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## ADHD management: Harnessing the power of modern assessment scales in homoeopathic treatment

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This paper explores the potent synergy between ADHD assessment scales and Homoeopathy in managing ADHD symptoms.

**Methods:** We discuss the use of modern assessment scales including the Vanderbilt assessment scale and ADHD self-report scale, examining their roles in enhancing Homoeopathic treatments.

**Results:** This individualized treatment approach encourages enhanced understanding of patients' symptomatology, aiding in improved remedy selection and patient outcomes.

**Conclusions:** The integration of contemporary ADHD assessment scales into Homoeopathic practice has the potential to provide more comprehensive and individualized ADHD management, fostering a truly holistic treatment protocol.

**Keywords:** Homoeopathy, ADHD, assessment scales, Vanderbilt assessment scale, ADHD self-report scale, child attention profile, holistic approach, treatment monitoring, behavioural assessment, impulsivity, inattention, hyperactivity, disruptive behaviour

### Introduction

In recent decades, Homoeopathic therapies have been increasingly employed as a complementary and alternative medical approach in the treatment of various disorders. Particularly, Homoeopathy has emerged as a promising treatment avenue for Attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder. This can be attributed to Homoeopathy's unique principle of 'like cures like' and its individualistic treatment approach, which resonates with the manifold symptom presentations associated with ADHD [1]. Crucially, the efficacy of this Homoeopathic approach can be significantly augmented when guided by ADHD assessment tools. These state-of-the-art assessment methodologies provide a detailed understanding of the ADHD symptom profile, enabling homeopaths to tailor treatment plans according to each individual's unique symptom expression. This article aims to elucidate the pivotal role of these modern assessment tools in guiding the Homoeopathic approach and how they, in synergy, promise a more individualized, comprehensive, and effective method for managing ADHD.

### Understanding ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder stands as a complex disorder, its characteristics, varying in nature and intensity, leading to unique experiences for individuals across different age groups. A common thread through these experiences are the core symptoms: inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

In children, inattention can often be observed as difficulty in staying focused on one task. Symptoms can include making careless mistakes in schoolwork, overlooking details, or finding it hard to follow through on instructions. Organizing tasks prove challenging, and activities that demand sustained mental effort might be avoided. Often, these children may be labelled as lazy or underachieving due to the gap between their potential and actual performance [2].

Hyperactivity in children frequently manifests as constant motion, inappropriate running, or difficulty playing quietly. Such children may fidget, squirm while seated, or leave their seats when expected to stay seated. This symptom noticeably impacts school settings, where conventional systems might not accommodate their need for movement.

Impulsivity in children denotes acting swiftly without considering consequences. This can lead to interrupting conversations, not waiting for their turns, or making hasty decisions, often leading to social challenges<sup>[3]</sup>.

For teenagers, while hyperactivity may decrease, challenges with attention and impulsivity could persist or intensify due to the increasing demands of adolescence. Furthermore, emotional issues or risky behaviours may become more prevalent, all interconnected with their ADHD symptoms. ADHD doesn't cease in adulthood; instead, it evolves.

While an adult with ADHD might no longer express hyperactivity as restlessness, symptoms of inattention and impulsivity continue, often camouflaged as other issues. Adults may struggle with time management, organizational skills, self-management, maintaining relationships, or managing daily responsibilities at home and work<sup>[4]</sup>.

One crucial aspect of ADHD is that these symptoms are not born out of an individual's defiance or lack of understanding, but rather from this neurodevelopmental disorder. Being aware of these characteristics and challenges can lead to better management strategies, more supportive systems across all arenas of life-scholarly, professionally, and personally-ultimately leading to improved outcomes and an enhanced quality of life for those affected by ADHD.

### Need for Assessment

For a homeopath specializing in ADHD treatment, the use of assessment scales can bring a transformative edge to their practice. A defining trait of ADHD is the vast symptom variability among individuals, often making diagnosis and treatment trickier. Herein is where assessment scales come into play, serving as invaluable tools to categorize, analyse, and monitor these diverse symptoms.

