**BARRIERS FACED BY PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES WHEN ACCESSING HEALTH CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES**

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**Objectives:** Over the past 25 years, there has been a substantial increase in supports and services for children and youth with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families. These supports are housed in the health care, social services, and education systems and include both generic services (e.g., hospitals) and specialized DD or disability-related services (e.g., respite care programs). However, many research studies note the complexity and fragmentation of the systems and the difficulties families have accessing services. Attempts to address this situation might benefit from a greater understanding of the nature of the barriers families experience in accessing both generic health services and disability-related services. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to report on specific barriers to service access and to determine their relationship to families' quality of life.

**Method:** GO4KIDDS is a Canadian team project exploring the health, wellbeing, and social inclusion of children with severe DD and that of their parents, using several surveys and focused studies. The Family Quality of Life study (Perry & Isaacs, 2013) involved 62 diverse families (48% immigrant families; 32% single-parent families). Children (70% boys) range in age from 6 to 18 years. They display high rates of problem behaviour (on the Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised) and 48% have autism.

This poster presentation will use portions of the Family Quality of Life Survey (FQOLS; Brown et al., 2006), which examines nine domains (e.g., health of the family, support from disability-related services). Each domain includes specific background questions followed by ratings on six dimensions (e.g., attainment, satisfaction). Overall quality of life scores will be the average of attainment plus satisfaction across the nine domains as per Perry and Isaacs (2015). The barriers faced by parents come from an original list together with some additional barriers added to the FQOLS when it was administered to families in an interview. In total, twenty barriers are listed, including two ‘other’ options where parents can qualitatively comment on any other barriers. The types of barriers can be categorized as within the system (e.g., travel to services, wait lists), within the parent/family (e.g., fear of being a burden, being too busy/overwhelmed), or related to the disability itself (e.g., not a big enough problem, temporary problem).

**Results:** The barriers commonly faced by parents and their frequencies will be reported. Regression analyses will be used to determine if the number of barriers faced is predictive of overall family quality of life (as measured by the FQOLS) and/or related to family demographics (e.g., SES, marital status) and child characteristics (e.g., age, adaptive level, maladaptive behaviour).

**Discussion/Conclusion:** This study will contribute to our understanding of the barriers families experience in accessing services and the role this experience plays in their Family Quality of Life. It will comment on how family quality of life may be impacted by parent’s access to and experience of health care and disability services. We hope to target specific barriers common to families of children with DD and provide recommendations for improving access to those services.

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