



Neurodiversity Coaching: Impact Review

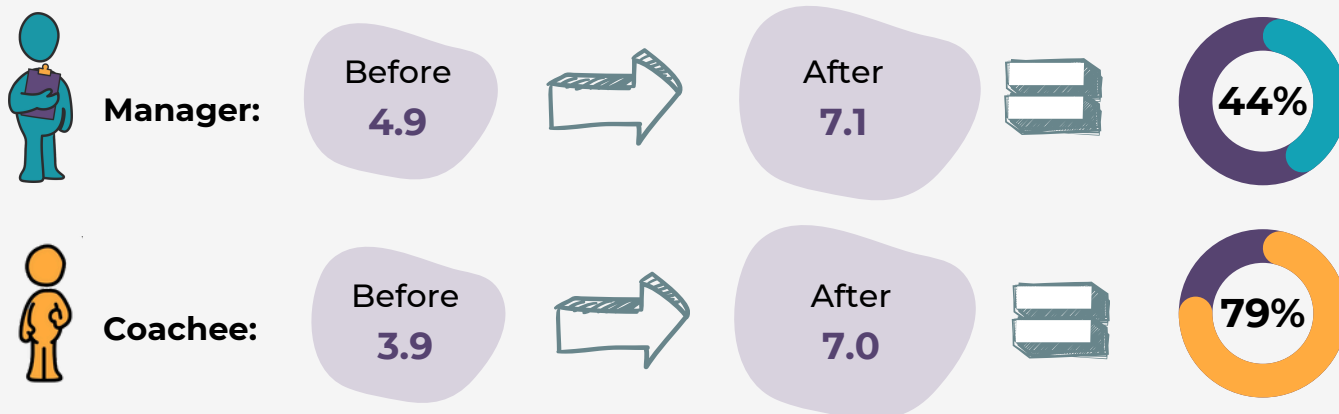
At Genius Within CIC, we have been researching neurodiversity coaching since 2011.



We have routinely collected performance scores before coaching and then after, to measure the distance travelled. We collect scores from managers as well as coachees so that we can make sure employers are noticing the same improvements. We ask them to rate out of 10.

Our average improvement scores are reliable and significant.¹

Improvement

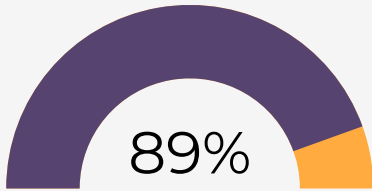


Coachees were rating themselves lower to start because of low self-esteem but also because they knew how extra hard they were working to achieve basic performance. Managers had greater faith in their staff and didn't see as much of the additional effort.

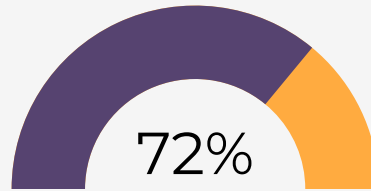
The topics that coachees are seeking help with, and providing scores for, are the same across all neurotypes (e.g. ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Chronic Illness etc).

¹ Coachee and Manager average improvement scores for the period 2019-2022.

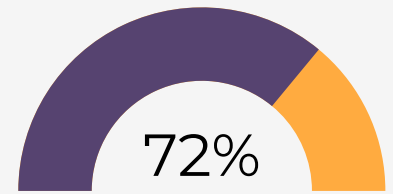
The most popular coaching topics are:



Stress and wellbeing

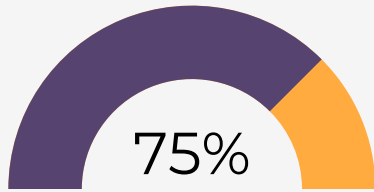


Communication

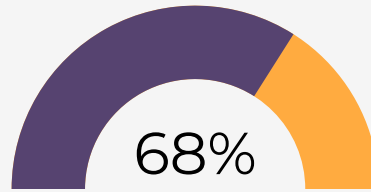


Self-awareness and understanding ND

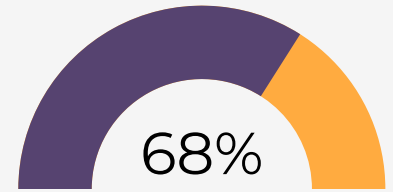
89% of coaching clients ask to focus on stress and wellbeing, this has increased from 60% pre-pandemic



Memory and concentration



Organisational skills



Time management

The Relationship Between Hours and Impact



We examined whether or not the amount of coaching made a difference, and observed an interesting result. Impact improves over time, to a point and then flattens, before going down again.



