Abstract:

**Introduction:** Models of children’s chronic health conditions emphasize family involvement. For parents of children with mental health conditions, participation requires overcoming unique barriers as they interact with professionals. Assisting families requires assessing their readiness to act in a planned and thoughtful manner. Parent proactive participation encompasses important beliefs, attitudes, confidence, and knowledge. Valid reliable measures of proactive participation must reflect the unique characteristics of mental health systems. This project describes the development of a measurement model of parents’ proactive participation in mental health care.

**Method(s):** A systematic review of models and concepts related to management of chronic health conditions was conducted. The review focused on conceptual definitions, health outcomes, and measures. The Family Empowerment Scale (FES), the Vanderbilt Mental Health Service Efficacy Questionnaire, (VMHSEQ) and the Parent Patient Activation Measure (PPAM) were evaluated to identify relevant items and for psychometrics for this population.
**Results:** The measures addressed some but not all dimensions of proactive participation nor have all have been used in children’s mental health studies. Estimates of reliability and validity were incomplete in this population. The resulting measurement model holds that proactive participation is a second-order factor with four first-order factors: role belief, role attitude, confidence, and knowledge. Empirical indicators include 35 items selected from 72 items in the FES, VMHSEQ, and PPAM.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** This project describes a measurement model of parents’ proactive participation in their child mental health care. The review indicated that the concept parent proactive participation reflects a neglected component of parents’ readiness to participate in their children’s care. Although measures of parents’ readiness to participate exist, none adequately addressed all of the important dimensions of proactive participation. Nevertheless, items from each of the instruments can be utilized as empirical indicators for proactive participation. Future research will examine model fit and its utility in research evaluating interventions proactive participation, and health outcomes.

**Abstract History:**

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No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

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