

# Disorder lacks right attention

## Push for better awareness of ADHD

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AUSTRALIANS with ADHD are flying under the medical radar, struggling for a diagnosis and unable to find the support they need, according to new research.

A massive 74 per cent of people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder who responded to the study believe more education was needed for patients, carers and doctors.

Almost 50 per cent told the Under The Radar investigation more support was needed to move patients from childhood to teenage and adult services.

Australians with ADHD are facing major challenges in their daily life, with 65 per cent claiming it impacted their work and 40 per cent believing it impacted their finances.

About three in four said their ADHD made it difficult to manage other co-occurring physical and mental health conditions.

Experts have warned the ill-

### MISCONCEPTIONS

1. ADHD only happens to men. It affects both genders equally.
2. ADHD can be caused by bad parenting. Research has shown that it can be linked to changes that impact your brain development during pregnancy.
3. Everyone with ADHD has trouble focusing. There are three types of ADHD all of which have different symptom profiles.

ness remains widely misunderstood with most believing myths like ADHD can only happen to men or is caused by negligent parenting.

Westmead Hospital Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine medical director and ADHD Australia chair Professor Michael Kohn said the findings indicated the condition could have a "snowball effect".

Prof Kohn said ADHD can put patients at a high risk for debt, addiction and self-harm.

"The plight of those living with ADHD, which remains one of the most misunderstood mental health conditions, is not an easy one," he said.

Chatswood woman Rachel Worsley was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 25 after several experts told her the condition only occurred in boys.

"All my life I wondered why things were so difficult to do," she said. "Eventually, I did a lot of research myself and ADHD made so much sense. I made an appointment with a psychiatrist and felt really relieved to be diagnosed. It explained so much."

Chatswood woman Rachel Worsley, who suffers from ADHD, Picture: Justin Lloyd

