

Symptoms of ADHD in parents of young people with ADHD

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Background

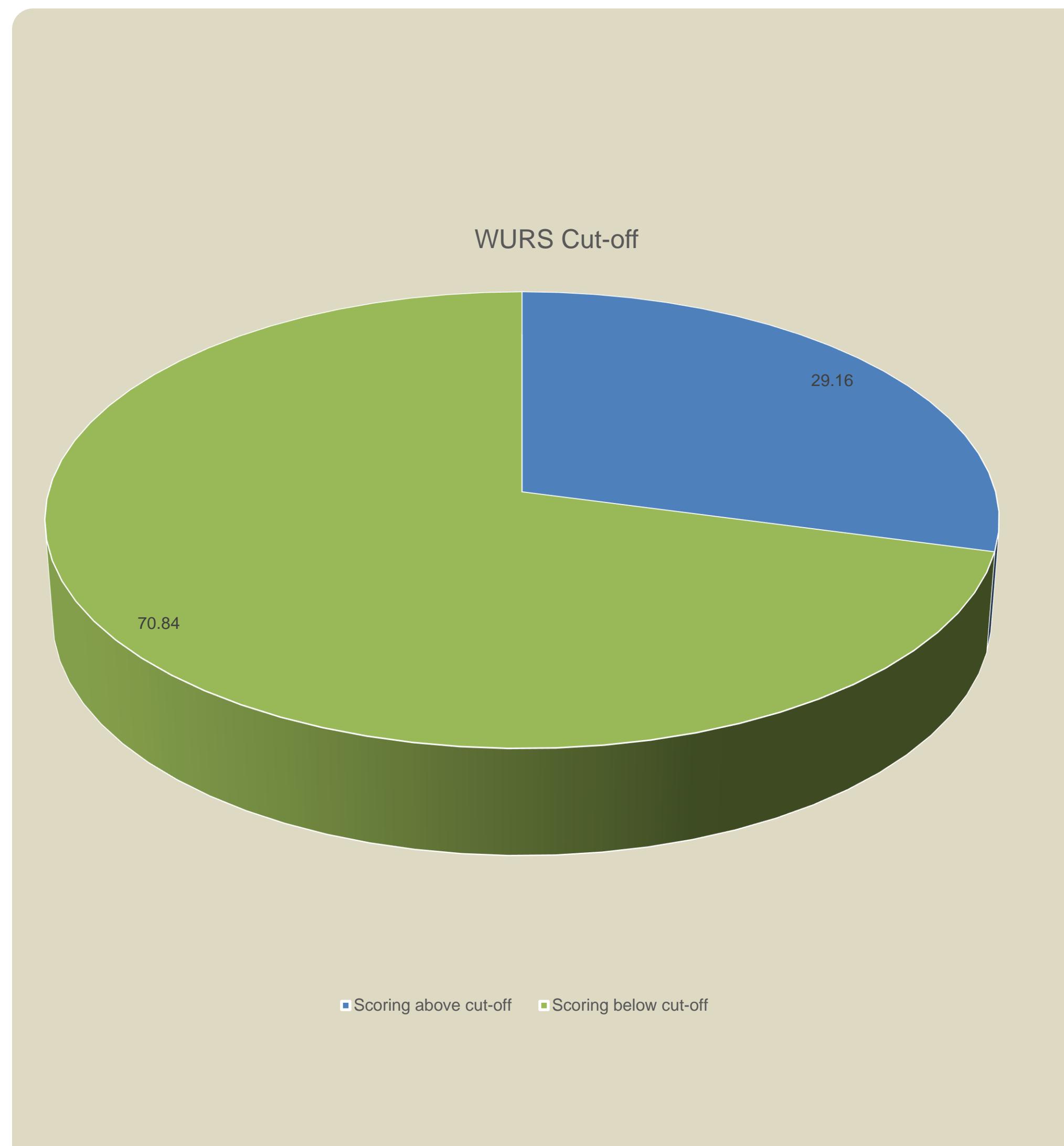
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a highly heritable neurodevelopmental disorder, with prevalence estimates of approximately 5% in children and 2.5% in adults. Despite the high rate of ADHD in adults, the disorder remains under-diagnosed and under-treated beyond adolescence. There is increasing recognition of the negative impact of untreated adult ADHD on a range of health and social outcomes, including difficulties with parenting and parental mental health. Prevalence of adult ADHD in parents of children with ADHD is likely to be significantly higher than 2.5%, with one small study reporting a prevalence of 40% (Starck et al, 2016), however there is a striking lack of research in this area.

