

COST Action BM1004: Enhancing the Scientific Study of Early Autism (ESSEA)

3-4 October 2013, Brussels, Belgium

WG3 meeting

10.00 to 18.00; 09.00 to 13.00

MINUTES

Participants: Ricardo Canal Bedia, Evald Saemundsen, Irma Moilanen, Nada Pop-Jordanova, Tatjana Zorcec, Patricia Garcia-Primo, Rafal Kawa, Synnve Schölberg, Annika Hellendoorn, Sanne Lemcke and Sigridur Loa Jonsdottir.

0. Work presentation from Macedonian ESSEA-COST Members

Based on the PowerPoint presentation by Nada Pop-Jordanova and Tatjana Zorcec:

The Macedonian team is working very hard on raising the awareness for ASD in the country by giving lectures, writing scientific articles for journals, reviews for daily newspapers and appearances in the media. Macedonian Ministry of Social Welfare has open the first Daily care center for ASD children in the country where families can place their children under professional care and receive various interventions.

Macedonian is also part of the South East European Autism Network where national coordinators for autism appointed by the national ministries of health from South Eastern European countries, gather and discuss policies, research activities, health care options, share information and experiences in order to improve the national health care quality for ASD children. They had their annual meeting in May in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina with support from Autism Speaks and WHO.

1. Overview of current situation of ASD Screening Programs in Europe:

Following several reviews from co-authors over the summer, together with a very useful input from Dr. Manuel Posada (IIER-Spain), a proposal for a new version as Narrative Review has been sent to Tony and Herbert for review on the 27th of Sept.

New title has been also suggested: " Screening for Autism Spectrum Disorders: State of Art in Europe". A new figure explaining the method followed for writing this manuscript has been now included aiming also to stand out the selling points of this article.

We are now waiting for their responses in order to be sent to rest of co-authors as well as to a translation professional service.

2. Survey on "Developmental surveillance across European countries"

Individual reports per respondent were presented and distributed to be reviewed during the meeting by small groups. They were checked for incongruences or redundancies. It was decided that final version of these reviewed reports need to be sent to each respondent for confirmation of information provided (Ricardo and Sanne to send emails).

Database with all responses was showed and also needs modifications after final version of reports. Brainstorming for analysis plan. It was agreed it is important to respond questions such as: what are the differences between countries with ASD screening program and without? What is the feasibility of ASD screening in each country? What would be the factors that best contribute for ASD screening? (Ricardo, Patricia , Evald and Synve have to work further on this before next meeting)

Draft for introduction of results publication (Ricardo to prepare and distribute first skeleton)

3. Cultural differences in delay in ASD diagnosis among immigrants

The working group discussed the objectives and content of the activity and the following agreements were reached:

1. Conduct a literature search and prepare a review of the literature (in form of a paper) concerning prevalence of ASD among immigrant and ethnic minorities in Europe (Evald, Irma, Sigridur Loa, Annika, Rafal). Evald will focus on the introduction. Rafal will conduct the literature search.
2. Evald and Sigridur Loa will start a pilot study in Iceland on delay in diagnosis among immigrants.
3. Conduct a search of information in available databases concerning immigrants and age of diagnosis.
4. Possibilities to apply for a Horizon 2020 grant concerning cross-cultural issues in ASD diagnosis (delay in diagnosis).
5. Possibilities to apply for a COST action (after finishing ESSEA) concerning cross-cultural issues in ASD diagnosis.

4. Joint STSM WG3 proposal (2013-2014)

The work plan to execute this action was analyzed. The following agreements were reached:

1. 2 or 3 applicants (from Spain, Iceland and possible one from Poland)
2. Working plan:
 - Questions/objectives:
 - a. What are the different screening tests that are used today to detect autism in early years? We hope to analyze their ability to identify signs or predictors of autism in order to diagnose autism earlier.
 - b. What are the most common items used as indicators of autism in early years?
 - c. Which items best represent autism?
 - d. What are the constructs underlying these signs?
 - Following META-ANALYSIS Methodology: Search of articles using: Medline, PsycInfo & Web of Science; review of journals specialized in the topic; review of the references of appropriate studies; Data from unpublished resources through ESSEA Cost Network and contact with experts or other research groups, review of doctoral dissertations, conference proceedings books....
 - Read abstracts to select appropriate articles

- Data presentation, statistical Analyses and Interpretation are already planned: Cohen's d or R correlation, Analysis of homogeneity of effect size, Heterogeneity tests (Q and I2) ANOVAs and regression, Forest plot for graphical representation etc.

3. Applicant's submission before end of 2013.

Minutes by Ricardo, Patricia and Rafal