Abstract

Objective:
To examine ADHD symptom persistence and subtype stability among substance use disorder (SUD) treatment seekers.

Method:
In all, 1,276 adult SUD treatment seekers were assessed for childhood and adult ADHD using Conners’ Adult ADHD Diagnostic Interview for Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed.; DSM-IV; CAADID). A total of 290 (22.7%) participants met CAADID criteria for childhood ADHD and comprise the current study sample.

Results:
Childhood ADHD persisted into adulthood in 72.8% (n = 211) of cases. ADHD persistence was significantly associated with a family history of ADHD, and the presence of conduct disorder and antisocial personality disorder. The combined subtype was the most stable into adulthood (78.6%) and this stability was significantly associated with conduct disorder and past treatment of ADHD.

Conclusion:
ADHD is highly prevalent and persistent among SUD treatment seekers and is associated with the more severe phenotype that is also less likely to remit. Routine screening and follow-up assessment for ADHD is indicated to enhance treatment management and outcomes.