Aims & Objectives

The aim of this study is to establish the prevalence of ADHD symptoms in parents of children attending ADMiRE, the specialist ADHD service in Linn Dara Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

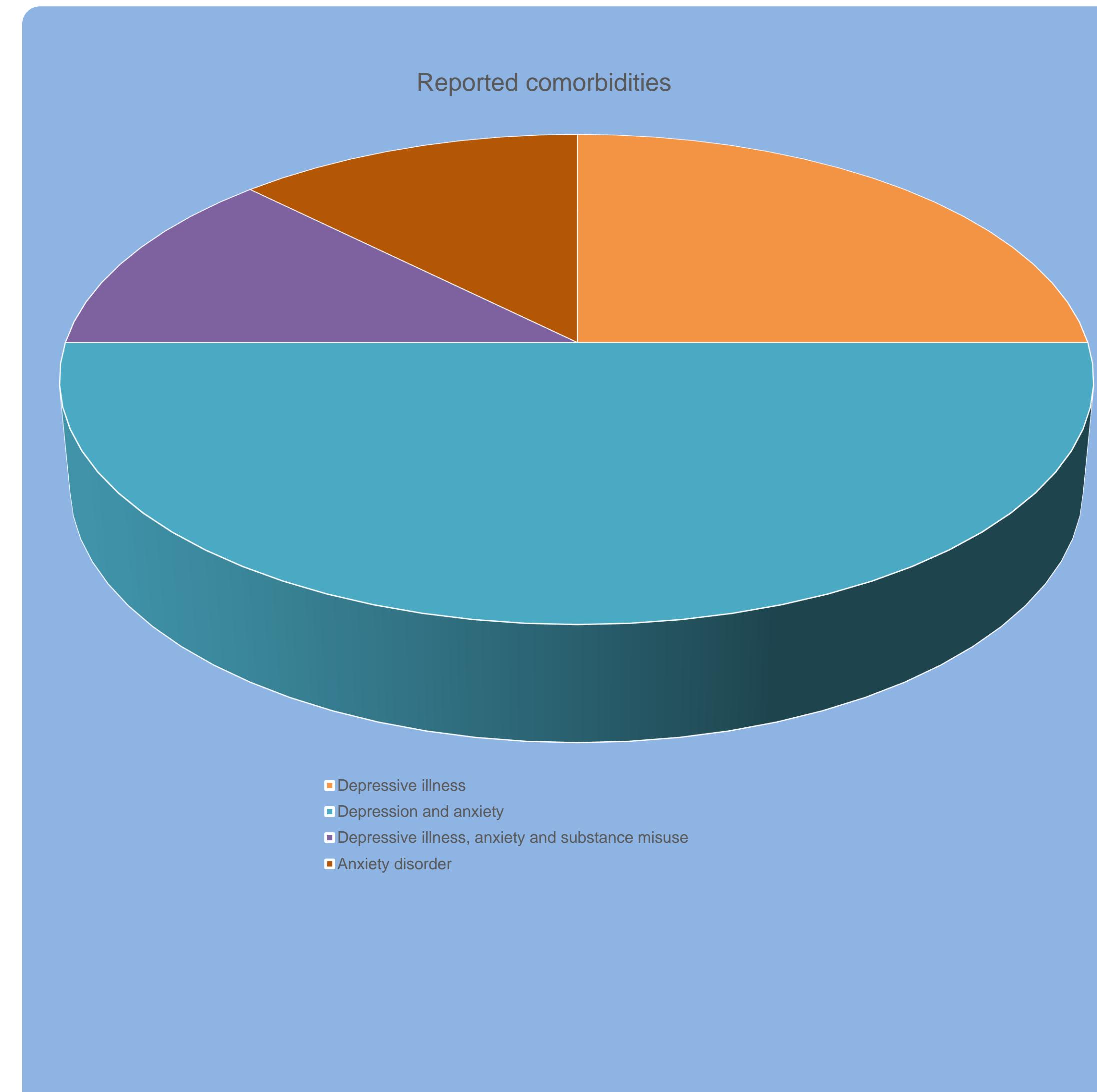
Methods

Parents of children with ADHD attending ADMiRE who have previously given informed consent to be contacted for ADHD research purposes were contacted by phone. Consenting parents were invited to complete two questionnaires that have been validated for screening for adult ADHD: the short version of the Wender Utah ADHD (WURS-25) and Adult Self-Report Scale for ADHD, six-item version (ASRS-6), questions relating to mental health and medication status. Established cut-off scores on the WURS-25 was used to divide the cohort into those who screen positive and negative for adult ADHD.

