

# UKAAN

## Education to Employment

# (ADHD) Biog

- QIO (Inclusion) for LEA
- Independent consultant – CLC Consultancy
- Member of UKAP
- Member National Autism Strategy Reference Group
- Depute Chair – Training and X Agency Collaboration sub-group
- Adviser – Mindroom
- Adviser – Perth & Kinross ADHD Support Group
- Member of 'Better Futures Group' (UKAP)
- Expert witness – S v K; M v G; ACC v IC; DF v MC
- Member of Complex Kids Panel (P&K)
- Member of P&K Autism Assessment Panel
- RCGP report on GP training

# Transitions

- Period of coinciding risk factors
  - CAMHS to adult services
  - Disengagement from treatment progs
  - Loss of influence of significant adult (e.g. SENCO, teacher)
  - Disconnect between education, other agencies and employment sector
  - Eligibility for support

# Transitions

- Premature and unplanned exit from secondary education system
- Academic under-attainment
- Non-linear trajectories?
- Immaturity – often under-estimated as a factor
- Multiple risk factors at transition stage (offending, substance use, anxiety) inc. loss of parental guidance

# Transition Planning

- Differential support for pupils with ASD/LD but less likely for ADHD?
- Possible over-estimate of 'resilience' of ADHD pupils
- Possible over-estimate of both social skills and language comprehension in ADHD pupils
- Pupils with ADHD less likely to accept support

# Careers Advice

- Standardised tests – poor performance linked to ADHD symptoms and not cognitive ability
- Potential often under-estimated at school due to poor task completion (homework, coursework)
- Direction towards low reward employment
- Apprenticeships – offer multiple opportunities (inc. self-employment)



# Gap(s) in evidence base

- Strong but incomplete evidence base for children and college students
- Comparative validity of US studies
- Few longitudinal studies
- Reliability of self-report?
- Low levels of adult ADHD diagnosis/treatment
- National context of employment
- Identifying reliable (representative) study groups

# Outcomes that could be studied

- No. of breaks in employment
- Start of employment
- Gaps in employment
- Reasons for leaving
- Manual v clerical v management
- Level of colleague/client engagement
- Type and complexity of task
- Satisfaction at work
- 'Aspiration'



# Problem of generalisation

- Heterogeneous population
- Dynamic nature of ADHD through life-span
- Confounding variables (e.g. choice of partner, parental/family support)?
- Treated v untreated outcomes
- Variations in treatment, support, awareness, age at diagnosis etc

- Cognitive ability
- Academic attainment
  
- Socio-economic status
- Gender (e.g. impact of early pregnancy)
- Cultural milieu
- Quality of transition support

# Comorbidity & psychosocial profile of adults with ADHD

Young, Toone & Tyson (2003) *Personality & Individual Differences*, 35, 743-755

- Employment rates similar between ADHD adults and those who have other psychiatric conditions.
- Suggests that psychopathology other than ADHD may contribute to occupational outcome

# Functional impairments of adults with self-reports of diagnosed ADHD

Biederman, Faraone & Spencer (2006) Journal of Clinical Psychiatry 67, 524-540

- ADHD in adults associated with occupational under-attainment according to intellectual potential

# The prevalence and effects of adult ADHD on the performance of workers

De Graff, Kessler, Fayyad, ten Have, et al (2008) WHO World Mental Health Survey Initiative. Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 65, 835-842

- ADHD significantly associated with work-related performance
  - Quality
  - productivity

# Direct Factors

- Impulsivity (NB driving)
- Hyperactivity
- Inattention
  - Executive Functions
  - Poor working memory
  - Stress management



# 'Indirect' Factors

- Sleep disturbance
- Substance mis-use
- Social competence
- Mental health
- Offending
- Managing relationships with authority/colleagues
- Own understanding and management of ADHD

