

Press Release

National campaign highlights ADHD provision disarray

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is an internationally recognised brain disorder affecting both children and adults. Despite extensive scientific research, fears and prejudices about ADHD and its treatments remain. Early identification and effective treatment allows sufferers to achieve their potential and have an improved quality of life. ADHD is a hidden disability; its symptoms present lifelong challenges.

Untreated or misunderstood, it damages lives, yet when sufferers are fortunate enough to receive appropriate treatment and support, their many gifts outweigh their challenges. Treatment for this disorder can be very successful, yet sadly many children and adults remain untreated due to lack of knowledge and foresight. The long-term costs of ignoring today's research are immense, both financially and personally. ADHD does not go away at 16 as so many authorities claim – it is a lifelong disorder.

Increasingly sufferers are seeking private assessment and treatment – the majority being excluded due to lack of funds. Inadequate government funding combined with a lack of understanding and acknowledgement at a local level prevents many patients from being treated, despite the condition being treatable. Left untreated ADHD can develop into severe mental illness.

The media often report on the negative and dramatic stories, further damaging patients. The real scandal is the inadequate provision available and the fact that no one wants to take responsibility for the disorder. Past and present sufferers include Albert Einstein, Ozzy Osbourne, Daniel Bedingfield, and several other high profile figures. Their success demonstrates what people with the disorder can achieve, while highlighting how much future potential is untapped among present sufferers due to lack of provision.

A group of ADHD advocacy organizations representing pressure groups throughout the UK have launched *Enoughs Enough*. The campaign highlights the issues that families have to face, and how little the government and local authorities across the UK are doing to prevent the suffering endured by service users and families. Parents, patients, professionals and advocates are no longer prepared to stand back as people suffer. The campaign is lobbying local and national government and will name and shame health authorities who are not providing adequate services, as well as those MPs and ministers who do not act in the interests of their constituents.

The campaign is highlighted by a national conference to be held on 29th June 2006 at Ipswich Town Football Club where the keynote speaker is Russell Barkley, Professor of Psychiatry at the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr G D Kewley, Consultant Neurodevelopmental Pediatrician who has considerable experience of

managing ADHD and related conditions says of the campaign: “This is well overdue. An awareness and understanding of ADHD and related conditions and their impact on sufferers is critical for the effective provision of children’s mental health. International research and clinical experience demonstrates that ADHD is an internationally-recognised medical condition and is validated by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE). Its symptoms can cause significant educational and social underachievement and sometimes lead to individuals becoming involved with the law. Its impact gives rise to immense distress to sufferers and it can also tear families apart. No child or adult mental health service can operate effectively without bringing AD/HD into the equation. It is high time that at the highest levels of health, education, juvenile justice and government generally, accurate information about this disabling condition was made available so that more educated and appropriate decisions can be made.”

Through the campaign website [www.campaignon.com/adhdenoughsenough](http://www.campaignon.com/adhdenoughsenough) people can lobby their MPs and the media and contact their local authority with their concerns. We urge people to visit the website and see how they can be involved.

#### Contacts

Campaign website [www.campaignon.com/adhdenoughsenough](http://www.campaignon.com/adhdenoughsenough)

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#### Notes to editors:

1. Contrary to recently held views, it is now clear that many children with ADHD will not simply "outgrow" their symptoms when they reach adolescence. Although the absolute severity of ADHD symptoms often declines with age, between 70-80% of children with ADHD continue to show problems with attention and impulsivity relative to their age mates.
2. There is evidence that some Health Authorities refuse to accept that the disorder even exists, this is despite the Government’s advice on its treatment and the vast amount of scientific research.
3. Many untreated ADHD adults reside in the UK’s prisons, untreated