



Leading the Way

The First Guidelines for the Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment of Adult ADHD in the United States

The absence of clinical practice guidelines for adults has created a significant gap in mental healthcare.

Myth: People outgrow ADHD. Fact: ADHD is frequently lifelong.

- Healthcare providers in the U.S. are not taught how to diagnose and treat ADHD in adults.
- Currently, the U.S. has no clinical practice guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD in adults.
- The recent surge in adults seeking care for ADHD, coupled with a steady increase in ADHD medication prescriptions, has underscored the pressing need for guidelines.

Why is it important to treat ADHD in adults?

Untreated ADHD has detrimental effects. For example:

Public Health Concern	Family	Education & Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 33% more ER visits● >7 medical visits a year● 2-4x more motor vehicle crashes● 2x risk of substance use disorders & earlier onset● 1.5-3x risk of obesity● 2.8-3.3x more likely to develop type 2 diabetes● at least 3x greater risk of suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● More parental divorce or separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Higher dropout rates & lower earnings

The guideline process

CHADD has partnered with the American Professional Society for ADHD and Related Disorders (APSARD), to develop and distribute the guidelines in 2025.

- APSARD is leading the charge in developing the guidelines for review.

- CHADD is taking the lead in developing resources and toolkits for healthcare providers across the U.S. to implement these new diagnostic and treatment guidelines.

With a coalition (the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Neurology, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness), and in partnership with APSARD, CHADD will adapt the guidelines to the needs of different medical and mental health specialists and patient populations. Currently, CHADD is facilitating focus groups with various practitioners to understand what they need to accurately diagnose and treat their patients. The goal is to ensure the guidelines are adopted by a range of health care providers and therapists who are on the front lines of diagnosis and treatment – not just those who specialize in ADHD treatment.

What a future with guidelines will look like

<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Standardized Care</p>	<p>A basic clinical standard will ensure a more uniform diagnostic and treatment approach across the U.S. while allowing for flexibility based on individual patient presentation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Enhanced Training</p>	<p>Adult ADHD will have an elevated validity as a subject for training programs. This could inspire educational institutions to incorporate adult ADHD into their curricula, ensuring future clinicians are better equipped to recognize and manage adult ADHD.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Modified Coverage Policies</p>	<p>The guidelines may help structure the decisions of third-party payers regarding the coverage of medical benefits for evaluating and treating adult ADHD and could lead to modifications in coverage policies.</p>

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