

# **DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER \*\***

## **Policy**

Federal law (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) established the rights of individuals with disabilities. Syracuse University is committed to compliance with all applicable federal laws and regulations regarding reasonable accommodation needed to provide equal opportunity to qualified individuals with disabilities. Final determination as to the appropriateness of an accommodation to the University setting is evaluated on a case by case basis. In accordance with federal and state regulations disability related information will be treated in a confidential manner.

## **Procedure:**

A student is responsible for providing documentation that supports his/her request for accommodation, it is important that the documentation clearly establish that the student has a disability as defined by federal regulations and that the documentation clearly supports the individual's request for accommodation. The following documentation guidelines are provided in the interest of ensuring that documentation of an Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) demonstrates a significant impact on a major life activity and supports the individual's request for accommodation.

## **Documentation Guidelines**

### **1. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation**

Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of AD/HD should have appropriate training. The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification should be clearly stated in the documentation. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and otherwise legible.

### **2. Documentation should be current**

The provision of accommodations is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance. Documentation that is outdated or inadequate in scope or content; does not address the student's current level of functioning; or does not address changes in the student's performance since the previous assessment was conducted may not support requested accommodations. When appropriate, additional supportive documentation will be requested.

**3. Documentation necessary to substantiate a disability should be comprehensive**

- a. Discuss any history of early impairment.**
- b. There should be evidence of current impairment.**
  - Statement of Presenting Problem: A history of the individual's presenting attentional symptoms should include evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning.
  - Diagnostic Interview: Information collected should consist of more than a self-report, as information from third party sources is critical in diagnosis. Sources may include, but are not limited to; family history, developmental history, medical history, psycho-social history, academic history, prior psycho-educational reports, and description of current functional limitations pertaining to an educational setting.
- c. Include relevant testing information used to supplement the diagnostic profile.**
- d. Diagnostic reports should include a review and discussion of DSM-IV criteria for AD/HD both currently and retrospectively and specify which symptoms are present.**
- e. Documentation must clearly state a specific diagnosis.**
- f. Interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process should include:**
  - *demonstration that alternative explanations have been ruled out;*
  - *indication of patterns of inattentiveness/impulsivity/hyperactivity across life span and settings are used to determine presence of ADHD;*
  - *indication and discussion of the substantial limitation to learning;*
  - *rationale as to why specific accommodations are needed.*

**\*\*** *These guidelines were adapted from the Policy Statement for Documentation of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Adolescent and Adults, April 1998, Office of Disability Policy, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J. 08541. The guidelines are not meant to be used exclusively or as a replacement for direct communication with the Office of Disability Services regarding the individual nature of a disability. While submitted documentation meeting the above guidelines may be acceptable to Syracuse University it is important to be mindful that they may/may not meet the documentation guidelines required in other academic or testing organizations (e.g., special certifications, Board examinations, standardized tests for admission to graduate schools, law schools, etc.).*