

Experiences of parents accessing health and social care services for children with autism

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Introduction/Rationale

The severity and support needs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) vary (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). It impacts social interaction, communication, and behaviour. World Health Organization (2023) predicts that 1 in 100 people worldwide have autism, highlighting the need for comprehensive care. Early diagnosis means children and families obtain timely interventions to improve development and outcomes (Lord et al., 2020). Health, social care, and education in the UK must collaborate to offer autism assistance for individuals and their families (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021). Delays in diagnosis, long wait times, and poor service provider coordination plague many parents (Crane et al., 2018). Thus, this study investigates parental autism service hurdles and facilitators concerning timely access, care coordination, and quality.

Research Question

What obstacles and enablers do UK parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) face when obtaining health and social care?

Research Aim

This study examines parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the UK to identify barriers and facilitators to accessing health and social care services and enhance support systems._

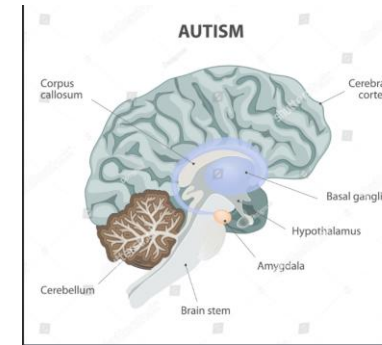
Prevalence

Neurodevelopmental Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects speech, socialisation, and conduct. Autism prevalence has increased due to better diagnosis, awareness, and health services in recent decades. Autism spectrum disorder affects 1 in 100 children worldwide (World Health Organization, 2023).

Many Brits have autism. UK children and adults are predicted to be 700,000 autistic (National Autistic Society, 2023). Thus, autism requires healthcare, education, and social care assistance.

The 1% autism rate in England backs up the UK's predictions (NHS, 2023). There are four times as many boys with autism as there are females (WHO, 2023). Researchers claim that inconsistent symptoms may lead to women being misdiagnosed with autism.

Effects on the carer and the autistic person. The NAS (2023) says that 2.8 million autistic people in the UK have family and caring responsibilities. Autism is common, thus it needs to be diagnosed early, treated by experts, and cared for by people in many fields. Early intervention enhances lifestyle, communication, and socialisation in individuals with autism.



Research Impact

Findings will benefit children with ASD, their families, health and social care organisations, policymakers, and professionals. The study will educate families with autism regarding health and social care. Long wait periods, not knowing what to do, and trouble getting around could all make it harder to get a diagnosis and treatment early, which is good for development and health (World Health Organization, 2023).

The study will enhance the coordination and accessibility of public health and social care. Kirby and Payne (2023) say that this can include health, education, and social care. Results may affect efforts to improve autism services in the UK health and social care system. Research will assist health and social care professionals in supporting parents.

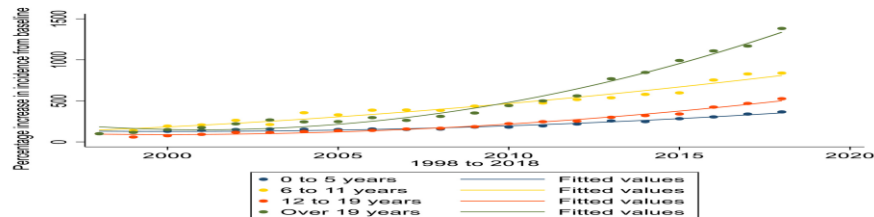
Research Objectives

1. To look into what parents go through when they try to get a diagnosis and help for their kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Kirby and Payne, 2023).
2. To find out what the main hurdles and facilitators are that make it hard for parents to get autism-related services. These could include things like long wait times, lack of service availability, and poor communication between the health, education, and social care sectors.
3. To look into methods to make it easier for children with autism and their families to get the resources they need and work together, so that the UK health and social care system can build more integrated and accessible care models (World Health Organization, 2023).

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(i) : Percentage increase in incidence of autism diagnosis from 1998 to 2018 by age-band.



(ii): By gender.

