
PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS FOR ADULTS

Questions to ask ... When you are an adult considering assessment for Learning Disabilities (LD) and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Why are psychoeducational assessments of adults sometimes necessary?

Adults of any age may face difficulties learning in college or university, or carrying out tasks at work. Psychoeducational assessment can help you

- Find out if you have a learning disability and/or ADHD that could help explain some of these difficulties.
- Provide you with a better understanding of your strengths and areas of challenge.
- Support the need for reasonable accommodations to help you be more successful at school and at work. These could include extra time to complete tests or work assignments, or technology to work around areas of difficulty.
- Access funding such as the Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities (<http://psds.ednet.ns.ca/funding-available>) that helps college and university students with LD and/or ADHD get help such as tutoring or assistive technology.

I had a diagnosis of LD when I was in school. Do I still need to get an updated assessment?

- If the assessment was done in the last few years of high school, and clearly identifies that you have a diagnosis of LD and/or ADHD, you may not need reassessment.
- Assessments include tests for children and tests for adults. A re-assessment as an adult may be more important if your previous assessments used tests for children.
- Check with your college or university to see how recent the assessment has to be, in order to document the need for accommodations.
- Application for disability-related funding may have specific requirements for recent assessment.

I was never diagnosed with LD or ADHD as a child. Is it possible I have LD or ADHD as an adult?

Yes, it is possible.

- Many adults went to school at a time when LD and ADHD were not well-understood or identified, and when psychoeducational assessments were not available.
- Others “got by” in school, but with the increased academic and attention demands of college or university, or the workplace, they find that they are no longer able to keep up, or have the skills they need to succeed.

Who can provide assessment services to diagnose LD and/or ADHD in adults?

- Registered Psychologists are the only professionals who can diagnose a Learning Disability.
- Psychologists, Psychiatrists or Physicians may diagnose ADHD.

How are psychoeducational assessments for adults paid for?

- Students in public school can obtain psychoeducational assessment through school psychologists at no cost. Unfortunately, there are currently no publicly funded psychoeducational assessment services in Nova Scotia for young adults and adults who are not in public school.
- Post-Secondary organizations may be able to assist College and University students in exploring funding options.
- Health care plans may cover full or partial fees for psychoeducational assessments.

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- Registered Psychologists providing psychoeducational assessments on a fee-for service basis in private practice in Nova Scotia can be found in the online Private Practice Directory provided by the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia (www.apns.ca).
- If you do not suspect you have LD, but are concerned about ADHD, you have a choice about whether to have your assessment done by a Psychologist or a Physician. You could ask your family doctor to help you find a physician with expertise in diagnosis of ADHD, who is able to provide the comprehensive report required to provide accommodations or funding for ADHD. Services of a physician are covered through MSI.

What is involved in a typical psychoeducational assessment with an adult?

Most psychoeducational assessments of adults involve:

- 4 to 6 hours of individual testing, involving tests in areas such as thinking and reasoning, attention, auditory and visual processing, memory, academic skills
- Interviews with you and sometimes someone who knows you well.
- Completion of questionnaires and review of school report cards and college/university transcripts
- Test scoring and interpretation
- Written report
- Feedback session with you reviewing the results and recommendations
- Consultation as requested by you with college/university Disability Facilitators, Employers

You should expect to learn about

- Your strengths and challenges
- Specific processing and/or academic difficulties you may have
- Your ability to carry out academic tasks under both timed and untimed conditions
- Recommendations for accommodations, strategies and/or remediation

What is the typical cost for a psychoeducational assessment for LD and/or ADHD?

Fees vary, and you will need to discuss this with the psychologist. For a comprehensive psycho-educational assessment, fees may range from \$1200 to \$2500. If there is no suspected LD, and an ADHD assessment alone is needed, the fee may be less. However, it is often difficult to determine if there is an un-identified LD in adults with ADHD without a comprehensive psychoeducational assessment.

How can I pay for a private psychoeducational assessment?

If you have any private health insurance through college, university or employment, or are still covered by your parents' plan...

- Check with the insurance company to see if psychological services are covered, and if so, how much per year.
- If you are covered by more than one plan, you may be able to claim from both plans
- Some psychologists may be willing to spread an assessment out over two calendar years (e.g., December/January) to maximize your coverage
- Many plans only cover the face-to-face time you spend with the psychologist and do not cover test scoring or report preparation
- Most psychologists will not direct bill your insurance, so you will need to pay the fee yourself. They will provide you with a receipt that you can submit to your health plan to get reimbursement

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If you are a college or university diagnosed with a learning disability through a psychoeducational assessment, and are eligible for the federal part of the Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities ...

- You may be able to claim back up to 75% of the cost of the assessment up to a maximum of \$1,500
- At the present time, this re-imbusement is only possible for a diagnosis of LD, and not for a diagnosis of ADHD
- Note that psychologists will ask you to pay for the psychoeducational assessment at the time it is done, before you know if you will be diagnosed with LD, and if you are eligible for the grant

If you are ...

- Receiving benefits from Employment Insurance or Community Services
- Are enrolled in an upgrading or employment planning program
- Attending college or university

... check with your worker/case manager/Disability Resource Facilitator to see if there are ...

- Screening assessments available to determine if it is likely you may have LD and/or ADHD, which will help you decide if it is worthwhile investing in a psychoeducational assessment
- Funding opportunities available to help pay for an assessment

Other Considerations

- Psychoeducational assessments are considered a medical expense and fees can be claimed on your income tax.
- Although they are under no obligation to do so, some psychologists occasionally provide reduced-cost or sliding scale assessments, or negotiate payment over time, for individuals with financial need. Discuss this with your psychologist.

How do I find the right psychologist for me?

- Search the online Private Practice Directory provided by the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia (<http://apns.ca/search-psychologist/>) or call 902-422-9183 for psychologists who do psychoeducational assessments, with young adult or adult clients
- Look at the websites of those psychologists to see their background and experience providing assessment services to adults
- Get recommendations from Disability Services at your college or university, or from other students or adults you know with LD or ADHD. Word of mouth recommendations are valuable
- Ask to speak briefly with the psychologists you are considering before booking an appointment. You can ask about their:
 - Approach to assessment and areas of ability they will be assessing
 - Experience assessing LD and/or ADHD in adults
 - Experience providing recommendations for accommodations in college, university and/or the workplace
 - Willingness to meet with you to review the results of the assessment, plan next steps, consult with other service providers as requested by you, and complete forms for funding as needed
 - Time lines for the assessment, written report, and feedback session
 - Fees and payment options, and whether completion of forms is included

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How do I prepare for an assessment?

- You cannot study for these tests, and you are not supposed to know all of the answers! Just try your best
- Try to be relaxed, well rested, and positive before your assessment
- Ask the psychologist as many questions as you need in order to feel comfortable about the assessment

Adults pursuing psychoeducational assessment for learning disabilities or ADHD often have many questions about how to start. This document provides information about psychoeducational assessments, finding a psychologist, and financial considerations. It is based on a FAQ document originally developed by NSCC Disability Services, and updated by TEAM Work Cooperative, a specialized employment service for adults with disabilities.

For more information about TEAM Work Cooperative, see www.teamworkbridge.org or contact us at [902-422-8900](tel:902-422-8900).