



Allied Health for Wellness

Supporting Neurodiversity at Work

Practical guidance for managers and supervisors

Neurodivergent employees (including people with ADHD, Autism, or overlapping profiles) may experience work differently. Challenges often reflect a mismatch between job demands and support, rather than a lack of capability or motivation.

This guide is designed to help managers and supervisors respond early and practically, using a tiered approach: starting with internal adjustments and escalating to external support when complexity increases.

Common workplace presentations and support options

What you may notice at work	Possible contributing factors (not diagnoses)	Initial internal adjustments (manager-led)	Potential external support
Difficulty starting tasks or meeting deadlines	Executive functioning load, overwhelm, unclear expectations	Break tasks into smaller steps; Clarify priorities in writing; Agree on short, regular check-ins	ADHD / neurodivergence coaching; Workplace assessment to clarify supports
Inconsistent attention or performance across the day	Energy regulation differences, fatigue, sensory load	Flexible start times where possible Schedule demanding tasks during peak focus periods	Functional workplace assessment; Review of role demands and hours
Missed instructions or misunderstanding expectations	Processing differences, verbal overload	Follow verbal instructions with written summaries; Use clear, concrete language	Workplace communication supports; Coaching focused on work strategies
Attendance issues or frequent unplanned leave	Burnout risk, sleep disruption, competing demands	Explore flexible hours Adjust workload temporarily; Regular supportive check-ins	Injury management input; External assessment to guide sustainable adjustments
Strong technical skills but difficulty with role fit	Mismatch between strengths and job demands	Task redesign where possible; Clarify role expectations	Career or vocational counselling; Redeployment support



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Key principles for managers

Small, proactive adjustments are more effective, and less disruptive, than reactive responses later.

- ✓ Focus on function and support needs, not labels or diagnoses
- ✓ Trial adjustments early and review them regularly
- ✓ Be consistent - unpredictability increases risk and fatigue
- ✓ Adjustments should support both the individual and the team
- ✓ Escalate to specialist support when complexity persists or risk increases

What NOT to do (important)

The following responses can unintentionally increase risk, distress, or disengagement:

- ✗ Don't assume behaviour reflects attitude, motivation, or capability
- ✗ Don't rely on verbal instructions alone for complex tasks
- ✗ Don't expect one adjustment to solve everything permanently
- ✗ Don't compare the employee to others or apply a one-size-fits-all approach
- ✗ Don't delay support until performance management or injury claims escalate
- ✗ Don't require disclosure of diagnosis to offer reasonable adjustments

When external support may be helpful

External, neuroaffirming support may assist where: - Internal adjustments have been trialled but are not effective or sustainable - Psychosocial or injury risk is increasing - Performance management and wellbeing concerns overlap - Managers need practical, defensible guidance

External supports may include: - Neurodiversity-informed workplace assessments - ADHD or neurodivergence coaching (work-focused) - Career or vocational counselling - Supports funded through employers, insurers, or JobAccess (EAF).

Key principles for managers

Two people with similar traits may require **very different supports**. Individualised, strengths-based adjustments are more effective, and more sustainable, than one-size-fits-all solutions.

This guide is intended as a practical starting point and can be used alongside existing WHS, Workers Compensation, Injury Management, and HR processes.

Remember - we're here to help!

Contact Allied Health for Wellness for a **FREE 15-minute consultation** to discuss options for specialist input, or explore referral pathways.



0492 800 314



connect@ahwellness.com.au



www.alliedhealthforwellness.com.au



Unit 13E / 817 Beeliar Drive
Cockburn Central WA 6164