

Approach, Diagnosis and Management of ADHD in Women Across the Lifespan: A Comprehensive, Skills-Based Clinical Course

Background

ADHD in women is one of the most rapidly emerging areas in mental health, yet it remains widely overlooked in clinical practice. Most diagnostic frameworks and treatment pathways are based on male-focused research, which contributes to delayed recognition and misdiagnosis. Women often present with predominantly inattentive symptoms, emotional dysregulation, sensory sensitivities and high-functioning compensatory behaviours that can conceal impairment for years. Hormonal transitions across puberty, the menstrual cycle, pregnancy, the postpartum period, perimenopause and menopause can significantly change symptom profiles and treatment response, creating additional challenges for clinicians.

Internalising comorbidities such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, sleep difficulties, eating-related concerns and substance use are common, and presentations frequently overlap with conditions including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder and Bipolar Disorder. There is growing international demand for clinicians who are equipped to recognise gender-specific presentations and provide safe and individualised care across the female lifespan. This course is delivered through highly interactive methods, including real case discussions, clinical interviewing role play, small group problem solving and a collaborative decision-making activity that allows participants to apply skills in real time.

This comprehensive and skills-based four hour workshop offers an engaging learning experience for mental health professionals seeking practical, up-to-date and confidence-building approaches to assessing and managing ADHD in women.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- recognise gender-specific presentations and masking across life stages
- conduct comprehensive assessments using structured tools and interviews
- differentiate ADHD from commonly overlapping psychiatric conditions
- understand hormonal influences and their relevance to clinical decision-making
- plan safe and individualised management including stimulant and non-stimulant options with considerations during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- integrate practical non-pharmacological strategies such as psychoeducation, CBT, coaching and lifestyle interventions

Course outline

Module 1: Understanding ADHD in Women Across Lifespan - 30minutes

Module 2: Real cases, Real challenges - Diagnostic Deep Dive - 60minutes

Module 3: Differential Diagnosis Across the Lifespan - 30minutes

Module 4: Guided Clinical Interviewing Role Play (SASI) - 40minutes

Break - 30minutes

Module 5: Management Strategies for Women with ADHD - 40minutes

Module 6: Collaborative Clinical Decision-Making Activity - 20minutes

Teaching Methods

Case-based discussions, video - guided interviewing and a collaborative decision-making exercise

Target Audience

Psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, trainees, psychiatry nurses, PSWs and primary care physicians.

Facilitators

1. Dr. Prabha Chandra, is a Senior Professor of Psychiatry and past Dean, Behavioral Sciences at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, India and is the immediate past President of the International Association of Women's Mental Health. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Archives of Women's Mental Health.
2. Dr. Patricia J.M. Van Wijngaarden-Cremers , is senior consultant psychiatrist who specialises in Gender, Developmental Disorders and Addiction at Dimence, the Netherlands. She started a country-wide network for psychiatrists and other mental health professionals treating adults with ADHD , Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and addiction.
3. Dr Parul Mathur is a Consultant Psychiatrist at Amaha, Bengaluru. Drawing on her lived experience of ADHD, she works extensively with neurodiverse women and has a particular clinical interest in ADHD across the female lifespan. Her work focuses on recognising gender-specific presentations and understanding how hormonal transitions influence symptoms and guide treatment planning.