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Abstract Submitting Form

Conference	8th Annual International Conference on Psychology, 26-29 May 2014, Athens, Greece
Title of Paper	Screening for Developmental Disabilities and Autism in Canada - A Survey of Primary Care Providers
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Abstract	<p>OBJECTIVES: Recent guidelines recommend regular screening for developmental delays (DD) and autism, using standardized tests. Available evidence suggests that detection of DD without such tools is inaccurate. In Canada, where the majority of primary care is provided by family physicians, little is known about current practices, knowledge, and barriers to screening.</p> <p>METHODS: A random survey of 1000 primary care providers was conducted. Familiarity with the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS), Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS), Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (MCHAT) and the Rourke Baby Record were specifically examined. Attitudes, beliefs and barriers to screening were assessed by level of agreement with a number of statements.</p> <p>RESULTS: A total of 252 clinicians returned the survey. The majority reported good familiarity with the Rourke (87.3%), but less than half used the NDDS. A minority of clinicians were familiar with the ASQ (6.3%), PEDS (8.3%) and MCHAT (12.6%). The majority of respondents believed that interventions for DD were effective, but only half felt confident in how to care for DD, and 40.1% indicated there were insufficient community resources. Twenty three percent felt confident that they could identify DD without screening tools, and 26.2% felt that eliciting parental concerns was a good substitute for screening. The major barriers to screening identified were lack of: time (72.6%), familiarity with tests (68.3%), resources (53.9%) and reimbursement (57.1%).</p> <p>CONCLUSIONS: These findings indicate that the majority of family physicians do not use standardized developmental screening tests, and certain negative attitudes and beliefs as well as barriers can be attributed to this lack of screening. While the Rourke is used routinely, it has never been validated for developmental screening. Further dissemination of guidelines and recommendations for use of screening tests is needed to increase the accuracy of screening for DD.</p>
Keywords	Autism, Developmental Disabilities, Screening
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