

TITLE: Understanding Health Care Service Use and Cost for Anxious Youth

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public health professionals and people who work with children with anxiety disorders.

ABSTRACT: Background:

Anxiety disorders in children are common and cause impairment including difficulties in school, with relationships, and functioning at home. The goal of this study is to describe service use and cost for youth with anxiety disorders compared to youth without anxiety disorders.

Methods:

A case-control study using data from electronic health records, administrative, and claims data from four health systems in the NIMH funded Mental Health Research Network (California, Oregon/Washington, Hawaii, Michigan). Subjects were 17,217 youth aged 4-18 years old with anxiety diagnoses, and 86,022 matched controls. We used conditional logistic regression models to estimate any service use and generalized estimating equations to estimate mean service use or cost.

Findings:

Youth with anxiety disorders have greater service use in all categories, including emergency departments, inpatient care, pediatric utilization, neurology, cardiology, and gastroenterology. Youth with anxiety disorders also have greater levels of psychotherapy, and psychiatric medications. Anxious youth had double the annual cost.

Implications:

These findings could help health systems and policy makers by identifying the most important services to provide in insurance coverage, to identify use of less effective services, and identify gaps in care for subgroups of anxious youth, such as youth from non-white racial/ethnic groups.

OBJECTIVE(S): Describe the differences in service between youth with anxiety disorders and those without anxiety disorders.

Identify differences in service use for anxious youth from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

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