

# The Importance of Regular Follow-Up for ADHD



Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.<sup>1</sup> When managed appropriately, medication for ADHD can control symptoms.

Studies consistently support the superiority of stimulant over the nondrug treatment. Psychosocial care, which includes behavioral interventions, psychological therapies, and skills training among other forms of non-pharmacological care, may be recommended as an initial treatment if the patient's ADHD symptoms are mild with minimal impairment, the diagnosis of ADHD is uncertain, parents reject medication treatment, or there is marked disagreement about the diagnosis between parents or between parents and teachers. Preference of the family should also be considered.<sup>2</sup>

## Provider Tips:

- The clinician should screen for ADHD by specifically asking questions about the major symptom domains of ADHD and asking whether such symptoms cause impairment
- Complete a comprehensive medical and psychiatric exam, including rating scales from parents and teachers, before diagnosing and prescribing
- Screen for coexisting issues that may be impacting the child
- Limit the first prescription of ADHD medication to a 28–30-day supply and schedule follow-up before the family leaves the office
- Re-evaluate medication effectiveness no more than 30 days after initiation via telehealth when available, and regularly monitor medication effects thereafter
- Discuss parent and child questions and concerns and highlight the child's strengths
- Address barriers and coordinate care with other providers
- Utilize telehealth and submit the correct CPT® claim codes
- Periodically review the ongoing need for continued medication therapy

## Measures:

- Follow-up Care for Children Prescribed ADHD Medication (ADD-E)

## Additional Support:

- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry — ADHD Resource Center (AACAP.org)
- Practice Parameter for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (JAACAP.org)
- American Academy of Pediatrics — Clinical Practice Guideline for the Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Treatment of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Children and Adolescents | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP.org)

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Resource\\_Centers/ADHD\\_Resource\\_Center/Home.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Resource_Centers/ADHD_Resource_Center/Home.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567\(09\)62182-1/fulltext](https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567(09)62182-1/fulltext)