



Information about ADHD

ADHD is the MOST under recognized, yet treatable psychiatric disorder in Canada

- Conservative Prevalence: 5% of children, 4% of adults
 - 1 – 2 children in every class
 - 4 adults out of every 100 people in a company
 - 1 Million Canadians are affected by this condition
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- ADHD is a neurobiological disorder that was clinically observed more than 100 years ago.
 - All of the major medical associations and government health agencies recognize this fact because the scientific evidence is overwhelming.
 - ADHD is the most prevalent child psychiatric disorder in Canada with a cost to the Canadian economy well over \$2 billion per year.
 - Through scientific studies we now know that ADHD is highly heritable and is a chronic disorder, persisting across the lifespan.
 - Students with ADHD are just as intelligent as other students.
 - ADHD is a disorder that significantly impacts learning in a variety of ways.
 - Medication is not a magic bullet that causes symptoms to disappear.
 - Current lack of knowledge, skills, and integrated services in health and education sectors post major challenges for accessing effective treatments.

What is the Burden of Illness (ADHD)?

- ADHD impedes the acquisition of human and social capital.
- Decreased likelihood of full-time employment and lower household income.
- Two-fold increased risk of injuries (particularly head injuries/fractures).
- Two to four-fold risk of motor vehicle accidents as a driver.
- Increased risk for substance abuse and mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

What is the Socioeconomic Burden of Untreated ADHD?

- No Canadian data exists
- U.S. data suggests:
 - Direct medical costs of ADHD are twice that for non-ADHD
 - Indirect costs: 120 million days lost in work in U.S.

By extrapolating U.S data, untreated ADHD costs the Canadian economy:

- 12 million days of lost work
- \$2 billion in lost productivity
- \$600 million in accumulated taxes

What ADHD medical issue are we currently facing?

Access to Assessment, Diagnosis and Comprehensive Treatment

- Access to timely and comprehensive assessments and treatments for all age groups is essential to decreasing the societal and economic impact of ADHD.
- Wait lists for assessment of ADHD in childhood can be significant.
- The lack of physicians to assess, diagnose and treat ADHD in adulthood is staggering.
- Due to inadequate compensation, many physicians are forced to charge over provincial coverage to do a comprehensive assessment, resulting in inequitable access to health care.
- Many of the proven multimodal treatments for ADHD are not covered by provincial health programs, creating a two tier system of health care for those impacted by ADHD.
- ADHD medication treatments are not a one-size-fits-all-situations, so all Health Canada approved medications should be accessible on provincial drug plans.
- To access information on which medications are covered in your province and with what conditions please visit: http://www.caddac.ca/cms/CADDAC_pdf/ProvincialMedicationcoverage1.pdf
- For further information on equal access to medication please visit: <http://www.caddac.ca/cms/page.php?208>
- Health Canada has approved more than one generic medication for ADHD. Some provinces have approved direct substitution of these medications for brand name medications. Some patients do not receive the same quality of symptom control with these medications, or experience more side effects. When this occurs there must be an option to direct substitution.

- For detailed information on CADDAC's concerns regarding new generic medication please visit: <http://www.caddac.ca/cms/page.php?210> and <http://www.caddac.ca/cms/page.php?119V>

ADHD and Education

- Students with ADHD have a three-fold increased risk for high school dropout.
- In three provinces in Canada, a diagnosis of ADHD alone does not qualify a student to be officially identified as an exceptional student, which would give them rights to special education resources and classroom accommodations.
- Children with ADHD are frequently labelled “problem children” rather than “children with a medical problem”.
- This lack of understanding causes many students with ADHD and their families to be misunderstood, stigmatized and traumatized.
- Many educators in the school system lack knowledge about the disorder and appropriate strategies and accommodations for the student, which, in turn, decreases their chance for academic success.
- For detailed information on how Ministries of Education in all provinces recognize or do not identify students with ADHD visit: <http://www.caddac.ca/cms/page.php?214>
- For access on our policy paper regarding the rights of students for equitable access to education visit: <http://www.caddac.ca/cms/page.php?209>