# Workplace Factors

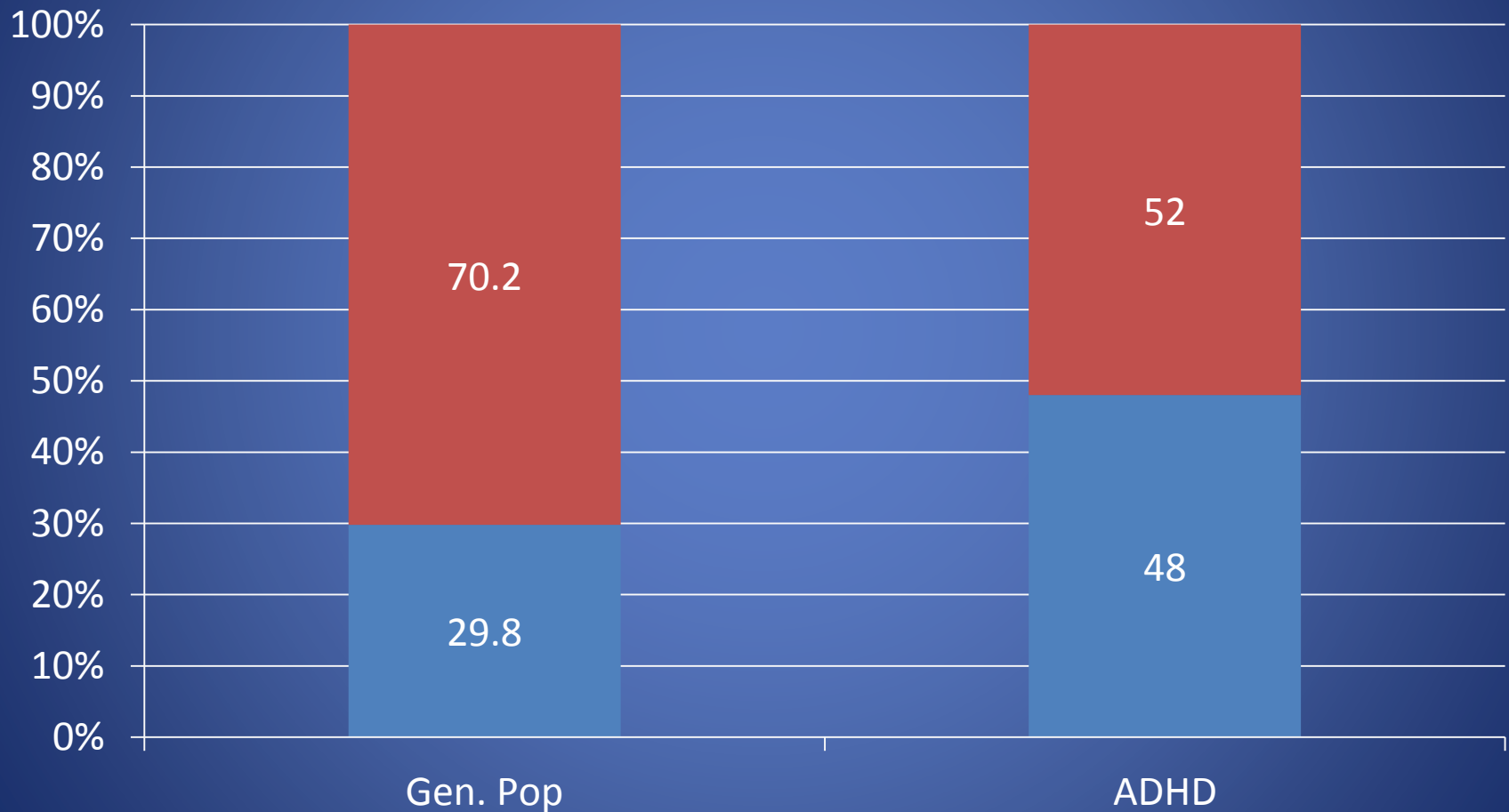
- Executive demands
- Temporal demands (e.g. speed of processing/deadlines)
- Multi-tasking
- Level of support (e.g. Secretary)
- Social demands and context (formal meetings v networking)
- Organisation of work day
- Working environment (open plan)
- Level of physical activity

