Primary Care Screening Practices for Learning Disabilities (LDs)

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Background

• 5-10% population prevalence of LDs in US. Earlier identification is better than waiting for signs of school failure. Currently, School distress is identified through presenting concerns or general screeners.

• Gap in research: Are the current screening practices in primary care enough in identifying LDs?

Hypothesis

• We hypothesize that the current primary care screening practices insufficiently identify learning disabilities (LDs).

Design

• Retrospective data analysis and chart review

• Primary care clinic in a large teaching hospital of 9491 total patient visits from January through December of 2018 which included 4997 unique patients ages 6 to 17 years.

• Those with ID or ASD were excluded.

• Visits where parents answered affirmatively to single question about school difficulties on the clinic-specific psychosocial screener were selected.
Results

- 6% of those given a psychosocial screener endorsed a school concern.
- No differences in racial diversity and language spoken were found between those endorsing school concerns and those without school concerns.
- 10 year olds most frequently endorsed school concerns.
- Those who endorsed school concerns were also more likely to have other developmental and behavioral concerns as well as psychosocial concerns addressed at their visits.
- In examining social determinants of health, we found that those with school concerns were about 6-7 times more likely to also endorse financial stress, worrying about food and food actually running out compared to all others screened.
- This is an ongoing study and therefore results are preliminary.
- All study objectives have not been examined.