PROJECT INFORMATION

April 2020

Improving Communication about Care Goals for Children with ADHD -- ADHD-Link

Principal investigator

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Organization

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

What was the research about?

Children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, may struggle to stay focused, pay attention, and control behavior. Treatment for ADHD works best if doctors, teachers, and parents share information and work together.

In this study, the research team compared two ways to coordinate care for children with ADHD. The team put families in one of two groups. Both groups used an online patient portal for parents to share information with doctors and teachers. In one of the groups, parents received support from a care manager in addition to using the portal.

What were the results?

The two groups didn't differ in

- Parent report of child's ADHD symptoms
- Parent rating of whether ADHD treatment met their family's goals
- Parent and child report of how the child was doing in school and in their relationships with peers
- Child report of family and teacher relationships

Across both groups of children, 68 percent had a parent and 30 percent had a teacher use the portal to report symptoms.

Who was in the study?

The study included 303 children with ADHD and their parents. Children received care from 1 of 11 practices

in a health system in Philadelphia. Of these children, 40 percent were White, 46 percent were Black, 9 percent were another race, and 5 percent were Hispanic. The average age was 9, and 69 percent were boys.

What did the research team do?

The research team assigned families to one of two groups by chance. Parents in both groups used the portal to privately share their treatment goals with doctors and teachers. Doctors used the portal to collect information about ADHD symptoms and share treatment information with parents and teachers.

In one group, care managers contacted each family every three months to provide education about ADHD treatments, discuss concerns, and solve problems related to care and treatment. Care managers contacted families by email, text, and phone. They also reached out to children's doctors and teachers every three months to help coordinate care.

Parents and children eight and older completed surveys in person at the start of the study and then online three, six, and nine months later.

Clinicians, teachers, and parents of children with ADHD gave input throughout the study.

What were the limits of the study?

This study took place at one health system in one city. Results may differ in other locations. Parents reported that they didn't feel connected to the care managers because meetings weren't in person and were spread out over time. Also, many parents and teachers in

both groups didn't use the portal often. These issues may have affected study results.

Future research could explore how to increase parent and teacher use of the portal and how care managers can better connect with families.

How can people use the results?

Health systems can use the results when considering how to improve care coordination among doctors, teachers, and parents of children with ADHD.

To learn more about this project, visit www.pcori.org/Guevara315.