# Functional Impairments and Occupational Outcome in Adults with ADHD

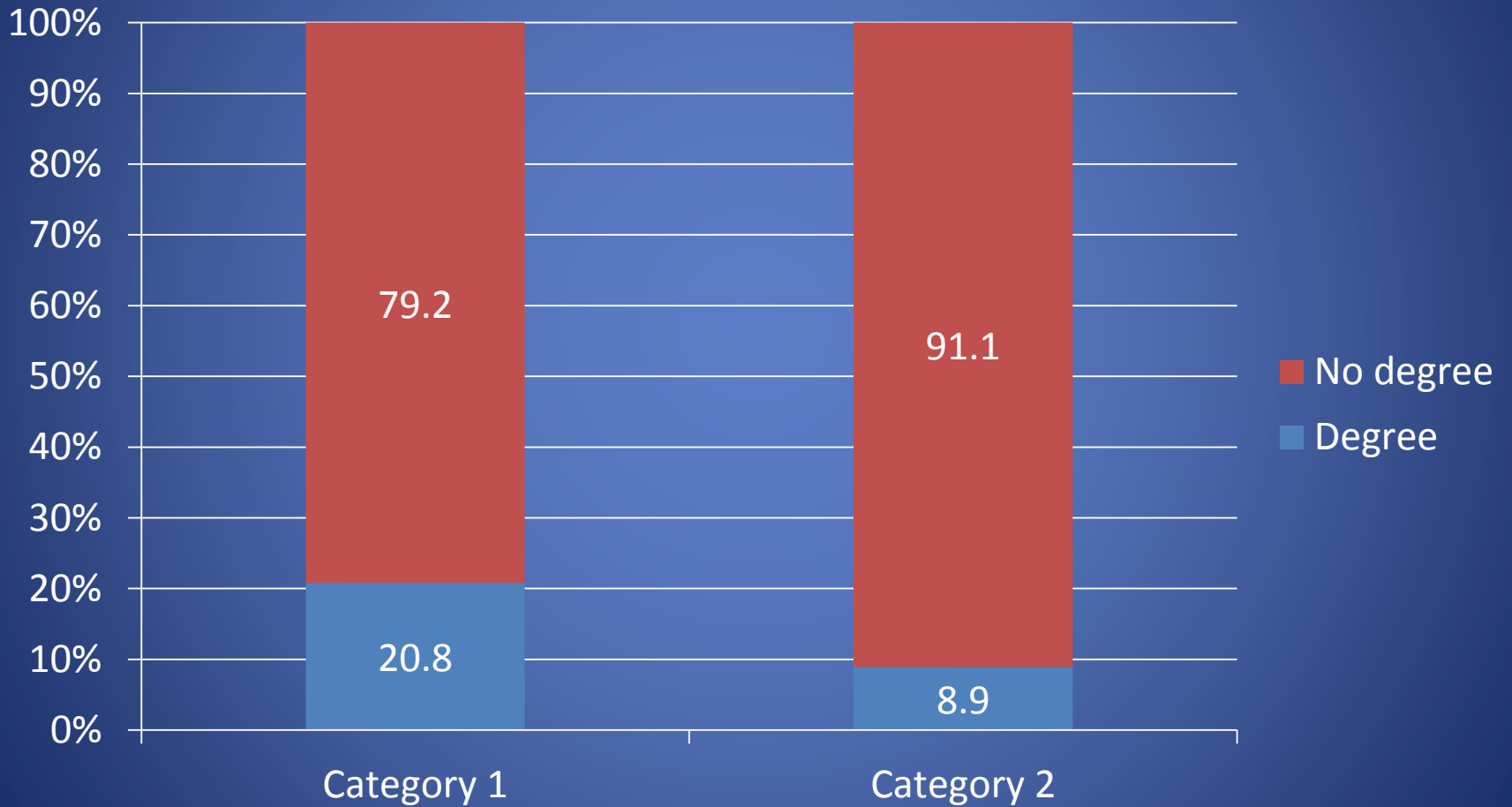
Gjervan, Torgersen, Nordahl, Rasmussen (2012), JAD16(7), 544-552

- High impairment in terms of;
  - Low educational attainment
  - Poor occupational outcomes
- Lower employment rate
- Higher dependence on welfare
- Gender differences in sub-type, substance use, personality disorder.

