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Survey of Primary Care Physicians' and Pediatricians' Competency in Identifying Prodromal Symptoms in Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders

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Survey of Primary Care Physicians' and Pediatricians' Competency in Identifying Prodromal Symptoms in Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders



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Background

- To address whether primary care physicians and pediatricians are equipped to recognize the prodromal symptoms of psychotic disorders
- Patients of primary care physicians exhibited increased help-seeking behaviors prior to schizophrenia diagnosis¹
- Primary care physicians in numerous countries have shown a lack of sufficient knowledge related to diagnosing and treating schizophrenia^{2,3,4,5,6}
- Unclear if primary care physicians in the United States are adequately trained and prepared to recognize prodromal signs of schizophrenia, and diagnose and treat a variety of psychotic disorders

Methods

- Measures:** Online-based adapted survey² distributed via list-serves
- Participants:** Primary care physicians and pediatricians in NJ (n = 12)
- Analysis:** Descriptive statistics

Results

	Mean (SD)	Range
Age (years)	44 (16)	29 – 69
Years in Practice	14.5 (14.2)	1 – 43

		% of Participants
Gender	Male	18.2
	Female	81.8
Type of physician	Primary Care	16.7
	Pediatrics	83.3
Patients treated per week	1 – 10	8.3
	11 – 20	16.7
	30+	75
Is schizophrenia preceded by early warning signs?	Yes	75
	No	25
Patients treated annually with suspected schizophrenia	0	41.7
	1 – 2	58.3
Preferred method of treating suspected schizophrenia	Collaboration	8.3
	Complete handover	91.7
Patients treated annually with diagnosed schizophrenia	0	75
	1 – 2	16.7
	6 – 9	8.3
Preferred method of treating established schizophrenia	Complete handover	100

Top methods physicians use to corroborate diagnosis:

1. Consultation with psychiatry
2. Interviewing the patient
3. Family history
4. Toxicology/Lab tests

Discussion

- Most physicians prefer handover of care for schizophrenia & suspected schizophrenia
- 66% of primary care physicians struggle to refer to psychiatry⁷
- Complete handover of psychiatric care may not always be possible due to psychiatry shortages⁷
- Limitations of study: Accessibility to survey, Complexity of survey

References

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Common Prodromal Symptoms Assessed by Physicians

