

# **Access to Therapy for Children with Autism: A Population-Based Analysis**

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- 1 year Secondary Data Analysis study

# Introduction

- Increase in prevalence in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) <sup>1</sup>
- Therapy services (OT, ST, PT) are frequently used interventions <sup>2,3</sup>
- Need more therapy services than other children<sup>4</sup>
- More likely to have unmet need for health care services, including therapy services<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (2014)

<sup>2</sup> Green et al. (2006)

<sup>3</sup> Thomas, Ellis, McLaurin, Daniels & Morissey (2007)

<sup>4</sup> Gurney, McPheeters, & Davis (2006)

<sup>5</sup> Chiri & Warfield (2012)



# Specific Aims

1. Compare rates of **access to therapy service** between children with ASD and other children with special health care needs (CSHCN) at two population survey time points
2. Examine the **relationship of individual and contextual characteristics on access** to therapy services across the two survey time points

# Methods

## Design & Data Source

- Retrospective, population-based cohort design
- National Survey for Children with Special Health Care Needs (NS-CHSCN)<sup>6</sup>
  - n=40,465 (05-06 Survey)
  - n=40,242 (09-10 Survey)
- Compared children 0-17 years with current ASD to other CSHCN

## Need for Therapy:

↓ Yes response to “In the past 12 months, was there any time when your child needed physical, occupational or speech therapy?”

## Unmet Need for Therapy (Access variable):

No response to “Did your child receive all of the therapy that he/she needed?”

# Unmet Need for Therapy

Did your child receive all of the therapy that he/she needed?

	2005-06 NS-CSHCN <sup>a</sup>		2009-10 NS-CHSCN <sup>b</sup>	
	ASD (n=1538) % [95% CI]	Other CSHCN (n=7543) % [95% CI]	ASD (n=2216) % [95% CI]	Other CSHCN (n=8008) % [95% CI]
Yes	82.1 [78.8-85.0]	87.2 [85.8-88.6]	75.6 [72.4-78.5]	84.0 [82.5-85.4]
No	17.9 [15.0-21.2]	12.8 [11.4-14.2]	24.4 [21.5-27.7]	15.9 [14.6-17.5]

<sup>a</sup>Design-based F (1, 9030)=10.1, p=.002. Strata = 51, PSU= 9081, Subpopulation observations= 9 081

<sup>b</sup>Design-based F (1, 10122)=27.8, p<.001. Strata = 102, PSU=10 224, Subpopulation observations= 10 224.

Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs, 2005–2006 and 2009-2010.



# Predictors of Unmet Need for Therapy Services

- Current **ASD** diagnosis
- Sampled in **2009** year
- Insurance status
  - **Uninsured**
  - **Public insurance**
  - **Public + private insurance**
- Functional needs of child
  - **“Usually”** or **“Always”** were affected
- No **well-child visit** in past year

# Conclusions/Discussion

- Importance of well-child visit for appropriate care
- Impact of recession?
  - Disposable income— copays
  - Federal poverty level was not predictive
  - Having public insurance was protective
- Next Steps:
  - Examine whether cultural differences in reporting of need impacted results
  - Sub-population analyses with specific diagnoses
  - State-level differences due to mandates

