

The services for ADHD and autism available are severely lacking. From diagnosis to ongoing support parents can expect wait times measured in years. The cost of these services (many not covered by Medicare, private health and NDIS) are so expensive as to be out of reach for many people. We personally have spent over \$7000 in the last 12 months obtaining diagnoses for our children. Within the next 2 weeks we will need to spend another \$1600, and we can expect a rebate of less than \$260.

The wait list for public diagnoses for people who can't pay privately is even more dismal.

When parents finally receive a diagnosis for their children, often after struggling for years with no support, then can they apply for NDIS. NDIS is known to significantly under fund people and parents have to fight for the support their children need. Service like speech pathology, occupational therapy and psychology often have their own wait times of up to 2 years. This is completely inappropriate as the children need these interventions while they are young and their brains are the most neuroplastic.

Mental health services for children are severely lacking. People who need help in a timely manner are being turned away or given waitlists that are so long, it is truly shocking. The demand for these services is only going to grow as neurodivergent people are forced to wait for diagnoses and support.

This whole immersion into the world of disability diagnosis and support has been eye opening in the worst way. As a health professional myself I am well aware of the current state of the health care system, but this has been a steep learning curve. The most vulnerable members of the community are being forgotten and falling through the cracks. It's very scary.