NCAA ADHD Documentation Guidelines

Stimulants are a class of drug banned by the NCAA. For this reason, to participate in athletics at Pine Manor College, all student-athletes being treated for ADHD with a medication that is classified as a stimulant must provide comprehensive documentation. Instructions on when and how to complete this documentation can be found below. An ADHD reporting form can also be found under the Athletic Training section of the Pine Manor College Athletics website.

The following information was taken from the “NCAA’s Guidelines to Document ADHD Treatment with Banned Stimulant Medications; Addendum to January Guidelines.”

Who needs to conduct the evaluation?

The initial evaluation may be conducted by clinicians with experience in assessing ADHD; these include school psychologists, clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, other MD’s and their supervised clinicians.

What type of ADHD evaluation documentation needs to be submitted to support an ADHD diagnosis and treatment with banned stimulant medication? What is acceptable and what is not acceptable proof an evaluation has been conducted?

The documentation should include a comprehensive clinical evaluation, recording observations and results from ADHD rating scales, a physical exam and any lab work, previous treatment for ADHD, and the diagnosis and recommended treatment. The physician can provide documentation of the above either with a cover letter and attachments or provide the medical record. This documentation should be kept on file in the athletics department until such time that the student-athlete tests positive for the stimulant. A simple statement from the prescribing physician that he or she is treating the student-athlete for ADHD with said medication IS NOT adequate documentation.

Will an assessment conducted more than three-five years ago be acceptable?

Yes, in fact the expectation is that for many student-athletes, the evaluation and initiation of treatment likely began during grade school. Documentation of that evaluation, along with the history of treatment and current prescription, should be submitted by the student-athlete to their sports medicine staff upon matriculation.

What is required of a student-athlete who for years has been prescribed stimulant medication to treat ADHD but has not undergone a full assessment?

In order to obtain a medical exception, the student-athlete must undergo a full assessment as described above. This may be conducted on campus, through a community mental health service, or by any experienced clinician. Does a student-athlete need to have an updated letter from the prescribing physician
on file each year of their eligibility?

Yes, an annual follow-up with the prescribing physician is the minimum standard, and that can be reflected in a letter from the physician or a copy of the medical record, with written indication of the current treatment.

Do physicians have to use a certain form when performing the evaluation for ADHD?

There is no specific form physicians need to use to perform an evaluation. The guidelines present the criteria identifying what to report, and several ADHD rating scales are listed, but it is the totality of the clinician’s evaluation that should be reflected in the documentation. This evaluation should be conducted by a clinician experienced in assessing ADHD.

Does the student-athlete need to first try non-stimulant medication to treat ADHD?

The student-athlete does not need to be put on a trial of non-stimulant medication, but the documentation must note that a non-stimulant alternative was considered and why the stimulant medication was chosen.