

# An audit on adherence to standard care practices in a Learning Disability mental health service

Dr Akriti Kamran, Dr Uma Geethanath

Children and Young People's Service – South Tyneside and Sunderland (Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust )

## Aims and Hypotheses

An audit to evaluate adherence to standard care practices for managing Challenging behaviours / comorbid mental health problems in a Learning Disability mental health service catering to children and adolescents.

## Background

- Children and Adolescents with Learning disability commonly struggle with various mental health problems and can display challenging behaviours which could be a result of multiple underlying causes/factors.
- To provide support and to improve their quality of life, underlying factors need to be identified and interventions tailored to the needs of the individual should be offered .
- These interventions can include functional/behavioural assessments, behavioural support and Psychotropic medications amongst others.
- Historically an over reliance on medications has been noted in this population group, hence the need for service evaluation.

## Methods

- The entire caseload of Learning Disability within Child and Young People services of the CNTW NHS Foundation Trust covering Sunderland and South of Tyne areas was screened.
- Current practices (including prescribing) were compared with standard guidelines - National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Supporting Treatment and Appropriate Medication in Paediatrics (STAMP) guidelines.
- As per NICE guidelines for Challenging behaviour

To consider personalised interventions that are based on behavioural principles and a functional assessment of behaviour

To consider antipsychotic medication to manage behaviour that challenges only if psychological or other interventions alone do not produce change within an agreed time or treatment for any coexisting mental or physical health problem has not led to a reduction in the behaviour or the risk to the person or others is very severe (for example, because of violence, aggression or self-injury).To offer antipsychotic medication in combination with psychological or other interventions.

STAMP initiative is to ensure there are the right therapeutic interventions available for children and young people. Depending on the child's needs, these could include input from speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, positive behaviour support or other approaches. To ensure reasonable adjustments at school and in other settings will also be important and Psychotropic medication to not be given instead of these.

## Results

- Out of a total of 178 patients,76 patients(42.7%) were exclusively receiving needs based behavioural interventions.
- 102 patients (57.3%) were on psychotropic medications ,of these 18 patients(17.7%) were not found to be receiving any additional behavioural interventions at present.(Figure 1) Those not receiving alternative additional interventions from CYPS were found in receipt of support from Social Services /Early help /School
- A clear rationale for prescribing certain medications was not documented in 7(6.9%) out of these 102.(Figure 2)
- Physical health monitoring was not being done for 16 patients of 24 on antipsychotic medications.(Figure 3)

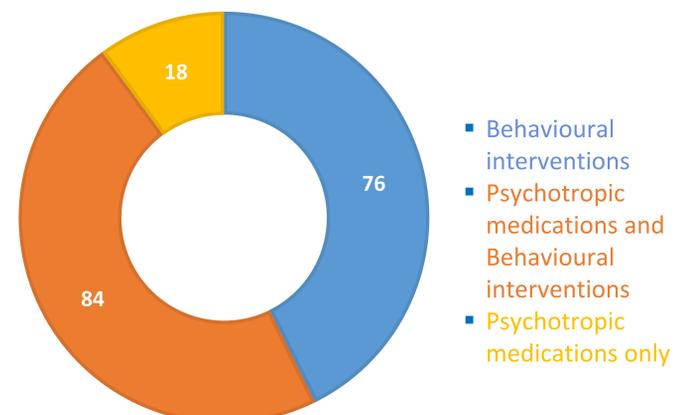


Figure 1

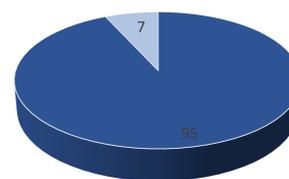


Figure 2

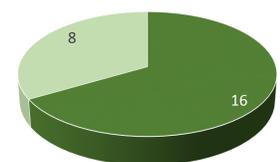


Figure 3

## Conclusions

Individualised behavioural interventions with additional psychotropic medications were being offered in accordance with standard practices, in majority of patients.

Rationale for the Psychotropic medications prescribed was not clearly documented in a small number of patients.

There was scope for improvement in the Physical health monitoring for antipsychotic medications.