



Early Intervention Report

Physicians: Important Point of Entry to Early Intervention Services

Over the past four years, AOK: All Our Kids Birth to Three Network has worked to increase developmental screening for young children in Kane County. An important aspect of screening is appropriate referral to Child and Family Connection for complete evaluation to determine need for Early Intervention (EI) Services or referral to other community resources for developmental stimulation (see article in Winter 2003-2004 Issue of *Perinatal Perspective*).

Data from Child and Family Connections (CFC) # 4, which serves Kane and Kendall Counties, demonstrate that physicians are increasingly important as a referral source for infants and toddlers entering the Early Intervention System in our area. During the thirteen-month period of December 2001 through December 2002, physician referrals account for only 11.9% while parents (indicated as self-referral) account for 33.6% and other community agencies 25%.

During 2003 (twelve month period), physicians account for 39.8% of referrals, parents as 12.2% and other community agencies as 17.6%. Community screenings/EI providers dropped from 15% to 12.8% of referrals. Two factors may account for these changes. As AOK and CFC # 4 analyzed early referral data, the question was raised about correct data collection. When parents called, did they call on the advise of an agency or their physician? Early in 2003, CFC # 4 began asking parents who called if someone told them to call and recorded that source as the referral rather than as a self-referral. In addition, representatives from AOK and CFC # 4 met with physicians through existing physicians' meetings and individually at their offices to clarify the role of CFC and referral process. This may have resulted in fewer referrals to community screening sites and more referrals directly to CFC. While the data does not offer pure scientific evidence, it does clearly indicate the importance of physicians in the process of infant and toddler Early Intervention Services.

Resources

The Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) offers support to local Illinois physicians (any physicians providing pediatric services, not limited to pediatricians) through a practice-based education program called Screening Tools & Education for Pediatric Providers (STEPPs). This three-hour office based-program offers both CME (physician) and CE (nurses) credit. For details on this program, go to <http://www.illinoisAAP.org/DevelopmentalScreening.htm>; to schedule a presentation at your practice, contact Kathryn Hawley, Project Manager, at 312-733-6207 or email khawley@illinoisAAP.net.

In the Spring of 2004, ICAAP added another office based program, *Early Autism Detection and Referral*. Kathryn Hawley is the contact for this program as well.

Referral from:	12/01-12/02	1/03-12/03	1/04-6/04 ***
Doctor's Office	116 (11.9%)	326 (39.8%)	262 (49.6%)
Birth Hospital	59 (6.0%)	78 (9.5%)	44 (8.3%)
Self-referral and Re-referrals*	328 (33.6%)	100 (12.2%)	46 (8.7%)
Community Screenings / EI Providers	147 (15 %)	105 (12.8%)	54 (10.2%)
Health Department/APORS	81 (8.3 %)	67 (8.1%)	44 (8.3%)
Other community agencies and individuals	245 (25 %)	144 (17.6%)	78 (14.7%)
Total	976	820	528

* Re-referrals defined as re-contact from parents case closure

*** Denotes six months only

If you have children who may benefit from EI services, please call **Child and Family Connections at 630/761-9227**. (179 Oswalt Ave., Batavia, IL 60510)