Gender Differences May Play a Greater Role in Diagnosing Autism

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 1 in 68 children in America are diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. Of the children who have these disorders, around 1 in 42 are boys and 1 in 189 are girls. These numbers suggest that autism tends to be far more prevalent in males than females, but few concrete conclusions have been drawn to account for these differences.

According to Dr. Judith Gould, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Director at the Lorna Wing Centre of Autism:

“Autism is more diverse than originally thought, with new ideas being put forward every day. In fact, it’s a case of “the more we know, the less we know,” particularly in how gender affects individuals with autism.”

However, a recent study conducted by Felicity Sedgewick and her team at the Centre for Research in Autism and Education, at the UCL Institute of Education, has proposed a unique perspective into autism, friendships and the differences between boys and girls with autism.

The study included 46 adolescents with the same intelligence level, aged 12-16, who were all assessed by a number of psychological measures and interviews.

The results showed that peer friendships of autistic girls were similar to those of non-autistic girls, while autistic male relationships were qualitatively different. Girls, autistic or otherwise, had very similar scores for social motivation and friendship qualities; however autistic girls in particular noted considerably less conflict within relationships than non-autistic girls.

Autistic males were far less motivated to form relationships and those they did form were seen as less close and secure than the relationships formed by their non-autistic peers.

According to Sedgewick and her team, non-gender-specific diagnosis may not always identify autistic girls. The study concluded that there may be a need to use gender-specific diagnostic tools when evaluating social interactions as an indicator for autism, as issues dealing with these sorts of relationships are more subtle in autistic girls.

While the discussion of gender differences among children identified on the autism spectrum is not limited solely to the tools used for diagnosis, studies such as this do call for additional research into gender-specific diagnostic tools. Furthermore, these sorts of studies may also shed light on important areas to target when treating and supporting children and young adults on the autism spectrum.

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We Are Provider Advocates: Come See Us in 2016!

At HealthLink, we value your continued participation in our provider networks and we remain committed to providing you with the tools and support you need to deliver high-quality health care to our members, your patients. In order to achieve this, we strive to be highly visible in the market to differentiate ourselves and bring value to you as we work to exceed your expectations.

Review the list below to see all of the events where HealthLink will have a presence this year and COME SEE US at an event near you! HealthLink is always excited to meet with our providers or those who may be interested in learning more about joining our network. We are here to answer all of your questions and address any concerns. We are looking forward to working with you in 2016!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HFMA – Hospital Financial Medical Association</td>
<td>March 22, 2016</td>
<td>St. Louis, MO</td>
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<tr>
<td>IHA – Illinois Hospital Association</td>
<td>April 13, 2016</td>
<td>Springfield, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSMA – MO State Medical Association</td>
<td>April 21, 2016</td>
<td>Columbia, MO</td>
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<td>MGMA – Missouri Spring Conference</td>
<td>May 1 – 3, 2016</td>
<td>Osage Beach, MO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois MGMA (Joint Conference – Illinois/Indiana)*</td>
<td>May 5 – 6, 2016</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
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<td>MIMH – MO Institute Mental Health</td>
<td>June 2 – 3, 2016</td>
<td>Osage Beach, MO</td>
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<td>MAFP – MO Academy of Family Physicians</td>
<td>June 3 – 4, 2016</td>
<td>Camdentown, MO</td>
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<td>MSMA – MO State Medical Association</td>
<td>July 26, 2016</td>
<td>St. Charles, MO</td>
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<td>MO State Chiropractic Convention</td>
<td>August 24 – 26, 2016</td>
<td>Branson, MO</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAFP – MO Academy of Family Physicians</td>
<td>November 4 – 5, 2016</td>
<td>Ridgedale, MO</td>
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* HealthLink attendance subject to change.

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

Mercy Kids Autism Center

Mercy Kids Autism Center provides children and their families with a comprehensive, child-centered approach to dealing with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) including:

- Diagnosis and assessment
- Medical consultation and ongoing follow up
- Physical, occupational and speech-language therapy
- Intensive early intervention program for toddlers ages 18-60 months
- Social communication groups
- Psychological services

The Center’s care team is lead by board-certified physicians with expertise in neurodevelopmental disabilities and applied behavior analysis, clinical psychologist, speech-language pathologists, physical and occupational therapists, audiologists, applied behavioral analyst and a pediatric nurse practitioner. They are committed to creating a personalized approach that meets the needs of each child and each family.

