



Collaboration for Early Childhood

December
2011

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DIAGNOSING ADHD

Rebecca Barbato, MD

Did you know that the American Academy of Pediatrics recently released a statement indicating that Primary Care physicians should begin evaluating children for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) at age 4 through 18 years of age? I am always amazed by how often I see ADHD in my office as a general pediatrician. I am also amazed by how often I see “school problems” that look like ADHD. It is difficult in the course of my busy day to sort through it all.

My comfort with diagnosing and managing medication for ADHD has grown during my 10 years in practice. I find the Vanderbilt forms are very helpful in making the diagnosis of ADHD and also in screening for comorbidities like anxiety, depression and oppositional defiant disorder. The Vanderbilt forms are available for free on the Collaboration for Early Childhood’s website (www.collab4kids.org) and several other websites.

I have learned to tell families that it often takes months of changing medications and doses around to find an appropriate therapy. When I am making the diagnosis of ADHD and starting medication, I see patients frequently to make sure things are going well. I also find that this provides me with additional time to talk about the ADHD diagnosis with families as they gradually come to terms with it. If you are interested in learning more about diagnosing and managing ADHD in a primary care setting and learning about mental health resources, please join us at our next breakfast meeting. The meeting will be held on December 6 from 7:15 am to 9:00 am at Maya del Sol, 144 S. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park. Email kbaldwin@collab4kids.org to confirm your attendance or call 708-613-6122.

DR. SARAH BAUER TO DISCUSS EVALUATION AND TREATMENT OF ADHD IN THE PRIMARY CARE SETTING

The Physicians Network is very happy to welcome Sarah Bauer, MD, MS, who will be presenting “Evaluation and Treatment of ADHD in a Primary Care Setting” at the Physicians Network Breakfast: Tuesday, December 6, 7:15 – 9:00 am at Maya del Sol in Oak Park.

Dr. Bauer is an attending physician in developmental and behavior pediatrics at Children’s Memorial Hospital and instructor in pediatrics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. She has been a fellow consultant for Camp STAR (Summer Treatment for ADHD and Related Issues) and is a member of the Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics. Dr. Bauer recently participated in the Illinois Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Training Program. She lectures regularly and has published several academic articles in the developmental and behavioral pediatrics field.

State Budget Woes Severely Impact Mental Health Services for Low-Income Patients

One in 10 children in Illinois has a serious mental illness. Are you having trouble finding mental health services for your patients? This is not surprising. During the past two fiscal years, the State of Illinois has reduced spending on mental health by \$78.6 million. Community mental health center funding was cut by 20% for the current fiscal year. As a result, services for low income, non-Medicaid patients are now restricted as follows: The state will pay for five hours of case management and five hours of medical management but only for specific diagnoses. There is no allowance for therapy.

Medicaid eligible patients are also experiencing severely limited access to mental health services because Medicaid reimbursement rates have not risen since the early 1990s. As a result, many mental health practitioners are not willing to treat children on the All Kids Medicaid program.

There are some Oak Park-area providers that will treat your patients. Austin Family Health Center in Chicago, The Children's Clinic in Oak Park, Family Service and Mental Health Center in Cicero, Lake Street Family Health Center in Oak Park, Pillars in Berwyn, Thrive Counseling and South Family Health Center in Berwyn all provide some mental health services for children.

Making Referrals for Developmental Assessments: A Quick Learning Opportunity

After the Physicians Breakfast on December 6, the Physicians Network will offer attendees an opportunity to learn about the new referral forms and procedures for referring children (birth to 3) to Early Intervention. If you are interested, plan for an additional 15 to 20 minutes to get your questions answered and to receive guidance on the use of the forms.

The Collaboration's website also has an information and resource area for healthcare providers: www.collab4kids.org. Look there for the Standardized Illinois Early Intervention Referral Form (children birth to 3) and the Developmental Referral and Services Directory, as well as links to sites that provide developmental screening tools.

Our mission is to make sure that all children (birth to age 5) in our local community arrive at kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn.

www.collab4kids.org

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