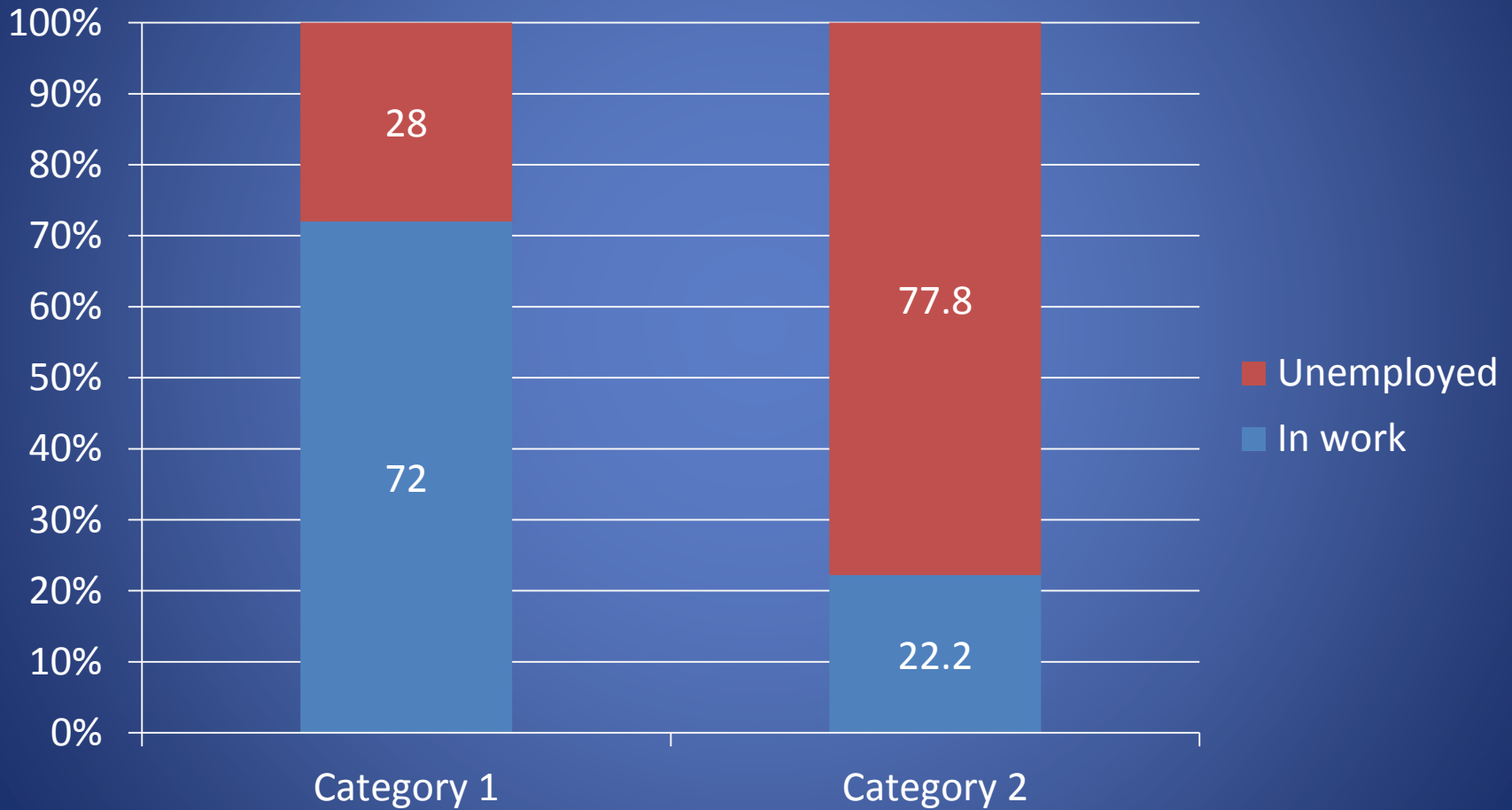
# Junior HS = highest acad. attainment



# College Degree



# Regular work





# Functional Impairments and Occupational Outcome in Adults with ADHD

NB only 17.4% of participants had been treated with stimulants.

# Bridging the Gap?

- Scaffolding during transition phase – but start early
- Potential of (carefully chosen) work experience opportunities
- Importance of building trusting relationship
- Who? Teacher/careers adviser/OT?
- Importance of key personnel having an understanding of ADHD and co-morbid disorders

# Employment Options?



## **Captivated by Change: Police Officers and Firefighters**

Police officers and firefighters are busy. No two days are the same, which is a good thing for people with ADHD because a routine can become tedious. ADHD adults find pleasure in constant change; they thrive in an environment that is stimulating and in which they have to adapt and analyze.

The training required to become a police officer or firefighter is challenging, however, and may be too difficult for some. Working with a mentor can help people with ADHD maintain their focus during testing and training. Once they're in a police station or firehouse, ADHD adults will find themselves busy with work they find both fulfilling and rewarding.