The prime benefit of these scales lies in their ability to provide a structured framework to capture the individual symptom presentation of each patient accurately. They break down the often complex and multi-layered ADHD symptoms into clear, measurable parameters – from impulsivity and hyperactivity to inattention. This quantitative representation of symptoms helps the homeopath understand not only the presence of symptoms but their severity and impact on the patient's life as well. This comprehensive symptom profile becomes the guiding map for the homeopath in selecting the most suitable Homoeopathic remedy.

For example, the Vanderbilt Assessment Scale, ADHD Self-Report Scale, or Child Attention Profile can guide which Homoeopathic remedy could be beneficial. A child high on the inattention scale might respond well to Stramonium, a remedy known to ease restlessness and inattention, while an adult with high impulsivity scores may benefit from Hyoscyamus Niger, used for impulsivity and disruptive behaviour. These remedies, backed by the quantitative symptom analysis from these scales, allow for a more individualized, precise, and efficient treatment plan. Moreover, these scales help homeopaths track treatment effectiveness over time. Regular reassessment of symptoms using these scales enables the homeopath to monitor how well the chosen remedy is working and adjust the prescription or dosage as necessary.

Integrating these modern assessment tools into the Homoeopathic approach paves the way for evidence-based, clinically informed treatment for ADHD. They bring

enhanced precision and predictability to the process of diagnosis, remedy selection and treatment management, adding an element of rigor to the holistic, individual-centric approach of Homoeopathy.

Recognizing the interdependence between divergent ADHD symptoms and Homoeopathic remedy selection highlights the indispensability of these scales. They provide a bridge that fuses humanistic aspects of Homoeopathic treatment with a rigorous, systematic structure, enriching the treatment process and contributing to an enhanced standard of patient care.

The assessment scales further establish a consistent communication tool between the homeopath and the patient. Given the subjective nature of ADHD symptoms, it's essential to have a reliable, objective method to track symptoms and treatment progress. By using scales that ask quantifiable and specific questions about symptom presentation, homeopaths can ensure they're obtaining a complete and accurate picture of a patient's experience. This becomes particularly important for adult ADHD patients, who may have difficulty describing their symptoms accurately.

Moreover, using these assessment scales can foster a better understanding and trust between the homeopath and the patient. For the patient, the realization that their symptoms can be quantified and understood scientifically can give them greater confidence in the treatment process. This confidence, coupled with the ability to visualize their progress through these scales, can motivate them to adhere better to the treatment regimen, thus enhancing outcomes.

Importantly, the concept of 'individualized attention and treatment' central to Homoeopathy is mirrored in using these ADHD scales. ADHD does not have a 'one-size-fits-all' symptom presentation, and therefore, the treatment must be similarly specialized. The scales allow homeopaths to delve deeper into each patient's unique experiences, guiding them in crafting a treatment plan as distinct as the individual themselves. The result is genuinely personalized care - the essence of Homoeopathy.

Incorporating ADHD assessment scales adds a layer of depth, precision, and efficiency to Homoeopathic practices. By providing quantifiable measure to the subjective ADHD symptoms, they aid in superior diagnosis, facilitate the selection of suitable remedies, allow for continual monitoring of treatment effectiveness, and enhance patient trust and compliance. Offering a harmonious blend of traditional and modern, this integrated approach marks a promising advancement in Homoeopathic ADHD management.

### Assessment Scales

Addressing ADHD effectively necessitates an array of diverse assessment tools each designed for specific age groups and measures unique aspects of the disorder<sup>[5,6]</sup>.

**1. Vanderbilt Assessment Scale:** For children aged 6-12, this tool helps measure ADHD's severity based on parents' assessment. Developed by Mark Wolraich, it also reviews comorbid disorders and rates behaviours from 'never' to 'often.' Its strengths include great clinical utility and validity. It consists of 55 questions. Parents answer these questions, documenting the frequency of their child's behaviours. Clinicians then score the responses, making it an essential tool in diagnosing ADHD and co-morbid disorders, like

anxiety and depression.

**2. ADHD Self-Report Scale:** This tool screens ADHD in adults. Scoring 4 or more in Part-A indicates symptoms highly consistent with ADHD. It's user-friendly, brief, and has robust reliability and validity. This scale is designed for adults who suspect they have ADHD. Individuals answer 18 questions about their symptoms, contributing to a high level of self-awareness. The scale is easy to administer, with scores between 0-6 suggesting the individual's symptom profile is highly consistent with ADHD.

