

Documentation Requirements

ADHD

Definition

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is considered a neurobiological disability that interferes with a person's ability to sustain attention, focus on a task and/or control impulsive behavior. Many people have difficulty sitting still, paying attention or controlling impulses, but for some people the problem is so chronic and persistent that it gets in the way of daily life—at home, at school, at work and in social settings.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose ADHD: Physician, psychologist or psychiatrist. A letter from a physician or psychiatrist is sufficient; a psycho-educational assessment is preferred from a psychologist. The psycho-educational assessment should have been conducted no earlier than **three** years prior to the student's initial request for disability-related services at SAIT. The diagnostic report must be dated and submitted on letterhead and include;

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. Summary of all instruments and procedures used in the assessment
4. Written summary of educational, medical, family histories and behavioral observations
5. Test scores (e.g. percentiles) and a detailed interpretation of the results including strengths and weaknesses
6. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments and accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of functional limitations on the student's academic performance
7. Signed original preferred

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Definition

Autism spectrum disorders are pervasive developmental neurological disorders ranging from a severe form, called autistic disorder, to a milder form, Asperger syndrome. If a person has symptoms of either of these disorders, but does not meet the specific criteria for either, the diagnosis is called pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS).

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose Autism: Physician, psychologist or psychiatrist. A letter from a physician or psychiatrist is sufficient; a psycho-educational assessment is preferred from a psychologist.

The psycho-educational assessment should have been conducted no earlier than **three** years prior to the student's initial request for disability-related services at SAIT. The diagnostic report must be dated and submitted on letterhead and include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. Summary of all instruments and procedures used in the assessment
4. Written summary of educational, medical, family histories and behavioral observations
5. Test scores (e.g. percentiles) and a detailed interpretation of the results including strengths and weaknesses
6. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments and accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of functional limitations on the student's academic performance
7. Signed original preferred

Chronic Health Condition

Definition

Chronic health disabilities include medical conditions that significantly limit a student's ability to function in an educational environment. Chronic health conditions may include but are not limited to cystic fibrosis, HIV, cancer, hepatitis, kidney disease, severe allergies, asthma, fibromyalgia, and chemical sensitivities.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose chronic health condition: Family physician or medical specialist. A diagnosis of a medical condition alone is not sufficient to be eligible for accommodations and supports. Documentation must indicate the impact of the condition on the student in an academic setting. It is recommended assessments and evaluations should have been conducted no earlier than three months prior to the student's initial request for disability-related services at SAIT. Documentation must include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. A clear statement of the chronic illness or disorder, a summary of present symptoms, and a statement of the treatment, if applicable
4. Where relevant, a description of the severity, longevity, and/or expected progression or stability of the illness or disorder
5. Medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the post-secondary environment
6. Description of how the chronic illness or disorder and treatment, if applicable, impact the student's functioning in an academic setting
7. Suggestions on specific types of accommodations which may minimize academic barriers
8. Signed original preferred

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Definition

Deaf students have severe to profound hearing loss and typically use sign language as their primary mode of communication. Some deaf individuals rely on oral communication, some deaf individuals may have residual hearing and may use a hearing aid to augment the communication process, monitor their voice or hear environmental sounds.

Hard of Hearing students may have mild to severe hearing loss and use speech as their primary mode of communication. Students with mild hearing loss may miss up to 50% of class discussions especially if voices are soft or the environment is noisy. Students may require the use of a hearing aid or personal FM system and other accommodations that match their individual needs.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose hearing loss: Audiologist.

The documentation must be dated and submitted on letterhead and include;

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. An audiological assessment and report with a medical diagnosis of hearing loss, along with the prognosis and functional impact of the loss
4. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments and accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of hearing loss
5. Signed original preferred

Learning Disabilities

Definition

Learning Disabilities refer to a number of conditions which may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These conditions affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from global intellectual deficiency.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose Learning Disabilities: Registered Psychologists with expertise in diagnosing learning disabilities. Learning Disabilities are diagnosed after a psycho-educational assessment that notes the individuals' achievement on individually administered standardized tests in reading, mathematics, or written expression is substantially below that expected for age, schooling and level of intelligence. The psycho-educational assessment should have been conducted no earlier than **three** years prior to the student's initial request for disability-related services at SAIT. The assessment report must be dated and submitted on letterhead and include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. Summary of all instruments and procedures used in the assessment
4. Written summary of educational, medical, family histories and behavioral observations
5. Test scores (e.g. standard scores percentiles confidence intervals) and a detailed interpretation of the results including strengths and weaknesses
6. Description of intracognitive and/or aptitude-achievement discrepancies or the clinician's rationale for clinical judgment
7. Statement of how the learning disability substantially interferes with the student's educational progress
8. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments and accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of functional limitations and maximize the student's academic performance
9. Require a statement that describes unique academic demands of Polytechnic institution, so psychologists understand that recommendations must encompass the unique academic environment at SAIT.
10. Signed original preferred

