

## FAQ's: Integrated Mental Health Clinic

**Congratulations** on taking the first step to seek a comprehensive mental health assessment from our Integrated Mental Health Clinic.

If you are unsure of what comes next, who to call or what your next steps might be, we will be with you every step of the way.

There are **4 ways** you can have your questions answered *at any time*:

1. By our team admin manager via [email](#) or phone,
2. By your therapist at Dig a Little Deeper through [secure messaging](#),
3. By your NP after your first assessment by [secure messaging](#), or,
4. By referencing this our [website FAQ Information](#) or this FAQ handout.



### First, let's review Our 'Right Service' Checklist!

You've decided to pursue a private, comprehensive, mental health assessment. Let's ensure this is the right choice for you. If any of the following are answered with "No", this may not be the appropriate service for you at this time. **Be sure you,**

- ☐ Are a resident of Ontario,
- ☐ Can pay privately for the service, regardless of whether or not your insurance company will reimburse you,
- ☐ Can commit to follow up either with the program, or back through your family physician for ongoing care,
- ☐ If your session is virtual, ensure you have access to privacy, a strong internet connection, fully charged devices and the ability to connect to a virtual session with your laptop or smartphone,
- ☐ If your session is in person, have access to transportation to arrive on time for your in person session in Bolton.

### Next, book your appointment:

- ☐ Complete our **confidential Screening Quiz** found on the main service page. *(If you are better served by another level of service, you will be informed of this before proceeding to the booking stage).*
- ☐ Complete your booking once you have selected the best dates for you, and have paid your confirmation deposit.<sup>1</sup>
- ☐ Complete the assessment forms sent to you.
- ☐ Come to your scheduled appointment and begin your assessment!



### What to expect:

**1. Intake:** You will be asked to complete a series of forms that include information about your past and current symptoms, past or current diagnoses, a family history, and if possible, we will ask you to select a loved one to also provide information about their observations of the same symptoms throughout your life.

- A. If you see a psychotherapist on our team, they will also provide an internal referral to help supplement this information. Your NP will have reviewed this information in detail before your appointment, as well as with you at your appointment.
- B. You'll have a 20 minute phone call with our Intake Review team member to ensure everything is completed and ready to go in time for your assessment.
- C. If there are still reports or forms outstanding at the time of your assessment, you may have to adjust your booking until everything is submitted.

**2. Psychiatric or Medication Assessment:** In your assessment appointment, you'll meet with a specialized mental health Nurse Practitioner. Your NP will conduct a detailed medical and developmental history, and ask about current and past functioning. Most assessments are finalized with one assessment session.

- A. Your NP may request that you complete lab work which is important to have these results for your appointment or follow-up appointment will be required.

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<sup>1</sup> **Payment:** 50% of your session payment is due upon booking, and 50% is due on the day of your session. The 50% deposit for Psychiatric Assessments is **non-refundable**. A considerable amount of preparation is undertaken in advance of your session. If you need to reschedule your Nurse Practitioner Assessment, we require **a minimum of 72 hour's notice**.

3. **Results:** Either at your first or follow-up assessment appointment, your NP will discuss the findings from a medical perspective and if a diagnosis and treatment plan is indicated, you will review it together then.
  - A. You will have an opportunity to ask questions, collaborate, share your values and work together to create a plan that works for you. If you require or will benefit from medication, your NP will be able to prescribe and follow up with you for ongoing care.
  - B. At your direction, a detailed Consultation report can be sent to your family physician or child's pediatrician. There is no charge for a confirmation of diagnosis, but there are fees for more detailed reports. Check out [current rates on our website](#).
4. **After your appointments** with your NP, you can customize the rest of your treatment journey.
  - A. We know from research and global treatment guidelines, optimal treatment outcomes for ADHD specifically at any age include a blend of medication, ***followed by ADHD focused therapy and executive function coaching.***
  - B. For other diagnoses, our diversified group of clinicians also know what mental health treatments are most likely to be successful.
5. You can check in with your NP or your family doctor for your **ongoing medical care**, and ideally you will be able to participate in ADHD focused therapy with an ADHD trained and specialised psychotherapist to make the most of your treatment journey.

**\* If you have been prescribed medication from an NP, *please be sure to pre-book any follow up appointments to have your prescription renewed and your treatment progress evaluated.*** Pre booking prevents any unnecessary delays in your treatment; your NP may only be available on specific days of the week.