From this we can see that there is a 'sweet spot' of 8-16 hours, where coachees are achieving a strong performance improvement and therefore more likely to retain employment.



Our average employment retention after one year is >90%, and indeed we typically see a promotion rate of 25-35% as well.



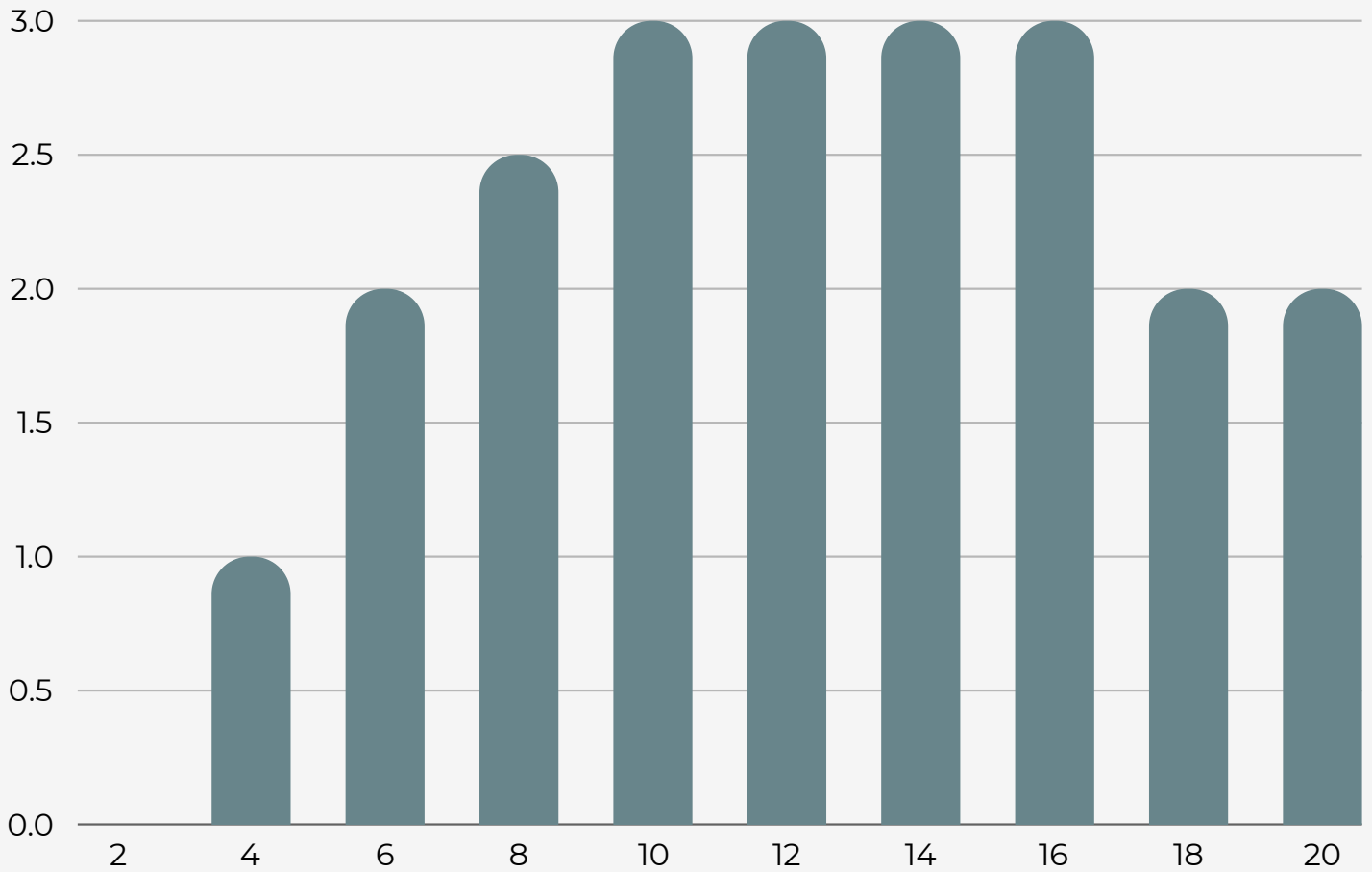
It is not possible from the data to understand if those who were allocated 16 hours would actually have done just as well with 8, however we observe that the number of topics chosen as a coaching focus increases with the number of hours allocated.



