

Editorial

Verity Chester and Samuel Tromans

Journal news

Advances in Autism Literati award winners 2022

We were pleased to participate in the Emerald Literati Awards, which for 25 years have celebrated and rewarded the outstanding contributions of authors and reviewers to scholarly research submitted to Emerald journals. Our *Advances in Autism* winners were as follows:

Outstanding Paper – Gender differences in mental health prevalence in autism – Felicity Sedgewick, Jenni Leppanen and Kate Tchanturia. We found this a very well conducted piece of research, focused on an important topic, which has justifiably received significant attention from other researchers in the autism research community since its publication.

Outstanding Reviewers – Nathan Keates, Ginny Painter and Krysia Waldoock – Our outstanding reviewers were chosen due to the volume of high quality, thorough and considered peer reviews of articles submitted to our journal. We thank each of you for your support of the journal and look forward to continuing to work with you all in future.

Thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people as we approach the end of our first year as editors.

We would like to thank our large team of peer reviewers, who contribute hugely to the standards of research published in the journal, and support of the editorial team.

We would like to thank our publishing team, particularly Jo Sharrocks, Sonali Durge and Apurva Deorukhkar.

We would finally like to thank you, the readers of the journal. We hope that you are able to use our content in the development of knowledge, your own research and practice. Please do get in contact with us if you have any suggestions or comments regarding the journal as we progress into 2023.

Issue content

In this issue, we have seven papers on a variety of topics pertaining to autism.

The first article, by Jean and colleagues, explores the overlap between symptoms of depression, anxiety, irritability and aggressiveness in 42 autistic adolescents and adults. Using cluster analysis, the authors were able to highlight two groups; the first characterized by higher levels of core autism symptoms and elevated externalizing symptoms (irritability, hyperactivity and aggressiveness). The second group was characterized by lower externalizing symptoms, variable levels of anxious and depressive symptoms and milder autism symptomatology. The authors highlighted research implications such as a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms related to emotion dysregulation and enhanced detection of co-occurring psychiatric conditions in autistic people.

In the second article, Ng *et al.* highlight the lack of adequate primary medical and dental care for both youth and adults with developmental disabilities, and describe the creation of a

Verity Chester is based at Department of Psychiatry, Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust, Norwich, UK.

Samuel Tromans is based at Department of Health Sciences, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK and Adult Learning Disability Services, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Leicester, UK.

specialized medical-dental clinic for adults with developmental disabilities in Canada. The paper highlights a best practice model that can be emulated by services more widely.

Roy and Kumar present a unique paper examining the mediating role of parental playfulness on parent-child relationship and competence among parents of autistic children. The data suggested that playfulness among parents of autistic children functioned as a partial mediator in the relationship between parent-child relationship and parental competence. This could suggest that more playful parents have better parent-child relationships and are competent in parenting. The authors emphasised the role of parental well-being in addition to the consideration of autistic presentation of the child, with implications including enabling playfulness in parenting to enhance the parent-child relationship.

With research suggesting that the provision of post-diagnostic support for autistic adults is highly variable across the UK, Hatton and Lee describe and evaluate the utility of an online post-diagnostic support group for recently diagnosed autistic adults. The article highlights a number of positive outcomes from the group, including gaining a sense of community and belonging from their attendance, sharing knowledge and the opportunity to self-reflect, as well as a number of learning points for service provision in this area.

Proskurnina, Portnova, Ivanova and Sokolova highlight that electroencephalogram (EEG) examinations can cause stress in autistic persons, and this stress can affect the results of the EEG examination. As such, the authors examined the utility of saliva analysis in the assessment of emotional stress in autistic children undergoing EEG. The authors found that markers of stress presenting in saliva correlate with the absence or presence of psychological stress in children, and note the promise of testing saliva when assessing psychoemotional stress in autistic children undergoing medical examinations.

Given the pervasive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for many in the UK, Riese and Mukherjee examine the experiences of autistic adults specifically. The authors highlighted that autistic adults experienced an increase in anxiety and poor mental health, which exacerbated their baseline autistic symptomatology. The authors also highlight the resilience of the autistic community during the pandemic.

The final article within this issue is a systematic review of the assessment and treatment of anxiety in autistic children and adolescents, by Perihan, Burke, Bowman-Perrott and Bocanegra, which investigated a number of important questions relative to the efficacy of commonly used psychological therapies for our population. The authors highlighted the lack of measures which are sensitive to the autistic presentation of anxiety and the variable results of the first-line treatment, cognitive behavioural therapy and discuss future directions.

We do hope you find the final issue of 2022 informative and useful.