## Thrive in High-Intensity Environments: Doctors and Nurses

“People with ADHD tend to work well in a fast-paced, high-intensity environment, like that of an emergency room or ambulance,” says Dr. Stephanie Sarkis, a clinical psychotherapist and assistant professor at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. Like police officers, doctors and nurses never have the same workday twice. This requires them to call up all of their training, maintain focus, and work with others to succeed.

Working in a hospital may involve long hours, stacks of paperwork, and having to answer to authority figures—all possible weaknesses for ADHD adults. But having a strong support staff and colleagues willing to help can allow people with ADHD to succeed in the medical field.







## **Enjoy Talking a Lot: Salespeople**

People with ADHD love talking to others. Sales jobs are a great way to focus this natural energy in a positive way. In an environment that requires heads-down, solo work, ADHD adults may get frustrated without human interaction and begin bothering their co-workers. But with a job that depends one-on-one communication, such as sales, someone with ADHD may find great success.



## **Express Creativity: Artists and Entertainers**

The entertainment industry has long been a mecca for dreamers, creators, and visionaries. The energy and drive it takes to succeed in any aspect of the entertainment industry—as a graphic artist, ballet dancer, or stage actor—is exhausting for most people, but not for those with ADHD. Their high-energy drive can propel them into a fruitful creative career.





### **Enjoy Physical Work: Members of the Military**

The military, in which order and discipline are key, may seem like the last place for a person with ADHD. Yet some do very well in the armed forces. That's because the intense mental focus and physical demands of training keep their minds and bodies engaged. They have clear instructions, an objective, and incentives to reach their goals.

Still, joining the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard isn't for everyone. A person with ADHD might rebel in a military hierarchy, not thrive.

**But excluded if taking medication or have done so for last 1-3 years!**



### **Be Independent: Entrepreneurs**

Entrepreneurs must have determination, boundless energy, and the desire to succeed. They also have to share that drive by interacting with investors, employees, and customers. This requires a great deal of independent work, organization, and planning—areas in which people with ADHD typically struggle. But not when it's their own business—something they are deeply committed to seeing through. “When they're in an area of passion, people with ADHD flourish,” says Dr. Kevin Ross Emery, author of *Managing the Gift: Alternative Approaches to Attention Deficit Disorder*.



**Prefer to Work Outside the Office: Commission Salespeople**  
Salespeople who work on commission are out-and-about, shaking hands, and seeing new faces. It's the type of job in which a person is almost always "on." No cubicles or 9-to-5 schedules here. "Work environments that are 'outside the box' are perfect for people with ADHD," Dr. Emery says. "It gives them the space and flexibility they need, with the right amount of structure so they can be really successful."



### **Enjoy Variety: Mechanics**

Working on cars, boats, and motorcycles is a hands-on, physical job. It's one that is different each day, often calls on a person's critical-thinking skills, and requires face-to-face interaction. It's perfect for a person with ADHD who feels trapped behind a desk and loves solving problems.





### **Enjoy Hands-On Work: Construction Workers**

The construction business keeps people busy and working hard. It's also a job that changes frequently while still providing clear instructions and objectives. There's little time for boredom—as soon as one portion of a job is done, there are usually other tasks to complete. A person with ADHD can succeed in the construction industry, so long as he or she deals well with authority figures.



### **Need Clear Deadlines: Delivery Truck Driver**

Delivery truck drivers are people on a mission; they have somewhere to be, and they have to be there by a certain time. It's the perfect structure for a person with ADHD. "Employees with ADHD thrive in environments where they have clear instructions and directives," Dr. Sarkis says.

With a truck full of boxes and a day in which to get them delivered, a person with ADHD will work hard to accomplish the task before them. This profession also allows ADHD adults to work outside of a typical office setting, interact with others, and use their boundless energy to complete assignments.



## Hiring Employees with ADHD

Adults with ADHD make very industrious employees. They are high-energy, naturally curious, and eager to succeed. Making a few small adjustments can help you establish a productive work environment for them.

“People with ADHD flourish when expectations and deadlines are clear and put into writing,” Dr. Sarkis says. “Employers should break down projects into smaller tasks and assign deadlines to those components.”

Also, help your ADHD employee identify a coworker who may be able to help him or her with the more challenging aspects of the job, such as paperwork. It may take extra time to integrate an employee with ADHD, but once you do, it’s likely to be a very successful partnership.