



Yes, really

As a family physician who treats many children and adults with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), I was glad to see the August 2006 issue of *Canadian Family Physician* devoted to ADHD. I was initially dismayed by the flippant commentary by Dr Roger Ladouceur in "Editor's Notes,"¹ but on reflection, his misconceptions are all too stereotypical and represent those of a substantial number of physicians and other professionals. These attitudes need rebuttal, and I hope others will respond. Healthy scepticism is important, but all too often ignorance masquerades as scepticism.

Yes, really, Dr Ladouceur. You should review the extensive literature and statements of the Canadian and American psychiatric associations. Those adults with ADHD might well have found ways to adapt, but many lead lives of chronic frustration, working considerably below their potential and having difficulty with relationships and employment, without knowing why. The response to appropriate treatment is often dramatic, with people being able to read through a book for the first time or take a course to upgrade their education, which previously seemed impossible. As a rule, their problems were simply dismissed as moral failings or laziness before getting appropriate diagnoses. Of course you did not see it in your practice, because, like many of your colleagues, you were not looking for it. We are not treating people for being gregarious or unique, but those whose lives are greatly impaired. It takes time and experience to assess these patients, and if you are not able to do it in your own practice, at least be aware of the condition and make appropriate referrals.

Fortunately, the editorial by Dr McLennen and the article by Dr Matas, which you ridicule, deal with the issue of ADHD more seriously.

—Philip McFarlane, MD, CCFP, FCFP
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by fax

Reference

1. Ladouceur R. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in adults: really? [Editor's Notes]. *Can Fam Physician* 2006;52:939.

Correction

The website address given in the book review of *Auto accident survivor's guide for British Columbia. Navigating the medical-legal-insurance system* (*Can Fam Physician* 2006;52:1115-6) should have been **www.autoaccidentsurvivorsguide.com**. Physicians who contact the publisher through this website and who identify themselves as physicians when they do can receive a professional discount on the book or order free brochures for their offices.

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