Talking about Stigma with Healthcare Providers: A Survey of Parents of Children with Learning and Behavioral Difficulties

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Poster #13838

Objectives
- Determine whether or not stigma is addressed in treatment as frequently as parents feel it should be.
- Find out if parents believe it is their own or their providers’ responsibility to initiate a dialogue on stigma.
- Explore correlations between clinical stigma discussions and levels of satisfaction with treatment.

Methods
A survey was administered to 126 attendees of the Massachusetts General Hospital Patient and Family Education Program on Children and Adolescents with Learning and Behavioral Difficulties.

Stigma in Treatment Questions –

Parents who reported feeling stigmatized (N = 42):
- 100% feel that stigma should be discussed, but only 58.5% indicated actually having talked about it with their provider.
- Those who reported discussing stigma in treatment displayed significantly higher satisfaction levels than those who did not (p = .021).

Results

Should stigma be discussed in treatment? 

<table>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<td>51.10%</td>
<td>48.90%</td>
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Who do you think should bring up the topic?

- 60.19% feel that stigma should be discussed in treatment than parents who reported discussing the topic with their providers (p < .001):

Discussion

- Nearly all parents believe that stigma should be discussed as a part of treatment; however, only half of parents reported actually having talked about it with their providers.
- Providers should bring up the topic of stigma with their patients’ families.

Next Steps

- Collect more data on parents’ experiences with stigma in other clinical populations, such as those with autism spectrum disorders.
- Use this information to personalize care.
- Examine providers’ attitudes and practices so that we have a deeper understanding of the clinical setting dynamic between providers, patients, and their families.

References

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