Where hours are higher than 16, and results go down, this may represent a coachee who is actually not well suited to their role, or have additional complex needs not suited to coaching.



Average improvement x number of hours



Changes over time

From 2011 to 2019, all coaching was delivered face-to-face. In 2020, all coaching became remote. From 2021 coachees have had the choice of preferred delivery and approximately 80% of them have remained remote.

Comparing 2019 to 2020 to 2021, the change in remote versus in-person did not affect performance improvements.

However, the rise of remote coaching has led to some changes in the amount of time people spend having coaching and it has steadily fallen.

Average number of coaching hours commissioned per client: ²



² Doyle N, Bradley E. Disability Coaching During a Pandemic. J Work-Appl Manag. 2022.



Analysis



As evidenced by the increase in coachees seeking support with stress and wellbeing, coaching has become more complex and coachees have higher levels of need. It is exactly the wrong time to reduce the number of hours!



The lower number of coaching hours is undoubtedly having a negative impact on performance improvement, which will in turn affect job security.



We believe that market conditions have changed to accommodate increased demand. With diagnosis of neurodivergence skyrocketing, pressure on employers to provide expensive 1:1 services has increased.

However, compromising quality is risky, in a vulnerable population with potential disability protection in law. We need to improve employment success for this group.



Genius Within have analysed typical customer spend and observed that assessment (often diagnosis, also workplace needs assessment) are routinely prescribed and that these interventions tend to cost more than coaching.



Further, coaching programs typically lead to recommendations that are simple to implement and cost free or cost neutral, such as use of noise cancelling headphones, visual and colour based strategies for time management, prioritisation of tasks in alignment with circadian rhythms. Since the cost of implementing changes that improve performance is so cheap, the current system is inefficient and leaves many employees with labels but no direction.





Solution: Scaling Support



Genius Within have received Social Impact Investment to increase the efficiency of adjustments with a stepped model.



The aim is for clients who would traditionally only require short coaching sessions to understand their strengths / challenges at work and be signposted to tailored common strategies, which improve job performance and reduce stress.



We created the Genius Finder™: A psychometrically designed personal development platform which signposts to over 400 recommendations for adjusting environment, activity, use of everyday tools and cognitive/emotional strategies.



All recommendations are free of exceptional costs and can be implemented without permission or external expertise. They can be edited to relate to specific workplaces such as manufacturing or healthcare.

Solution: HCML Stepped Approach

HCML has trialled both the “Gatekeeping Approach” and the “Stepped Approach” to supporting clients through their Corporate Health Service.

The Gatekeeping Approach requires either a diagnosis or Specialist Workplace Needs Assessment for individuals to access support. The Stepped Approach provides individuals with immediate access to supportive and actionable advice as part of their organisation’s occupational health services, leading to specialist support where required.

Employees were offered the opportunity to access support for suspected neurodiversity challenges through their occupational health services, which were accessible via their managers. HCML’s corporate health service triaged employees and provided additional support where necessary. In the initial trial to support neurodiversity at work, HCML assessed the need for specialist evaluations, such as diagnostic assessments or Workplace Needs Assessments. In the second trial, HCML evaluated the need for support using a stepped approach, considering various options. The outcomes revealed that by offering a stepped approach, more employees received the assistance they required. Conversely, a gatekeeping approach resulted in fewer employees receiving any form of support due to the complexity and cost of assessments acting as a barrier.



