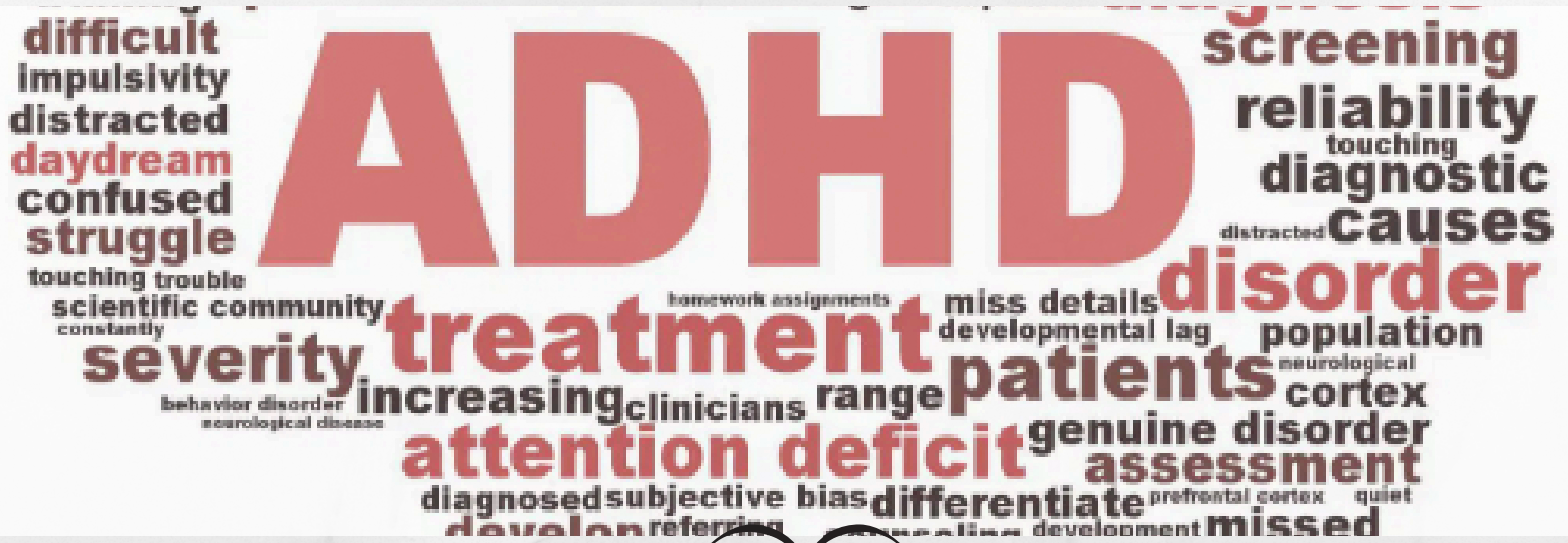


COMMUNITY PROFILE: NEURODIVERGENT YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

This community profile aims to provide a overview of ADHD in young people in Carmarthenshire, highlighting key areas for improvement and future development.

ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) is a underdevelopment condition and according to Furman (2005) is known for;

- **Inattention:** Difficulty focusing, easily distracted and forgetfulness.
- **Hyperactivity:** Excessive fidgeting, restlessness or has trouble sitting seated.
- **Impulsivity:** Acting without thinking about the consequences, interrupting others and unease waiting for one’s turn.

This can create challenges in school, at home and social environments. It often impacts emotional regulation, relationships and overall quality of life (Furman, 2005).

ADHD affects a significant portion of the population, including young people in Carmarthenshire. (Polanczyk et al., 2007).

	Male	Female	English as an additional language (A, B or C)	Additional learning or special educational needs - Statemented	Additional learning or special educational needs - School Action Plus	Additional learning or special educational needs - School Action	Additional learning or special educational needs - Individual Development Plan
Carmarthenshire	51.4	48.6	1.9	1.0	1.3	2.1	4.4

(StatsWales, 2024)

Figure 1: Number of children and young people waiting to start an ADHD or ASD neurodevelopment assessment in February 2022 and December 2023

	February 2022	December 2023	Change
Powys Teaching HB	194	728	275% ▲
Cardiff & Vale UHB	1,267	2,992	136% ▲
Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB	1,187	2,624	121% ▲
Betsi Cadwaladr UHB	2,753	5,163	88% ▲
ALL WALES	9,014	16,812	87% ▲
Hywel Dda UHB	2,194	3,403	55% ▲
Swansea Bay UHB	803	1,099	37% ▲
Aneurin Bevan UHB	616	803	30% ▲

(Senedd Research, 2023).

Challenges Faced by Young People in Carmarthenshire with ADHD

Social Challenges: Difficulty regulating emotions and impulsiveness can lead to strained relationships with peers and family members. Young people with ADHD may struggle with social cues, interpreting social situations and managing conflict (Moore *et al*., 2017).

Educational Challenges: ADHD can severely impact academic performance. Difficulty with focusing, organizing and completing tasks can lead to frustration, underachievement and low self-esteem (Moore *et al*., 2017).

Family Challenges: Parenting a child wi.th ADHD can be demanding and stressful. Parents might need extra support and resources to manage the challenging behaviours effectively and create a supportive home environment (CHADD, n.d).

