ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS FOR EPISODIC DISABILITIES

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Discussion of disabilities that are considered episodic and what that means for assistive technology consideration and accommodations in the workplace. Understanding the functional issues of these disabilities will result in greater participation by the consumers in the discussion of the issues in identifying possible solutions.
ADAAA (American’s Disabilities Act Amendments Act)

“states that an impairment that is episodic or in remission meets the definition of ‘disability’ if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active”

Source: https://www.washington.edu/doit/can-impairments-are-episodic-or-remission-be-considered-disabilities
WHAT ARE EPISODIC DISABILITIES

• Episodic
  • Sporadic
  • Irregular Symptoms
  • Fluctuating Periods
  • Degrees of Wellness and Disability

• Triggers
  • Diet
  • Lighting
  • Smell/Fragrances
  • Sound
  • Other
COMMON EPISODIC DISABILITIES

- Migraines
- Meniere’s Disease
- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Other Respiratory Disorders
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Allergies

- Major Depressive Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Schizophrenic
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis
- Fibromyalgia
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Arthritis
- Heart Disease
THINGS IN WORKPLACE

- Fire Alarm
- Lighting
- Noise
- Food
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Stress
  - Deadlines
  - Work Pace
  - Other
- Schedule
- Cleaning Products
- Bathrooms
- Fragrances
  - Co-Worker
  - Customers/Clients
  - Vendors
  - Etc.
FUNCTIONAL ISSUES

- Anger/Emotions
- Attentiveness/Concentration
- Balancing
- Fluctuation of Hearing
- Fluctuation of Vision
- Stamina/Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Speech
- Fine and Gross Motor Impairment

- Time Management
- Memory Loss
- Mental Confusion
- Nausea
- Noise Sensitivity
- Photosensitivity
- Headache
- Stress Tolerance
- Side Effects of Medications
- Temperature Sensitivity
ACCOMMODATIONS

• Flexible Schedule
• Sounds
• Noise Canceling Headset
• Check List
• Visual Schedule
• Task Separation
• Uninterrupted “Off” Work Time
• Wall Calendars and Planners
• Worksite Redesign/Modified Workspace
• Written Instructions

• Lighting
• Office/Cubicle Assignment
• Fans
• Periodic Rest Breaks
• Timers
• Air Purifier
• Fragrance-Free Environment
• Flexible Leave Policy
• Telework, Work from Home
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Lighting
  - Overhead
  - Task
- Ergonomic Workstation
- Portable Air Conditioners
- Cold Resistant Gloves
- Anti-fatigue Matting
- Air Purifier
- Sit-Stand Desk

- Digital Calendar
- White Board
- Organizers (Paper or Electronic)
- Mini Refrigerators
- Tinnitus Maskers/White Noise Machines
- Personal Air Cleaner (Neck Worn)
- HEPA Filters
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY APP: GOOGLE PLAY

- Anxiety
- Brainwaves
- Breathe & Relax
- Breathe2Relax
- BreatheWell Wear
- DBSA Wellness Tracker
- Eating D
- End Anxiety Hypnosis
- Happify
- Headspace
- iMood Journal
- In Flow - Mood and Emotion Diary
- Jourvie
- Mood Meter
- NAMI AIR
- OCD
- Operation Reach Out
- Pacifica
- PTSD Coach
- Recovery Record
- Rise Up + Recover
- Self-Help for Anxiety Management (SAM)
- Smiling Mind
- Spire
- Stop, Breathe & Think
- Stress is Gone
- Symple - Symptom Tracker & Health Diary
- T2 Mood Tracker
- Talk Space
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY APP: ITUNES</th>
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HOW TO WORK WITH HR AND/OR EMPLOYER

• ADAA
  • An interactive process
  • Reasonable Documentation
    • Focus less on the disability and more on need for accommodation

• Episodic
  • Focus on the functional needs
  • Focus on potential solutions

• Possible Solutions
  • Flexible time for medical appointments
  • Better lighting
  • Ergonomic Workstation
  • Scheduled breaks and privacy
  • Location of office
  • Flexibility in work schedule as needed
  • Identification of support network in the workplace
  • Supervisory Methods
  • Uninterrupted Work Time

REMEMBER THAT EPISODIC DISABILITIES CAN BE EVIDENT OR HIDDEN. ADDRESSING THEM CAN BE SIMPLE OR COMPLEX DEPENDING ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE WORK PLACE.

Questions? Comments?