Autism related services are provided at two Mercy Kids Centers.

IN-TOUCH First Quarter 2016

Any information included in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for medical care or advice provided by a physician.

Any reference in the material to other organizations or companies, including Internet sites, is not an endorsement or warranty of the services, information or products provided by those organizations or companies. HealthLink does not assume responsibility for any circumstance arising out of the use, misuse, interpretation or application of any of the information in this newsletter.
Meet Dr. Jay Moore, M.D., HealthLink’s New Chief Medical Director

Dr. Moore has been in the health care industry for more than a decade, including six years of practice as an internal medicine physician. His time as Vice President of Medical Affairs and Chief Medical Officer for one of the largest, full-service hospitals in St. Louis has given him extensive experience in leading cutting-edge quality and operational initiatives aimed at making health care more sustainable for future generations.

Dr. Moore currently leads a team of 25 physicians and nurses who are responsible for overseeing Utilization, Disease and Complex Care Management, as well as for the Cost of Care and Quality Ratings programs.

He has been locally recognized for his contribution and impact to the St. Louis community through the FOCUS St. Louis Leadership Program as well as the St. Louis Business Journal 40 Under 40 award.

Provider Satisfaction Survey

At HealthLink, our commitment to you, our providers, is an essential component of our business and we place a high value on the relationships we have cultivated over our many years of partnership together.

Throughout 2015, we worked diligently to achieve our main objective to provide simple solutions that make it easier for you to concentrate on running your business and delivering care to your patients. In order to achieve this goal, we first relocated all provider materials from our public website to our secure portal ProviderInfoSource, making it quick and easy to get all of the vital information you need in one, secure format.

Next, we began sending electronic contract packets to providers, developing a new process that is more prompt and convenient. We assigned Contract Specialists to handle the entire end-to-end contracting process, ensuring a faster, more streamlined experience, and we redesigned the Provider Solutions team and developed new territory assignments to deliver better service to the provider community.

We appreciate your continued partnership and we want to do even better in 2016! HealthLink Provider Solutions would like to invite you to take a short survey so we can determine how we have been successful and how we can better improve our service to you. Take the survey online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HealthLinkProviderSatisfactionSurvey.

HealthLink Associate Wins $1,000 Grant for National Charity, 3 Little Birds 4 Life

Associates made their voices heard when they selected Rebecca Swip, Program Administrator, as the winner of a recent Volunteer Recognition Program contest. Rebecca was one of three finalists and earned a $1,000 grant for a charity she has a personal connection with, 3 Little Birds 4 Life (3LB4L).

3LB4L was founded in 2010 after Ashely Swip, founder of the charity and Rebecca’s niece, realized that there were very few resources and wish-granting opportunities for young adults with cancer. Ashely took it upon herself to grant a wish for her brother Tyler right before he lost his fight with melanoma cancer, and 3LB4L was born. Today, the charity focuses on helping families battling cancer diagnoses by granting wishes to them at any age and educating young adults to be their own health advocates through awareness and prevention.

The budget for each wish given is around $1,000, so as a result of Rebecca’s recognition, at least one wish will be fully funded.

In addition to her involvement with 3LB4L, Rebecca is Chief of Staff for Women’s Inspired Network (WIN) an internal associate resource group, which she also credits for the recognition. To learn more about 3LB4L visit www.3littlebirds4life.org.

Dr. Jay Moore currently serves as First Vice Chairperson at Doorways Housing Organization, whose sole mission is to provide affordable, secure housing and related services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

“I really enjoy solving problems. Whether it is a member that is having a problem getting quality care, or an enterprise-wide cost of care initiative that is designed to cut waste and make health care more affordable,” says Dr. Moore. “I think HealthLink does great work, in particular through their support and partnerships with providers, and I’m happy to be a part of the organization.”

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Coding Corner

Helpful CPT Code Reminders

When submitting a corrected claim, please remember to include all of the charges on the claim, including the corrected information and the information that does not need to be corrected. Please do not submit a claim with the corrected line item only. This will avoid delays and/or inaccuracies in processing the corrected information.

HealthLink’s ICD-10 Project Is Complete!

HealthLink worked hard to ensure the ICD-10 transition was as seamless as possible for our providers and thanks to our ICD-10 team, we were successful! A lot of effort went into making this project such a success and we hope our providers had similar successes with their internal transitions.

Cover story information source:

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