

“Transitioning Together” Translational Research

Waisman Center, Univ of Wisconsin-Madison (IDDRC, UCEDD, LEND)

WI LEND research and clinical implementation team:

Anne Harris, LEND Director

Leann Smith, Research Coordinator, IDDRRC Investigator

Megan Farley, Psychology Training Coordinator, UCEDD Clinician

Stacy McCarthy, LEND Social Work trainee

(also involved Claire duCharme, Sarah Nelson, Michi Gerdts

– resulted in LEND trainee research poster presentation, May 2014)

“Transitioning Together” family intervention to improve outcomes for transition-age youth with ASD – developed by Dr. Leann Smith

Research established the efficacy of this program:

“Transitioning Together” (TT) program includes pre-intervention

“joining” session, 8 weekly sessions with concurrent parent support/education group and youth social/behavioral group, resulted in improved outcomes for youth and reduced parent stress



Efficacy & Effectiveness

Transitioning Together Effectiveness Study

LEND trainees working with researchers and clinicians on an interdisciplinary translational research project
– began January 2014 and currently ongoing

Trainee study questions:

- What is translational research? Why is it important?
- What is the difference between efficacy and effectiveness?
- What does it take to implement Transitioning Together in the clinic?

Aims for effectiveness research:

- To document the processes and challenges required to implement TT as a clinical intervention
- To determine if positive outcomes for youth and parent participants are replicated when the TT program is implemented in clinical practice



Methods/Activities

Trainee activities:

- Literature review of translational research in behavioral sciences
- Assist in preparation of IRB submission, development of consent forms
- Assist in implementing the TT program in clinic – joining sessions, running youth social/behavioral intervention groups
- Summarize progress, barriers to implementation - develop poster
- (future) Research data collection – assessments, evaluation, analysis

Progress so far:

- Clinicians recruited participants, obtained prior authorization for treatment through private insurance companies
- IRB application still pending, anticipate approval within next month
- First clinical intervention group – joining sessions completed, 8 week group sessions running July 15 – September 7



Results

Relatively easy to implement:

- Identify and train lead clinician and other group leaders
- Scheduling of sessions, rooms
- Recruiting families

Challenges/barriers (most of which have taken time/delayed progress):

- Addressing questions from clinic administrators, concerns about billing codes, confidentiality, clinicians doing “new” therapy / behavioral intervention
- Process of obtaining prior authorizations, differences in insurance coverage and classification for this type of intervention
- Separating out what are research versus clinical procedures for IRB application
- Use of different terminology between systems and disciplines

Implications

For trainees:

- Learning about “translational research”
- Depending on activity completed, gained experience in working with IRB submission, literature review, preparing poster
- Contributing to data collection, providing intervention

For clinics:

- Coordinating across university and health care systems
- Conducting a behavioral intervention in a health care setting
- Translating a research protocol into evidence-based practice

For researchers:

- Appreciating the complexity of “implementation science”
- Collaborating across IDDRC, UCEDD, LEND for translational research
- When completed, establishing effectiveness of TT program