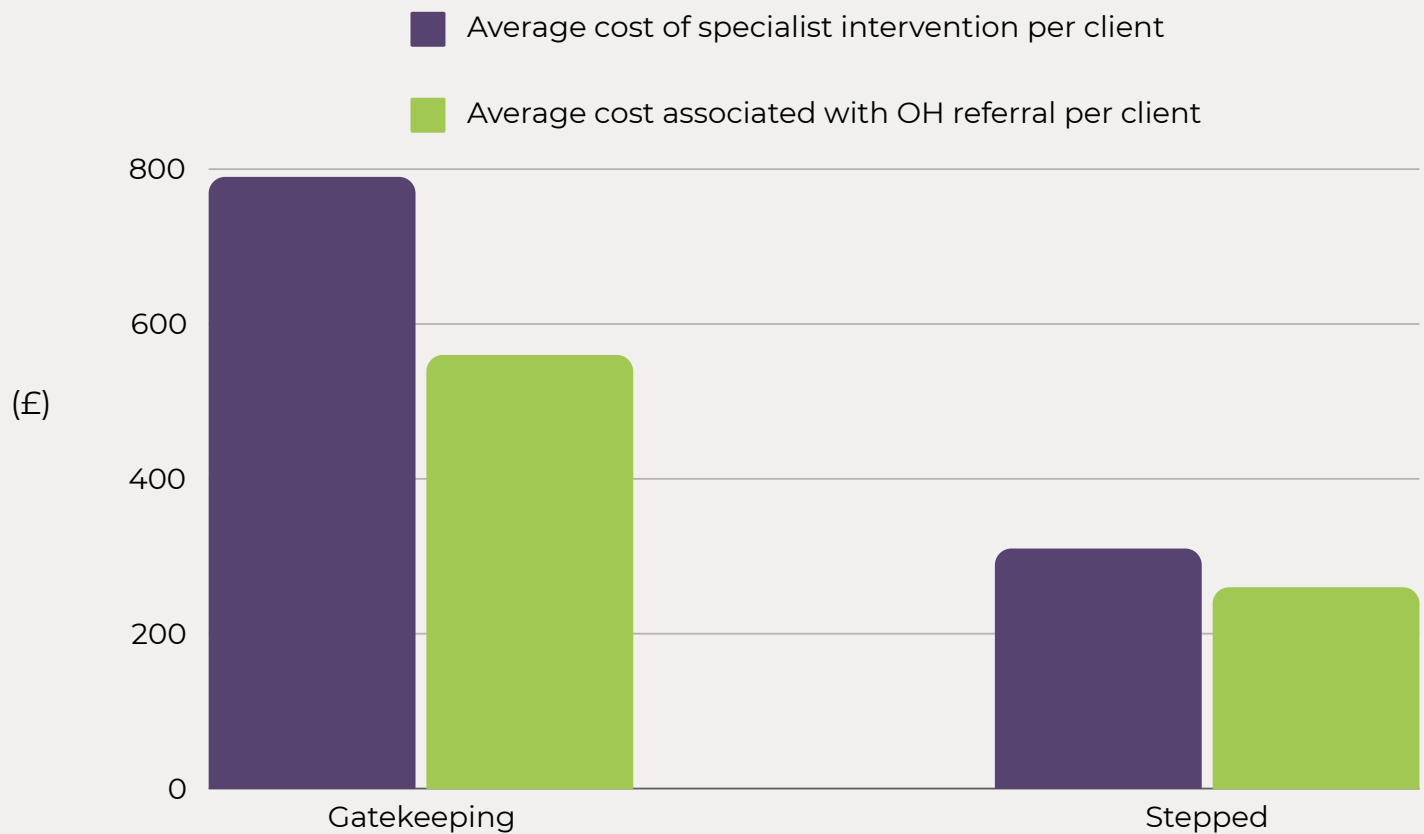
A pilot study conducted by HCML (N=108) compared the costs of the traditional gatekeeping approach (Provider A) with our Stepped Approach (Provider B). The findings revealed that more individuals were able to access the necessary support at a lower cost and significantly reduced timescales.