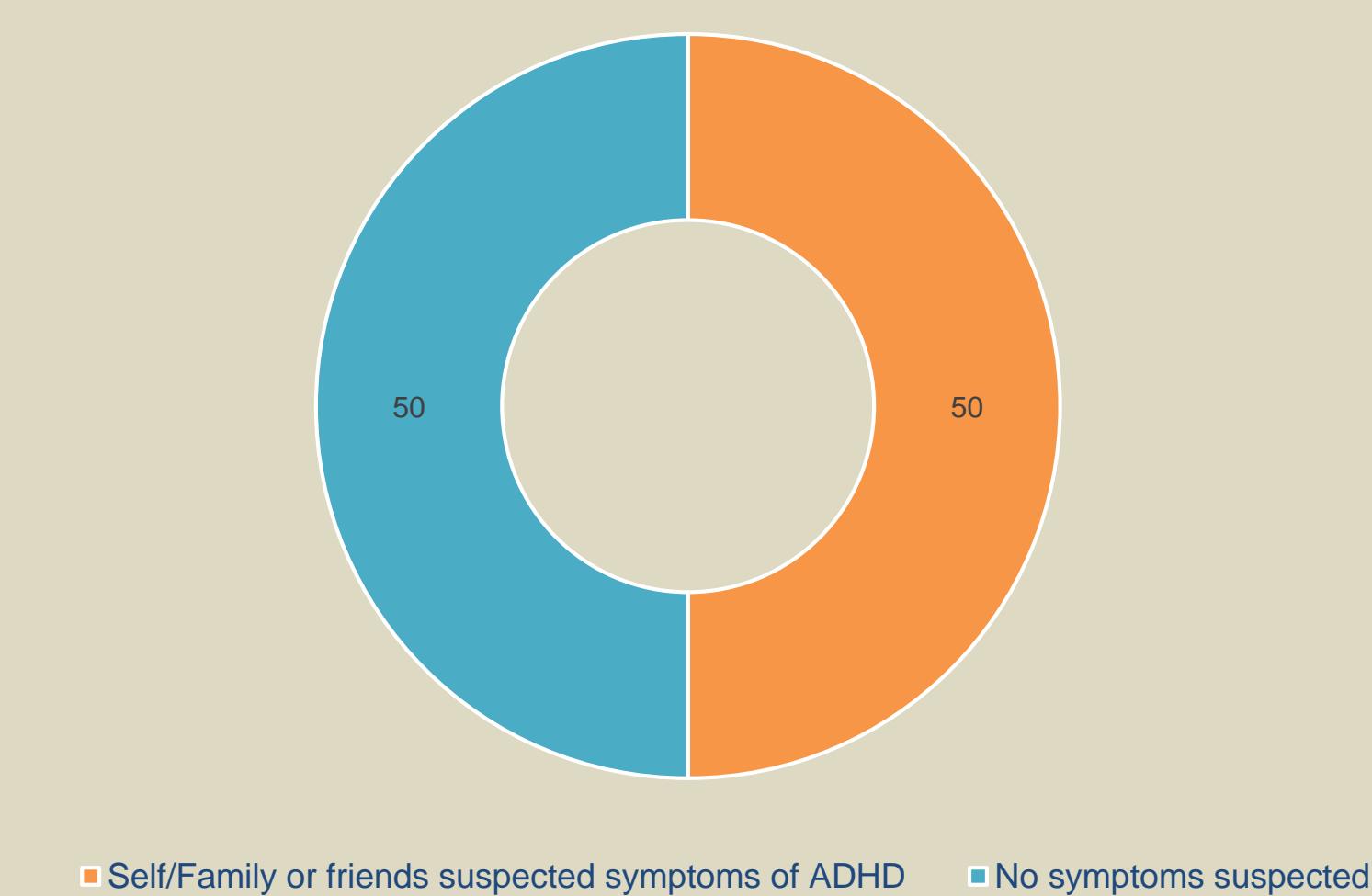


Results

24 parents of YP attending ADMiRE completed the questionnaire. Of the parent respondents, 29.16% (n=7) scored above the WURS-25 cut-off of 46. No parents had an existing diagnosis of ADHD, however 50% (12) respondents reported that they (or their friends/family) suspected they had symptoms of ADHD. 33.33%(8) of parents reported a comorbid mental health condition. Out of those 33.33%, 25%(2) reported Depressive illness, while as 50%(4) reported depression and anxiety. 12.5%(1) reported Depressive illness, anxiety and substance misuse while as 12.5%(1) reported only anxiety disorder. 4.1%(1) of the total respondents were currently on medication for depression and anxiety.



Suspected symptoms of ADHD



Conclusion

This study suggests a high presence of undiagnosed adult ADHD in parents of YP with ADHD. Untreated parental ADHD symptoms are likely to have a negative impact on the outcome of interventions for the YP.

Further research is required to establish the prevalence of adult ADHD in parents of YP with ADHD.

References

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