

Enhancing Interventions and Embedded Research with Treatment Fidelity

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BACKGROUND

- Treatment fidelity refers to methodological strategies that are used to monitor and enhance the reliability and validity of behavioural interventions. It ensures treatment integrity, that is, the degree to which a treatment is implemented as intended.
- Assuring optimal treatment fidelity:
 - Helps clinician researchers validly explain findings;
 - Helps clinicians explain the intervention in relation to child outcomes.
- STA developed a comprehensive paradigm of treatment fidelity, based on the National Institutes of Health's Behavioural Change Consortium model.
 - The model incorporates:
 - a) creation of a treatment fidelity checklist to be used in an intervention study
 - b) training all clinicians
 - c) delivery of the intervention
 - d) young children's receiving the intervention based on STA philosophy
 - e) verification of intervention standards through treatment fidelity checks.
- Society for Treatment of Autism's (STA) comprehensive intervention program is tested, well-developed, and well defined.



RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- Training of current front-line staff occurred in August 2012. Training explained the treatment fidelity check procedure and reviewed STA's critical elements of intervention.
- Newly hired front-line staff receive initial training of intervention principles and have a probationary period of six months.
- Ongoing training includes monthly supervisory observations and feedback, as well as regular consultation and feedback from a trans-disciplinary treatment team.
- Preliminary results indicate first quarter fidelity was at 87%.
- Treatment fidelity measures are currently being used as part of a study investigating STA's behavioural social-communication intervention.



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