

Abstract:

MINDing the Gap: Addressing Disparity in Meeting the Learning Needs of Neurodivergent Medical Trainees

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Background:

Late diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in physicians can lead to significant negative impacts on their personal and professional lives. However, despite the potential benefits of early diagnosis and intervention, many physicians may not be diagnosed until later in life. This research project explores the prevalence of late ASD and ADHD diagnoses in physicians and identifies potential barriers to early diagnosis.

Methods:

A meta-analysis was conducted on physicians who were diagnosed with ASD or ADHD after the age of 18. Data on demographics, presenting symptoms, diagnostic process, and treatment were collected and analyzed. Results: Common presenting symptoms included difficulties with social interaction, executive functioning, and attention. Barriers to diagnosis included stigma, lack of knowledge about the conditions, and fear of professional consequences.

Discussion:

Recommendations for improving the diagnostic process and increasing awareness about ASD and ADHD among physicians include the following: need for increased education and training for physicians, the establishment of support groups and resources for individuals with ASD and ADHD in the medical profession, and the development of screening tools and protocols for early identification of these conditions. Overall, this study highlights the importance of early diagnosis and intervention for ASD and ADHD in physicians, and the need for increased awareness and support within the medical community.