

# IAAF Medical & Anti-Doping Department

Statement on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, March 2014

# International Association of Athletics Federations



# IAAF Statement on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Following the increasing number of "late awareness" and ADHD diagnosis cases – mostly in young adults, the subsequently increasing number of TUE applications received, and the health danger that the misuse of the substances required for treatment can induce, the IAAF Medical & Anti-Doping Commission hereby issue the statement, and abide to it requirements on TUE granting.

### What is ADHD

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a neurobehavioral disorder that includes inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity; normally being noted in early age, and affecting school-age children with impairments to their normal functional life, with symptoms that can continue into adolescence and adult. Recent literature suggests that this disease can also be diagnosed for the first time in young adulthood.

The diagnosis is clinical, frequently initiated by family, friends or schoolteachers, and behavioural rating scales – such as Connors Rating scale, Brown attention Deficit Disorder Scale, Vanderbilt Rating scale or Swanson, Nolan and Pelham IV scale – are usually used to formulate diagnostic criteria.

For a complete and specific diagnosis, experts – namely Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, Neuropsychologist or other experts in ADHD, whilst using the here above scales – are required to categorize the disease using DSM-IV or ICD-10 criteria.

Treatment is done through prescription of stimulants – such as Methylphenidate, dextroamphetamine or amphetamine, and others – all of which are included in the WADA Prohibited List (on an In-Competition basis), with patients obliged to a strict use of the dosage prescribed and to a 3- to 4-month initial stage of close follow-up treatment, by a specialized physician, to ascertain the necessary stable dose and, thereafter, a yearly follow-up.

# Requirements for TUE granting

Those who have this disorder may require the use of stimulants (as included in the WADA Prohibited List, as substances prohibited on an In-Competition basis) to have a normal, functional life. Whilst being a disease, the right to have the treatment should not impede the pursuit of their sporting life.

As such, the following criteria must be met by those applying for a TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemption) for the first time:

- Two distinct sport-independent ADHD experts diagnoses (namely from Paediatricians, Psychiatrist and Neuropsychologist, or other specialized physicians) based on DSM-IV criteria or ICD-10, confirming the disorder;
- Yearly follow-up by one ADHD expert; and
- Other non-medical and medical reports such as early diagnosis or 3- to 4-month specialist physician reports during the initial stages of treatment can also be submitted, as further information supporting the disorder diagnosis.

The IAAF will grant a ONE-YEAR TUE to all those satisfying the here-above criteria. Re-application after one year will require only a medical report, resulting from the normal yearly follow-up done by the attending ADHD expert, which will extend the TUE grant for a maximum of one more year. A mandatory complete application is required every four years.