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ADHD CONSULTANCY  
EVIDENCE-BASED SUPPORT

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# Getting an ADHD Diagnosis in Australia

What to expect, what it costs, who can diagnose you, and what to do next. Current as at May 2026.

● [NUANCED CO. RESOURCE GUIDE](#)

## Why getting diagnosed as an adult is complicated

Adult ADHD is significantly underdiagnosed in Australia, particularly in women and in people who did not present with hyperactive symptoms in childhood. The diagnostic pathway for adults is fragmented, expensive, and slow.

As of 2026, an adult seeking an ADHD diagnosis in Australia can expect to wait between four months and twelve months for an initial specialist appointment, and to spend between \$600 and \$2,000 on the assessment process (University of Wollongong, 2026; Kantoko, 2024).

This guide explains the pathway clearly, including recent reforms that may make access easier depending on where you live.

## Who can diagnose ADHD in Australia?

Historically, ADHD in adults could only be diagnosed by a psychiatrist or, in some states, a paediatrician or neurologist. As of early 2026, this is changing.

Who	Notes	Medicare rebate?
Psychiatrist	The most common pathway for adult diagnosis. Comprehensive assessment, longest wait times.	Partial (MBS item numbers)
GP (selected states)	South Australia, NSW and VIC announced in early 2026 that trained GPs can now diagnose and treat ADHD in adults.	Yes, under special arrangements
Clinical psychologist	Can conduct assessments and formulate, but cannot prescribe medication. Works alongside a GP or psychiatrist.	Partial (Better Access scheme, with GP referral)
Paediatrician	Usually for children; some also see adults depending on specialty.	Partial

## The diagnostic process: step by step

Step 1

### Talk to your GP

Start with your regular GP. Describe your symptoms in everyday language: difficulty sustaining attention, problems with organisation, forgetting tasks, emotional regulation challenges. Ask for a referral to a psychiatrist or, if you are in a state with GP prescribing, ask whether your GP is trained to assess ADHD.

Step 2

### Gather your history

Assessors need to establish that ADHD symptoms were present before age 12. This does not mean you needed a childhood diagnosis. Evidence can include old school reports, accounts from parents or carers, or your own recollections of childhood patterns.

Step 3

### The assessment

A comprehensive adult ADHD assessment typically includes a structured clinical interview, standardised rating scales (such as the DIVA-5 or CAARS), review of childhood history, and consideration of other explanations for symptoms. It usually takes between one and three hours across one or more appointments.

Step 4

### The outcome

After the assessment you will receive a diagnosis (or not), a written report, and a discussion of options. If ADHD is confirmed, this will include conversation about medication, other supports, and follow-up care.

Step 5

### Medication, if applicable

If medication is recommended, a psychiatrist or GP (in eligible states) can prescribe stimulant medication under a Special Authority arrangement with the PBS. Your prescribing doctor will explain this process.

## What diagnosis does and does not mean

A diagnosis does not change who you are. It is information. It explains patterns that may have been confusing or painful for years. It opens access to support, reasonable adjustments at work, and evidence-based treatment. It is not a ceiling, a label, or a life sentence.

A diagnosis also does not mean every difficulty in your life is ADHD. ADHD commonly co-occurs with anxiety, depression, autism, dyslexia, and other conditions. Your assessment should consider these possibilities. If you feel your assessment did not address co-occurring conditions adequately, you can ask for a further referral.

Typical costs in Australia (2026)	
GP referral appointment	Bulk billed or \$0-\$90 gap
Psychiatrist initial consultation	\$600-\$1,400 (partial Medicare rebate applies)
Psychologist assessment	\$300-\$800 (partial rebate via Better Access)
GP diagnosis (where available from 2026)	Standard consult fee, significantly lower
Medication (ongoing)	PBS subsidised once authority prescription is in place

## If you are waiting for a diagnosis

The wait for a formal diagnosis can be long. In the meantime, there are things you can do.

- Tell your GP about the impact symptoms are having on your daily life and work. This is relevant clinical information.
- Ask about support available through your workplace, such as reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, which does not require a formal diagnosis in all cases.
- Look for ADHD-informed community support. ADHD Australia ([www.adhdaustralia.org.au](http://www.adhdaustralia.org.au)) and AADPA ([www.aadpa.com.au](http://www.aadpa.com.au)) both provide information and support resources.
- Connect with others who have similar experiences. Many people find peer support communities valuable while waiting for a formal pathway.

## References

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Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth). Australian Human Rights Commission.  
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This content is for general information only. Costs and policies are current as at May 2026 and subject to change. Speak with your GP for personalised advice.