Background

- 12% of children and adolescents are estimated to experience functionally impairing psychiatric disorders, which is concerning given the nationally acknowledged shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists.
- The increased need for mental health care treatment with limited child and adolescent psychiatrist availability is an additional indication for our study of integrated care model within a pediatric clinic.
- A majority (86%) of respondents believe diagnosing and treating psychiatric illness is relevant to their clinical practice.

Objectives

1. Evaluate pediatric residents’ knowledge and comfort with identifying and treating psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents, which we would evaluate prior to the intervention of providing consultation and education in this area.
2. Assess pediatric residents’ awareness and comfort with identifying and treating psychiatric disorders in pediatric populations.
3. Monitor numbers and outcomes of patients cared for through this integrated care project.

4. Improve access to mental health care for the pediatric population served by UNC General Pediatrics.

Methods

- Psychiatry will be available in the UNC General Pediatrics outpatient clinic for an 8 month period.
- The UNC Pediatrics Clinic is an outpatient clinic associated with a large teaching hospital that serves a culturally and socioeconomically diverse population.
- The intervention will involve “curbside” recommendations regarding diagnosis and treatment for patients with psychiatric symptoms with a focus on anxiety, depression, ADHD, and eating disorders.

Findings

- A majority (86%) of respondents believe diagnosing and treating psychiatric illness is relevant to their clinical practice.
- Prior to intervention, pediatric providers feel the least comfortable treating anxiety disorders in a pediatric population, with 73% of respondents reporting not feeling comfortable treating anxiety in their patients.

Future Directions

- Over the next 8 months, the data collected on patient diagnoses, screenings, outcomes, medications, mental health referrals and ED visits will be compared to the control group data. These results will indicate the effectiveness of the intervention in improving the patient’s access to mental health care, patient outcomes, and the need for referrals to other specialties (psychiatry, therapy, etc.).

Appendix

Figure 1. Pre and Post-Test Survey for Pediatric Providers: an Eight Point Likert Scale

Figure 2. Level of Training of Survey Respondents

Figure 3. I am comfortable with evaluating patients for psychiatric problems, such as depression, anxiety, and ADHD.

Figure 4. Diagnosing and treating psychiatric problems is relevant to my clinical practice.

Figure 5. I feel comfortable treating depression in my patients.

Figure 6. I feel comfortable treating anxiety in my patients.

Figure 7. I know when and how to access support services (case management, therapy, etc.).

References


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