Specifically, 77% of the individuals supported through our occupational health case management services received strategies via our OH service or the Genius Finder Pro™ screening tool. This approach significantly minimised the need for time-consuming, expensive, and sometimes stressful and extensive specialised assessments.

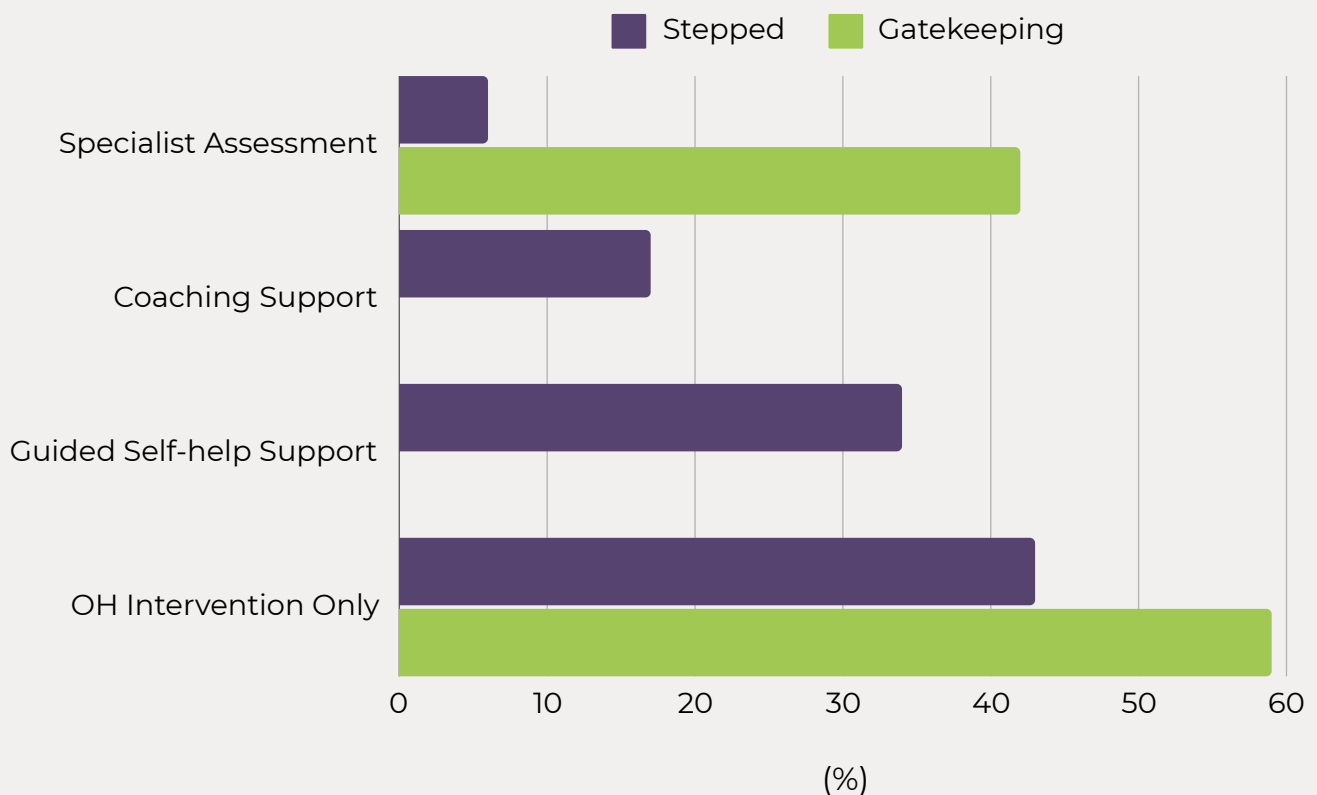
| | Provider A | Provider B |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| | Gatekeeping | £ Stepped |
| Average cost of specialist intervention per client | £ £780 | £ £309 |
| Average costs associated with OH referral per client (incl. non-referred) | £ £563 | £ £163 |

