

Eddie Chaplin and Jane McCarthy

Welcome to the second edition of 2020. This issue features eight papers on a range of topics that examine current issues related to diagnosis, assessment and supporting well-being in different groups of people within the autistic community.

The first paper by Whitney and Stansfield is topical in that it examines the subject of accepting self-referrals to clinical services. The study found those self-referring were more likely to receive a diagnosis and women who are often not picked up within traditional health and autism services were also more likely to be in the self-referral group.

The second paper from Renzo and colleagues continues on the theme of assessing for autism spectrum disorders in childhood and concentrates on two aspects: the identification of the risk (under 30 months of age) and the definition of a diagnosis. The paper describes a development profile, which allows to plan a specific intervention that takes into account the child's development trajectory in two clinical cases.

The third paper from Martin and colleagues also examines issues with diagnosis. It highlights the complexities in differential diagnosis of early psychosis, schizophrenia and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Overlap and symptom mimicry between the two disorders are still poorly understood in a number of non-specialist clinical areas. This paper presents two clinical cases that highlight the complexity of the differential diagnosis of schizophrenia from a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder.

The fourth paper from Kendah and colleagues examines the way autism is interpreted and accepted among the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) populations in the UK. This report summarises a Symposium on autism in the UK-BAME community in 2018, organised by Autism Voice UK. The conference heard from a range of autistic and neurotypical presenters, including the Participatory Autism Research Collective and the Critical Autism and Disabilities Studies Research Group at London South Bank University.

The fifth paper from Schwartz and colleagues describes caregivers' perspectives on carer transitions in autism. It is generally accepted that adults with autism spectrum disorder experience significant physical and mental health-care disparities, resulting in poorer health and quality of life. This paper reflects lived health-care experiences of geographically and ethnically diverse young adults with autism spectrum disorders in adult care settings in the USA.

On a similar theme, Kojima in the sixth paper looks at subjective well-being of individuals with autism in Japan. This study reports on possible relationships with self-esteem and negative feelings such as anxiety and worries that may influence their subjective well-being.

The seventh paper from Khullar and colleagues reports on the proposed LIV4Smile intervention and statistical tests to validate the performance of the system to examine improvement in social smile. Early results reported saw a significant improvement in observed smile responses of individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

The final paper from Fairchild and Colleagues examines the effectiveness of a peer mentor programme, both alone and combined with an incentive programme, on increasing the social engagement of college students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. This included examining the perceptions of the college students to determine potential barriers to participate in these social events.

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We hope you enjoy this edition of the journal and wish to thank you for your continuing support of *Advances in Autism*. We invite contributions from our readers to the journal and welcome a variety of papers on areas including innovative and evidence-based practice, research, case studies, service and policy-related issues and literature reviews. We welcome submissions from the range of health and social care professionals but additionally those who use services and people who care for them. We would also like to make you aware of the appointment of our new Gender and Diversity Editor, Verity Chester, [v.chester@nhs.net] who will be editing special editions related to gender and diversity. If you would like to know more about how to submit your work for publication, please contact us at (<mailto:chapline@lsbu.ac.uk>).