

# How to demystify neurodiversity and mental health in the workplace: part 2

## Identifying and supporting staff who do not have a diagnosis

Kate Dean, Enable Disability and Inclusion Consultants





# Identifying and Supporting Staff who do not have a diagnosis

---

Removing barriers to high performance through meaningful inclusion



## Adult ADHD Is the Wild West of Psychiatry



HEALTH

## People self-diagnosing ADHD and autism 'overwhelm services'



DR MAX PEMBERTON: ADHD is the latest 'must-have' mental health condition. But according to the test, I've got it too - ludicrous!



**Joe Wicks blames ultra-processed junk for explosion of children with ADHD as he reveals he 'ran on sugar' as a kid and thinks his love of Sunny Delight, Wagon Wheels and jam sandwiches caused his 'behavioural issues'**



## Rise of autism makes diagnosis 'meaningless'

Katie Gibbons

Tuesday September 28 2021, 12:01am, The Times

A diagnosis of autism has become meaningless, one scientist has claimed, after the number of new cases rose by 787 per cent in two decades.

Get unlimited digital access on any device.

Start your free trial

# Busting Myths and Misconceptions

**ADHD is not about an inability to concentrate or sit still**

**You don't grow out of it**

**Dyslexia is not just about reading and writing**

**Neurodivergence is not related to intelligence**

**We are not all on the spectrum somewhere**

**Dyspraxia is not just about being clumsy**

“Neurodiversity may be every bit as crucial for the human race as biodiversity is for life in general. Who can say what form of wiring will be best at any given moment?”

**Harvey Blume, The Atlantic 1998**



# What is Neurodiversity?

- Recognising and celebrating that we all think differently
- Neurodiversity is an 'umbrella term' for cognitive differences
- 80% of the population are neurotypical
- 20% are neurodivergent





# Neurodiversity...

- ADHD
- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyscalculia
- Tourette's
- Acquired neurodivergence
- Mental Health Conditions



# Neurodiversity and Mental Health

- MH challenges are part of Neurodivergence
- MH conditions can co-occur
- Misdiagnosis/route to diagnosis
- Young ADHDers are 8.5x more likely to self harm
- Up to 73% of those who have ADHD / autism experience with mental ill health at some point
- 25% of deaths by suicide by autistic/ADHD young people
- Autistic people are up to seven times more likely to die by suicide than the general population





# Why don't people share?

- We ask people to disclose
- Fear, stigma and judgement
- Raised in a deficit model
- Don't identify as being disabled
- Don't feel 'disabled enough'
- Sat in a waiting list – nothing to tell at this stage
- Masking / suppressing
- Implications of sharing
- Lack of knowledge and understanding



# Encourage people to share

- Share or declare – not disclose
- Take the fear out of it – reassure and make a supportive process
- Talk about it – awareness days
- Clarify what a disability is
- Make it part of induction and onboarding
- Senior role models
- Staff networks / Employee Resource Groups
- Training and resources for managers and HR/People teams



# Removing barriers in the workplace



Working hours



Location



Concentration  
and focus



Working  
memory



Processing  
speed



Sensory  
environment



Communication  
and interaction



Time  
Management

# Adjustments you can anticipate

Flexible working  
hours and location

Establish  
communication  
preferences

Make the unknown,  
known

Accessible meetings  
e.g. walking  
meetings, stick to  
time and agenda

Diagrams,  
flowcharts,  
timelines, visual  
representations

Be mindful of the  
environment

Explain unwritten  
rules and  
expectations

Technology to  
increase  
participation

Time to process  
information

Information backed  
up in writing or  
permit to record

Awareness around  
interaction on video  
calls

Ask, observe and  
learn

# How to start the conversation

- Talent Attraction / Recruitment process –create a safe space for people to share
- Onboarding – ‘what can I do to support you to be at your best?’
- 1:1s, PDRs, appraisals, ‘I’ve noticed...’, ‘would it help if...’
- Talk about neurodiversity at team meetings/ projects to explore neuroinclusion





# What not to say....

- Do you think you might be....?
- We're all a little bit autistic
- We're all on the spectrum somewhere
- You can't tell / you don't look it
- We all feel anxious sometimes

**Remember** we are all individual, no one size fits all!





Removing barriers to high performance  
through meaningful inclusion

**Consultancy | Training | Workplace Assessments**

---

**Kate Dean**

07894 497687

kate@enabledi.co.uk

www.enabledi.co.uk