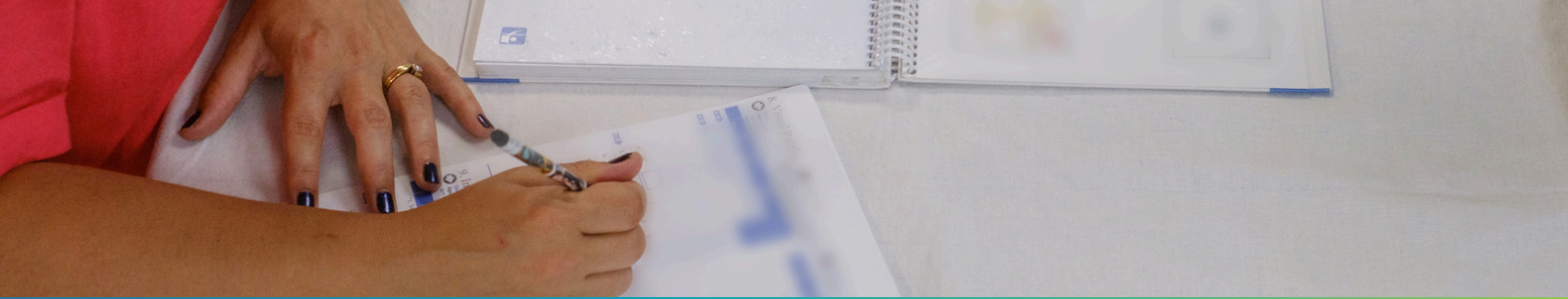
| | Gatekeeping | Stepped |
|--|-------------|------------|
| Percentage Needed OH Intervention Only | 59% | 43% |
| Percentage Receiving Guided Self-help Support | 0% | 34% |
| Percentage Receiving Coaching Support | 0% | 17% |
| Percentage Needing Diagnostic/ Workplace Needs Assessment | 41% | 6% |

Comparison of Costs: Gatekeeping vs Stepped Approach



Support Provided: Gatekeeping vs Stepped Approach





“

What I have found is that we are able to support our clients and their employees far better when using a stepped approach. High intensity interventions should be reserved for complex scenarios just like they are in mental health. We are at risk of overcomplicating how we support neurodiversity in the workplace and making the solutions unsustainable and therefore unappetising for organisations to implement. This approach has changed the way we support our clients and the team are delighted in the support that we can now put in place for individuals.

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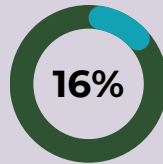
-Tim Heard, Business Psychologist



The Stepped Model



cost less per referral.



more individuals received a 1:1 specialist intervention.



received adjustment / strategy recommendations that they could implement with no further cost.

We believe that the Stepped Model allows us to prioritise 1:1 coaching support for those with the highest needs, personalising their journey and developing strategies that they can implement. Assessment with no support for implementation is less likely to result in improved performance, job retention. Further, it does not meet the obligations of the Equality Act 2010 to provide reasonable adjustments.



Recommendations for Occupational Health and HR professionals

- 1** → A Stepped Model, with tailored recommendations at every stage should be utilised to focus interventions on outcomes, rather than assessments.
- 2** → Coaching should be allocated between 8 hours and 16 hours.
- 3** → Some coaching time is used up in introductions, setup and administration, which can impact on the quality of the final outcomes. Some coachees may need in person first sessions to overcome these barriers. Referrals should include direct instruction for hybrid programs where needed, rather than deferring to remote coaching as standard.
- 4** → Coaching allocation should be 2 hours per topic and 2 hours spare to ensure each topic has sufficient time.
- 5** → Remote or face-to-face coaching should be to client preference, however when remote, shorter sessions with touch points in between is better than 2-hour sessions.
- 6** → Coaching staff should have the necessary skills to address wellbeing, communication skills, support for a wide range of neurotypes, as well as executive functioning.
- 7** → Coaching staff should have professional training in workplace dynamics, including building relationships with both manager and coachee.

