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# Mitcham's neurodiversity story

## Group Income Protection

A decline in Mitcham's mental health meant he was unable to work. He had been living with anxiety since school and was receiving ongoing talking therapy. During these sessions, his therapist recognised traits of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and looked into this further with Mitcham. He was put on a waiting list with his GP for an official diagnosis.

There was a point where Mitcham was able to return to work. This was when he highlighted some of the challenges he was facing at work, with his employer. Once they were aware, they referred Mitcham to Aviva to see if there was any support available through their Group Income Protection policy. Within three working days an Aviva case manager contacted Mitcham, to understand his needs. He shared information around his high levels of anxiety, mood swings and stress.

Mitcham recognised that during school he experienced challenges concentrating and would get easily distracted. This had continued into his adult life, presenting challenges both inside and outside of work. He was constantly overthinking. On top of this, Mitcham had been successful in getting a new role, but was experiencing challenges with organising and prioritising his work, and managing his time effectively. All symptoms which could be linked to his potential ADHD.

Mitcham had been receiving talking therapy for 18 months. This had helped his anxiety, but he wanted to explore tools to help him thrive in the workplace.

Following the initial call, we offered Mitcham a referral to our specialist neurodiversity partners, Lexxic. They undertook a workplace needs assessment to identify what reasonable adjustments could be put in place to support him at work.

The assessment identified that he might benefit from further one-to-one coaching and e-Learning courses to help him understand his neurodifference and learn new ways of working. A wide range of bespoke recommendations were made, tailored to Mitcham's individual needs, along with assistive technology and equipment recommendations. Specific e-Learning modules were also made available to his Line Manager to help educate them in ways to support Mitcham and other neurodivergent employees. Aviva also supported Mitcham with personal coaching sessions, provided by Lexxic, which continued over the course of five months.

Thanks to the support provided by Aviva and Lexxic, a year after his initial referral, Mitcham has successfully remained at work, full time, and is able to complete his full duties.

"This support has definitely helped me, and I would recommend it to anyone. I found the assessment really useful as I felt the person completing the assessment really listened to me and I felt instantly better off the back of the initial call. I felt that people at work wanted to help me, but they didn't understand how I was feeling. I really felt that the person at Lexxic understood what I was experiencing. I completed coaching sessions and again I found them beneficial. I had a good connection with the person at Lexxic and turns out some of the experiences I had they also experienced themselves which really helped me. They provided me with different tools and helped me reframe how I was thinking. I can now reflect on the tools provided and they help me to not feel as overwhelmed."

**Mitcham Brown**, Manufacturing Engineer, age 28 at time of intervention

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