

ADHD In Women: Managing Work-Related Stress and Workplace Wellbeing

Onebright's Clinical Director of Psychiatric Services, Gabrielle Pendlebury, explains how ADHD presents in females and how this can impact women later in life.



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such as ADHD can have an impact on women later in life, particularly on their productivity and their career progression. Onebright's Clinical Director of Psychiatric Services, Gabrielle Pendlebury, explains how ADHD presents differently in females and how this can impact women later in life, particularly on productivity, [work-related stress](#) and career progression.

About Onebright: <https://onebright.com/>

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, often referred to as ADHD, is a condition that affects behaviour. It can lead to inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsive actions. Globally, it is estimated that 1 in 20 people are affected by ADHD, and it is believed that approximately one-third of children with ADHD persist in having problems into adulthood. Before 1990, it was believed that most children outgrew ADHD in adolescence, as hyperactivity tends to lessen as the young person matures. However, it is now known that many symptoms continue into adulthood and overt hyperactivity can be experienced as internal restlessness.

ADHD symptoms can change and develop throughout a person's life, especially at work, and symptoms of ADHD can impact productivity in the workplace without appropriate support.

Many factors can be attributed to the underdiagnosis of ADHD in females, primarily the differing way ADHD can present in females compared to males. A strong perception still exists that ADHD is more common in males and lies as an issue that could see females miss out on necessary support for their condition.

ADHD comes in three subtypes: predominantly inattentive, predominantly hyperactive-impulsive and combined, a mix of inattentive and hyperactive-impulsive. Males tend to have more

hyperactive/impulsive ADHD symptoms, which may cause them to be fidgety, always on the go, disruptive, restless, talkative, impulsive, impatient, and have mood swings.

On the other hand, females tend to exhibit more inattentive ADHD symptoms, which makes it hard to focus, pay attention to details, stay organised, listen, and remember things. Sometimes difficulties are mistaken and this can lead to symptoms being mislabeled or viewed as elements of the individual's personality e.g being shy or impulsive.

Offering support in the workplace:

Reasonable adjustments may be needed to support an individual - and managers need to consider the Equality Act if an employee is experiencing a substantial disadvantage due to their condition.

Good communication is key, as with any employee, understanding what they need to be effective in their role is an ongoing conversation that every line manager should be having regularly.

Most organisations are now aware of the need to support staff and will have programs that address:

- Managing feelings at times of stress
- Effective time management
- Managing interpersonal conflict
- Assertiveness training
- Using compromise and negotiation to aid team functioning

Appoint a mental health champion:

Enrol one person (or multiple people if you have a big team) to become your Mental Health Champions. Businesses have first aiders who people can go to in case of a physical issue, but many don't have a Mental Health Champion whom people can confide in.

By providing professionally delivered [mental health training](#) to your Champions, you can develop peer-to-peer network support within your organisation. You are creating an environment in which the individual may feel more comfortable discussing any issue they may be having.

The post-pandemic work has presented obstacles in everyone's lives. It is important to support all employees who have had to adapt to many new situations over the past years. Having the patience to listen to employees and introduce mental health training for your Champions are proactive steps that can be taken to support women in the workplace.

Line management:

Ensure that each team member is valued, and it is appreciated that not everyone will think and communicate the same way. This will open the way for new ideas and perspectives.

The Line Manager can listen and support and offer training as required. Encouraging effective communication leads to better relationships and the ability to initiate change.

Plan meetings and conferences to be neuro-inclusive; a simple statement that inclusion is important is a good starting point.

Onebright for businesses:

Businesses should be more open and accepting of employees with ADHD. These individuals uniquely view the world and thrive off their ability to multitask and give work tasks the focus and attention required.

ADHD is a complex condition but with the proper support from businesses, these individuals can bring a lot to the table, they are often creative thinkers that bring alternative viewpoints and uplift their colleagues to promote a positive workplace culture.

Please inquire about our mental health training packages for employees and line managers by filling out the contact form below. We appreciate the impact of work-related stress and the need to maintain workforce well-being can be challenging. Onebright offers bespoke services to corporate clients to meet the specific needs of each organisation.

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