## Other FAQs:

### **Do I have to be a therapy client at Dig a Little Deeper to use the service?**

No! We opened the service to the general public in the spring of 2023, after piloting the program internally since the fall of 2022. We carefully created processes and systems that will allow for the ethical and practical care of patients, and facilitate faster access to the care we know Ontarians want and need. Anyone in Ontario can sign up through our new secure Self Assessment Screening Quiz on our website.

### **Is it hard to diagnose ADHD?**

Yes. Diagnosing ADHD is complex. No two people with ADHD are alike. ADHD affects functional, structural and neurochemical pathways in the brain, and presentations will vary based on individual people's life circumstances, experience of other co-existing conditions and the level of external support they may or may not organically have. To complicate matters further, symptoms that look like ADHD might not signal an attention disorder. Figuring out what's going on takes time, detailed investigation, and expert knowledge.

**Bottom line:** Diagnosing ADHD can't be done with a simple checklist. It can't be done in 15 minutes.

### **Is treatment for ADHD complicated?**

At Dig a Little Deeper, we offer a full comprehensive adult or paediatric psychiatric assessment, where specialized and experienced clinicians take an in-depth look at your entire mental health profile and experiences, and make recommendations backed by science to support functioning going forward. Our team approach involves several sessions.

Do I need a new assessment as an adult, if I was diagnosed with ADHD as a child?

If you have a confirmed psychiatric diagnosis and would like to review and adjust your treatment plan only (medication), you may book a Medication Assessment. You must be able to submit a psychological or psychiatric report confirming your diagnosis to receive this type of appointment.

Your NP will review the report prior to meeting with you. If you have more than one mental health diagnosis and the NP requires a more thorough assessment to confirm diagnosis, you may still require a psychiatric re-evaluation and need to book a full adult assessment.

### **I'm a parent. What can I expect for my child?**

#### ***A note about age of consent, privacy and confidentiality of patients, regardless of who is paying for a private medical service:***

It is a fundamental responsibility of all Ontario regulated health care providers to maintain client confidentiality at all times. In compliance with PHIPA (Ontario's Personal Health Information Protection Act), health care providers must ensure that the professional relationship with the client and the client's personal information are kept confidential, within legal limitations, which includes children (or adult children for whom you might be paying for an assessment).

In general, all parents are involved actively in the information gathering part of any medical assessment for minor children. Once the interview with your child is completed, the parents are asked to rejoin their child for discussion of the diagnosis and treatment



Mental health for every mind.

planning. Various options for treatment will be discussed. Risks and benefits of each option will be reviewed. We will spend some time letting both parents and child ask questions.

It is important to note, in accordance with PHIPA *the consent must be signed by the patient if they are 12 years of age or older*. Parental consent is accepted if the patient is less than 12 years of age, or is incapable of consenting. If there is a conflict between the child and the parent, the capable child's decision prevails with respect to consent.

Click [HERE](#) to download our specific **Guide for Parents**.

### Why Private Services?

NP services are considered a “non-insured health benefit”, like almost all mental health care, a massage therapist, physiotherapist or dentistry. Patients are required to “pay out of pocket” for non-insured health benefits, or carry additional health insurance. Many insurance companies such as SGI, WSIB, and some employee health benefit plans do cover Nurse Practitioner services.

Please contact your insurance company to inquire about your coverage. Much of the work that is required by patients in the community involves other agencies that may not recognize NP practice. This is changing! For example, Worker's Compensation, SGI and some insurance companies now accept an NP as a primary care provider. They recognize the work from NP's equal to the same work done by physicians. Most recently Revenue Canada has accepted NPs as providers for documents such as the Disability Tax Credit. The coroner's office and Department of Vital statistics also accepts NP signatures on documents. Slowly most agencies are recognizing that for many Canadians, an NP instead of a physician is the primary provider.

If your insurance company would like an assessment quote to see if you can get coverage, please let your therapist or nurse know and they can provide one for you in advance of your appointment. Please note that you should explore your coverage options before you book your appointment.



***At any time, come back to our Integrated Mental Health Clinic Service pages*** and check out any details you might be looking for, or book back in with your NP or therapist for ongoing care.



**Rebook with your current therapist**, or take the next step in your mental health journey with the services of experienced therapists and counsellors, with a range of fee options, from our team.



***Visit the original neurodivergent-affirming ADHD Resource Hub***, and find science, evidenced-based guidelines, tips and helpful resources for all stages of life with ADHD.