

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Digital connection to integrated health and social care services - Review of inter-sectoral cooperation of Health Care Center Zagreb and Rehabilitation Center Zagreb

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Introduction

Early intervention involves timely support for children with neurodevelopmental risk and developmental disabilities and their families through the process of information, counseling and education, guided by scientific knowledge about brain plasticity and the fact that the first years of life have a long-term effect on a child's development. Pediatricians are the first to come into contact with children with neurodevelopmental risks and developmental disabilities and their families and provide them with guidance for inclusion in further programs thereby trying to shorten the wandering and seeking of parents for diagnosis and therapy. Cross-sectoral collaboration between pediatricians and early intervention providers, who has additional resources in diagnostics and therapy is crucial in this process, complementing each other so that children could be involved in appropriate rehabilitation procedures and provide support to the family in a timely manner.

Description of practice change implemented, aim, targeted population and timeline

Encouraged by the stated problems, the Rehabilitation Center Zagreb, branch office Soboština and the Health Care Center Zagreb have cooperated with one another in order of better monitoring the child's development and to get involved in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures as soon as possible. The Internet has become the easiest form of communication in the form of online discussions, forums and various portals. Therefore, the practice of digital networking through telecommunication networks and video technology was occurred for over 6 months between pediatrician, early intervention specialists in educational rehabilitation, clinical psychologists, SIAT educators, parents and other early intervention professionals with a goal to further accelerate the entire process of providing timely and adequate support.

Highlights and discussions

In the process of cross-sectoral cooperation, pediatricians at the Health Care Center refer parents with children who have a suspected developmental deviation to the Rehabilitation Center. Prior to the meeting with the child and the family, the pediatrician inform the

Centre's experts electronically about their observations. In this way triage is conducted as to whether there is a need for a further evaluation process or only consultations which may be carried out by the pediatrician himself. Specialists within the Rehabilitation Center carry out a team assessment on the principles of transdisciplinarity, which further shortens the time to enroll in the program, and also reduces overload of both parent and child. During the assessment, counseling is provided and guidance is given to parents on how to encourage the child in the period up to enrollment in the program. In order to monitor the progress of the child, team meetings of pediatricians and early intervention specialists are held, both live and electronically.

Conclusions, sustainability and transferability and lessons learned

This method of cooperation proved to be the fastest, cheapest and most efficient, facilitating the exchange of information and data, establishing better and faster diagnostics, timely involvement of the child and family in therapeutic procedures. Also providing the creation of a community of professionals in specific areas with a common purpose, facilitating daily work and increased productivity of healthcare and other professionals in the effectiveness of treatment for small patients.