

Improving Early Detection, Diagnosis And Intervention For Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Cross-sectional Survey In China

Authors : Yushen Dai, Tao Deng, Miaoying Chen, Baoqin Huang, Yan Ji, Yongshen Feng, Shaofei Liu, Dongmei Zhong, Tao Zhang, Lifeng Zhang

Abstract : Background: Detection and diagnosis are prerequisites for early interventions in the care of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). However, few studies have focused on this topic. Aim: This study aims to characterize the timing from symptom detection to intervention in children with ASD and to identify the potential predictors of early detection, diagnosis, and intervention. Methods and procedures: A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 314 parents of children with ASD in Guangzhou, China. Outcomes and Results: This study found that most children (76.24%) were diagnosed within one year after detection, and 25.8% of them did not receive the intervention after diagnosis. Predictors to ASD diagnosis included ASD-related symptoms identified at a younger age, more serious symptoms, and initial symptoms with abnormal development and sensory anomalies. ASD-related symptoms observed at an older age, initial symptoms with the social deficit, sensory anomalies, and without language impairment, parents as the primary caregivers, family with lower income and less social support utilization increased the odds of the time lag between detection and diagnosis. Children whose fathers had a lower level of education were less likely to receive the intervention. Conclusions and Implications: The study described the time for detection, diagnosis, and interventions of children with ASD. Findings suggest that the ASD-related symptoms, the timing at which symptoms first become a concern, primary caregivers' roles, father's educational level, and the family economic status should be considered when offering support to improve early detection, diagnosis, and intervention. Helping children and their families take full advantage of support is also important.

Keywords : autism spectrum disorder, child, detection, diagnosis, intervention, social support

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