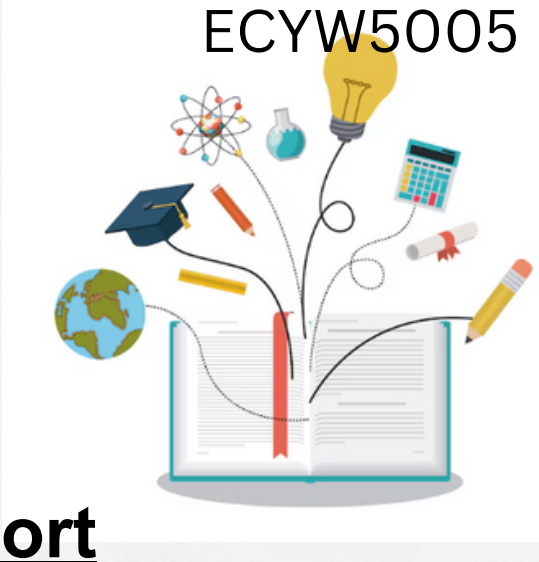
Emotional Challenges: ADHD is often linked to other conditions such as anxiety and depression. These conditions can further complicate a young person's emotional well-being and they may need additional support (Moore *et al*., 2017).

Needs

Young people with ADHD in Carmarthenshire need:

- **Education Support:** Access to customised educational plans, including Personal Learning Plan (PLPs) and classroom accommodations (Senac, 2024).
- **Early Intervention:** Early diagnosis to help long-term challenges in academia and social development (Sedgwick-Müller et al,. 2022)
- **Social Support:** Peer support groups for shared experiences and reduced isolation (Christoffersen, 2023).
- **Emotional Support**: Counselling services to manage co-existing conditions like anxiety and depression (Mendez et al,. 2021).
- **Parental Training:** Resources to help families manage behaviours effectively (Marquet-Doleac, Biotteau and Chiax, 2023).

Support Systems Available in Carmarthenshire



Educational Support

Individualised Education Plans (IEPs): These plans outline specific support and strategies to meet a student's individual needs (Forbrain, 2023).

Classroom Accommodations: These may include specific seating, extra time on assignments, frequent breaks and quiet spaces (Oselwalt, 2024).

Specialised Teaching Strategies: Teachers may use specified techniques to help students with ADHD focus, organise their work and manage their behaviour (Mulrine and Florez-Marti, 2014).

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Programs: Schools offer tailored support, including teaching assistants and specialised learning plans (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2024).

Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCO): Previously known as Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs). These professionals within schools oversee the provision of support for students with SEN, including ADHD (Welsh Government, 2018).

Training for Educators: Ongoing training to develop better support to neurodivergent students (Chowdhury, 2024).

Healthcare Services

Diagnosis and Assessment: Healthcare professionals, such as paediatricians and Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) clinicians conduct assessments to diagnose ADHD (Carmarthenshire NHS Trust, n.d; CTM University Health Board, n.d.).

Medication Management: Medication may be prescribed to help manage ADHD symptoms (Carmarthenshire NHS Trust, n.d).

Therapeutic Interventions: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can help young people develop coping strategies and manage their symptoms (Carmarthenshire NHS Trust, n.d).

Private Assessments: Services like The ADHD Centre offer private online assessments for residents in Carmarthen (ADHD Centre, n.d).

Community Support

ADHD Carmarthenshire's Family Support Group: This local group provides a platform for families to connect, share experiences and resources (ADHD Carmarthenshire Family Support Facebook Group, 2022).

Neurodivergence Wales: This organisation offers resources, advocacy, and peer support for families navigating neurodevelopmental conditions, including ADHD (Neurodivergence Wales, n.d.).

Online Resources: The websites ADHD UK and the ADHD Foundation offer comprehensive information and support for families (ADHD Foundation, n.d; ADHD UK, n.d).

Online Communities: Platforms like ADDers.org list support groups across Wales, including Carmarthenshire (Adders, n.d).

Online Resources

NHS 111 Wales: Provides comprehensive information on ADHD symptoms, treatments and support services (111 Wales, n.d).

Funding and Future

Securing long-term funding for ADHD services is still difficult. Future plans are to focus on better connecting education and healthcare, making early intervention programmes more accessible and expanding community support efforts.

NHS Wales: Funds healthcare services, including mental health and ADHD-specific clinics (NHS Wales, n.d.).

Educational Grants: Schools receive funding to support students with additional learning needs, for example Disabled Student Allowance(DSA) (UCAS, n.d).

Future Distribution

Neurodivergence Improvement Programme: Welsh Government aim to develop and test early help and support services for neurodivergent individuals (Government of Wales, 2023).

Recommendations for Future Provisions

Family support: Support parents of young people with ADHD with resources, understanding to effectively manage challenging behaviours and create a supportive home environment.

Enhanced Training: Apply compulsory ADHD awareness training for educators, healthcare providers, youth workers and social workers.

Increased Funding: Allocate more resources to reduce waiting times for assessments and provide comprehensive support services.

Community Outreach: Launch programs to raise awareness and reduce stigma around ADHD, encouraging early diagnosis and support.

Transition Support: Create structured pathways to support young people with ADHD transitioning into adulthood, ensuring there is continuous care.

Integrated Services: Develop multi-agency hubs where families can access health, education and social services in one location.

Holistic Approach: A more holistic and informed understanding of how ADHD develops within individuals, considering both genetic and environmental factors (Nature-nurture).

Supporting young people with ADHD in Carmarthenshire requires a varied approach across education, healthcare and community services. Early intervention, tailored education plans, counselling and parental support are key to addressing their needs. Increasing awareness, reducing stigma and providing professional training can give better understanding and access to services. Efforts in the future should focus on securing funding, reducing assessment waiting times and creating combined support hubs. This can empower young people with ADHD to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, to reach their full potential.

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