**3. Child Attention Profile:** Designed for children aged 4-18, it evaluates attention and related behaviours. Developed by Mary V. Solanto, it focuses on observation-based ratings made by those who work closely with the child and supports reliable and valid ADHD diagnosis. It evaluates the severity of attention and related behaviours. It is easy to score, has robust reliability and validity, and helps determine the extent of the attention deficit in the child.

**4. Behaviour Assessment System for Children:** This comprehensive tool for ages 2-25 evaluates a child's emotional and behavioural functioning, offering an in-depth perspective on the child's social skills, self-perception and many more. The clinicians, psychologists, and educators widely use this comprehensive tool to assess children's behaviour, emotions, social skills, and self-perception

**5. Child Behaviour Checklist/Teacher Report Form:** Used to evaluate behavioural and emotional problems in children and adolescents, it offers a multi-rater assessment, giving a holistic view of the child from different settings. This tool is used to assess behavioural and emotional problems in children and adolescents. It is designed to be completed by parents, teachers, or caregivers, ensuring different perspectives are taken into account when evaluating the child.

**6. Conners Rating Scale:** This brief tool boasts high diagnostic accuracy and is used widely for its ability to diagnose ADHD, monitor response to treatment, and provide multi-rater assessments. It is considered a highly reliable and valid diagnostic tool for ADHD due to its brevity and diagnostic accuracy. It is easy to use and score, making it one of the most effective diagnostic tools for ADHD.

**7. ADHD Rating Scale IV-Preschool Version:** Designed for children aged 3-5, it assesses ADHD symptoms based on DSM-IV criteria for inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity. Parents independently complete the scale, and a clinician scores it.

**8. NICHQ Vanderbilt Assessment Scale Diagnostic Rating Scale:** This tool for children aged 6-12 reviews ADHD symptoms and assesses other disorders like conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder, anxiety, and depression. It contains 55 question assessment tool.

**9. Swanson, Nolan, and Pelham Questionnaire – IV:** For ages 6-18, it assesses ADHD symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity, offering a comprehensive, multi-dimensional perspective.

**10. Wender Utah Rating Scale:** Used for adults, this tool assesses ADHD symptoms based on the suspected experiences of an individual during their childhood, making it unique. This scale assesses adult ADHD based on retrospective self-report assessments of childhood symptoms. This scale is effective at picking up ADHD that persists into adulthood.

### Conclusion

Exploring the intersections of Homoeopathy and ADHD opens up fascinating new avenues for improved ADHD management. Grounding treatment in thorough understanding of each individual's symptom profile, as provided by modern ADHD assessment scales, allows homeopaths to create highly personalized treatment plans. The mastery of these assessment tools in a Homoeopathic context not only strengthens the process of diagnosis and remedy selection, but it also supports ongoing monitoring of treatment effectiveness. At the crux of this approach lies the key principle of Homoeopathy - the focus on the individual, aligning perfectly with the diverse manifestations of ADHD symptoms. When homeopaths implement these contemporary tools, they can enhance their potential to provide holistic and impactful care. The fusion of traditional Homoeopathic principles with modern diagnostic measures heralds the onset of a truly synergetic approach - one where assessment scales and Homoeopathy coalesce to form an integrated, comprehensive treatment strategy. This visionary approach necessitates each step to be meticulously planned, always starting with the consultation of a registered homeopath or healthcare provider. In the end, the ambition is to provide a more effective and individualized treatment strategy, potentially improving the overall outcome for those living with ADHD. This represents an encouraging step toward optimized patient care and the continuous advancement of ADHD management strategies through the lens of Homoeopathy.

**Author Contributions:** AKP was the primary investigator and led the conceptualization and design of the study. PUM, provided the collection of scales used for the assessment. DUM served as key reviewer, providing critical feedback and edits to the manuscript. All authors approved the final version for publication.

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### Abbreviations

**ADHD:** Attention deficit hyperactive disorder

**NICHQ:** The National Institute for Children's Health Quality

**DSM iv:** Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

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