Mental Health

Definition

Mental health (psychiatric) disabilities involve disturbances in thinking, emotion, and behavior. The terms mental health or psychiatric disability are used interchangeably. Diagnoses include but are not limited to depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, panic disorder, social anxiety, generalized anxiety disorder, PTSD, specific phobias, obsessive compulsive disorders, eating disorders, and substance abuse.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose Mental Health Disabilities (dependent on the diagnosis): Psychiatrist, physician, or psychologist. A diagnosis of a mental health disorder alone is not sufficient to be eligible for accommodations and supports. Documentation must indicate the impact of the condition on the student in an academic setting. As the nature of a mental health can change within a short period of time, it is recommended documentation of a mental health should be dated within **three months** of the student's **initial** request for disability-related services at SAIT. Documentation must include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. A clear statement of the disability, including the DSM-IV diagnosis and a summary of past and present symptoms
4. A summary of assessment procedures and/or evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis
5. Medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of a post secondary education environment
6. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments or accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of the disability-related limitations on the student's academic performance. Suggestions for accommodations should be supported by assessment results and diagnosis
7. Signed original preferred

Neurological conditions

Definition

Neurological disability refers to a condition or limitation impacting the central nervous system. Difficulties are exhibited in one or more of the following areas: the use of memory, the control and use of cognitive functioning, sensory and motor skills, speech, language, organizational skills, information processing, affect, social skills, or basic life functions. Diagnoses include but are not limited to cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, graphic praxis, head injury, stroke, Parkinson's disease, Tourette's syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome/fetal alcohol effects, epilepsy.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose (dependent on the diagnosis): Neurologist, psychologists, neuro-psychologists, psychiatrists, or physician. A diagnosis of a neurological condition alone is not sufficient to be eligible for accommodations and supports. Documentation must indicate the impact of the condition on the student in an academic setting. For many of neurological conditions, specifically brain injuries, the documentation should refer to a comprehensive assessment that addresses the student's aptitude, achievement and information processing abilities. The diagnostic report must be dated and submitted on letterhead and include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. Summary of all instruments and procedures
4. Written summary of educational, medical, family histories and behavioral observations
5. Test scores (e.g. percentiles) and a detailed interpretation of the results including strengths and weaknesses
6. Description of intracognitive and/or aptitude-achievement discrepancies or the clinician's rationale for clinical judgment
7. Statement of how the brain injury might interfere with the student's educational progress
8. Suggestions for specific academic adjustments and accommodations which may assist to minimize the impact of functional limitations on the student's academic performance
9. Signed original preferred

Physical disabilities

Definition

Physical disabilities include a number of disabilities causing loss of function in areas of independent movement resulting from nervous system impairment, amputation and/or a musculoskeletal condition. These include but are not limited to arthritis, repetitive strain injury, carpal tunnel syndrome, soft tissue injury, spina bifida, amputations, paraplegia, quadriplegia, obesity.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose physical disabilities: Physician or specialist in the area of the disability. Because the provision of all academic accommodations is individualized and based upon the impact of a disability on current academic performance, it is recommended assessments and evaluations should have been conducted no earlier than **three month** prior to the student's **initial** request for disability-related services at SAIT. Documentation must include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. A clear statement of the physical disability, a summary of present symptoms, and a statement of the treatment, if applicable. Where relevant, a description of the severity, longevity, and/or expected progression or stability of the disability
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the post-secondary environment
5. Description of how the disability and treatment, if applicable, impact the student's functioning in an academic setting
6. Suggestions on specific types of accommodations which may minimize academic barriers
7. Signed original preferred

Temporary disabling conditions

Definition

Temporary disabilities or conditions include, but are not limited to, broken dominant hand or hospitalization due to surgery, illness or injury.

Documentation requirements

Temporary disabilities or conditions are considered to be in the medical domain and require the diagnosis by a professional with expertise in the area of the particular illness or disability. It is recommended assessments and evaluations should have been conducted no earlier than **one month** prior to the student's **initial** request for disability-related services at SAIT.

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. A clear statement of the temporary disability or condition, a summary of present symptoms, and a statement of the treatment, if applicable. Where relevant, a description of the severity, longevity, and/or expected progression or stability of the temporary disability or condition
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of treatment (e.g. medication, physiotherapy) on the student's ability to meet the demands of the post-secondary environment
5. Description of how the temporary illness or disorder and treatment, if applicable, impact the student's functioning in an academic setting
6. Suggestions on specific types of accommodations which may minimize academic barriers
7. Signed original preferred

Visual

Definition

Visual disability is a generic term which covers a range of difficulties with vision, including a visual acuity of 6/21 (20/70) or less in the better eye after correction (best corrected vision), a visual field of 20 degrees or less, any progressive eye disease with a prognosis of becoming one of the above in the next few years or, a visual problem or related visual stamina that is not correctable and that results in the student functioning as if his or her visual acuity is limited to 6/21 (20/70) or less. For educational purposes, a student with visual impairment is one whose visual acuity is not sufficient for the student to participate with ease in everyday activities in an educational setting.

Documentation requirements

Professionals qualified to diagnose visual disabilities: Ophthalmologist. Because the provision of all academic accommodations is individualized and based upon the impact of a disability on current academic performance, it is recommended assessments and evaluations should have been conducted no earlier than **three month** prior to the student's **initial** request for disability-related services at SAIT. Documentation must include:

1. Clinician's name, title, phone number, and address
2. Date(s) of examination
3. A clear statement of the limits of vision, a statement of the level of best corrected vision, a summary of present symptoms, and a statement of possible treatment, if applicable. Where relevant, a description of the severity, longevity, and/or expected progression or stability of the vision loss
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the post-secondary environment
5. Description of how the vision loss and treatment, if applicable, impact the student's functioning in an academic setting
6. Suggestions on specific types of accommodations which may minimize academic barriers
7. Signed original preferred