



It isn't known how many adults have ADHD but as employers we should know how we can help individuals with this condition. Under the Equality Act 2010, an employee with ADHD may be considered to have a disability if their condition has a "substantial" and "long-term" negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Employing someone with ADHD whose work aligns with their interest and strengths brings results that often very easily offset any (often minimal) challenges. Looking for a team member with great attention to detail? ADHDers do seem to spot things that are regularly missed by others. The brain of someone with ADHD allows in what many of our brains filter out. Those of us who do not have ADHD have brains that filter out, sort and discard many things on a daily basis in an automatic way. Someone with ADHD's brain generally doesn't do this so they often notice things of importance that other people have just naturally filtered out and missed.

People with ADHD often have above average creativity and general intelligence, real attributes for roles where creativity and a flair for being able to think outside the box are key skills!

### **What is ADHD and how might it impact on someone's work life?**

Behaviours that might be seen in someone who has ADHD are, impulsiveness, concentration that wanders, hyperactive tendencies, poor time management and an apparent lack of organisation skills. The main impact of an unsupportive or ill adapted workplace for someone with ADHD is poor performance.

Interestingly research shows that people with ADHD are often good in crises. When other people are in crisis often people with ADHD are calm and collected. In America it has been recorded that there are higher rates of ADHD amongst ER doctors and nurses, police officers, fire fighters, journalist and professional athletes.

### **What can we consider offering that might help?**

#### **Lessen Distractions**

- A desk that is in a low traffic area facing away from busy areas in the office

- Allowing/ encouraging protected "do not disturb time" that is signalled to the whole team
- Encourage a clutter free workspace
- Allow noise cancelling headphones to help block out other sounds

#### **Strategies to Help Manage a Short Attention Span**

- Use alarms to support focus for set periods of the day, these should be followed by breaks
- Break tasks down into manageable chunks that can be achieved over a period of time
- Encourage breaks and small changes to routine to help avoid someone with ADHD getting stuck in routing

#### **Helping with Organisation and Memory**

- Following up meeting, conversations and discussions with written notes
- Giving written information to support training and tasks
- Let the person know you are happy to be asked clarity questions after meetings
- Check in and simply listen regularly, offer appropriate support for tasks as a sounding board
- Try to keep things consistent but not rigid
- Dual computer screens or good size screen so information is really clear
- When assigning tasks give a clear deadline to help reduce panic about having to get everything done at once

#### **Diversity Benefits Us All**

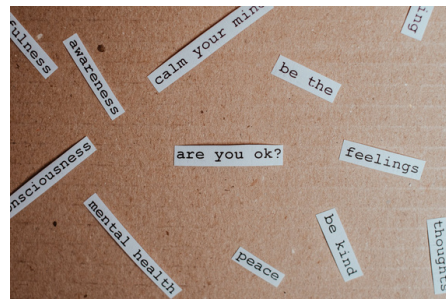
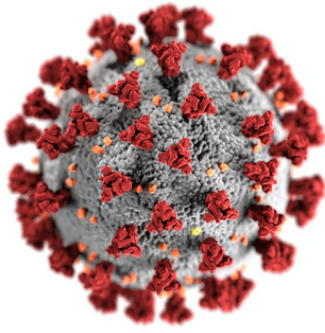
Here are a few of the things that someone with ADHD could bring to your team:

- Ability to find unique solutions to challenging problems
- Outside the box thinking
- Spotting patterns when everyone else simply see's chaos
- Empathy and intuition
- Resourcefulness
- A different perspective, new ideas, strategies and methods

#### **It Really is All about People**

- Keep talking, regular one to one communication to help stop little things building up
- Review completed work and re-enforce the positives
- If you notice someone isn't quite themselves offer them the space for an impromptu chat

Other qualities often experienced with team members who have ADHD are timeliness and exceptional focus for quality and attention to detail, often called hyper-focus.



## Living with COVID

Earlier this year the Government announced their Covid response policy, 'Living with Covid'.

Within this policy the government has set out details about lifting the legal restrictions and changes to support payments and Statutory sick pay. Below is a reminder of those changes that will affect employers and employees going forward.

### From the 24th February

The government removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. However, any adults or children who tested positive are still being advised to stay at home and avoid contact with people. After 5 days, they may do a lateral flow test (LFT) and the following day and if both tests are negative and do not present any symptoms they may return to their normal routine.

There are no longer any self-isolation support payments available for people, who chose to self-isolate.

### From the 24th March

The Covid provisions for Statutory sick pay will end. This will mean that employees will no longer receive Covid Statutory sick pay from day one. If a team member is off sick with covid, this will now be treated like any other absence of sickness, and the individual will not receive any statutory sick pay until after the 4 day period of absence.

There is no guidance to date in relation to covid absences and employers not wanting their employees in the workplace. More guidance on this is due to be published on the 1st of April. For the interim period, employers should use their discretion on how they pay their staff.

We have produced a guide and frequently asked questions (FAQ's) that outlines more information about these changes, if you click the link below this will take you to our website where the information is displayed.

<https://www.apexhr.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Covid-19-update-Feb-2022.pdf>

Alternatively, you can contact us at Apex HR for a chat to talk through any individual cases you may have on 01752 746627.

## Supporting mental health at work

If an employee has a mental health issue, it is important for their employer to find out what support they might need at work.

Employers have a 'duty of care'. This means they must do all they reasonably can to support their employees' health, safety and wellbeing.

A mental health issue can be considered a disability under the law (Equality Act 2010) if all of the following apply:

- it has a 'substantial adverse effect' on the life of an employee (for example, they regularly cannot focus on a task, or it takes them longer to do)
- it lasts at least 12 months, or is expected to
- it affects their ability to do their normal day-to-day activities (for example, interacting with people, following instructions or keeping to set working times)

A mental health issue can be considered a disability even if there are not symptoms all the time, or the symptoms are better at some times than at others.

If an employee has a disability, employers:

- must not discriminate against them because of their disability
- must make reasonable adjustments

It's a good idea to work with the employee to make the right adjustments for them, even if the issue is not a disability. Often, simple changes to the person's working arrangements or responsibilities could be enough. For example:

- allowing them more rest breaks
- working with them each day to help prioritise their workload

If staff feel they can talk openly about mental health, problems are less likely to build up. This could lead to:

- less time off for a mental health issue
- improved morale at work

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