

POSTER ABSTRACT

Adolescents with neuropsychiatric symptoms in the turmoil of the service system: The NEPSOS interdisciplinary study of social work, adolescent psychiatry, special education, and expert organisations

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Existing social, health and education services do not respond to the needs of adolescents with neuropsychiatric symptoms. These services are usually fragmented and their professionals' expertise is insufficient. In this interprofessional context, the integration of specialisations, multidisciplinary expertise and knowledge is a challenge. In the NEPSOS study, we explore the services aimed at and service needs of adolescents with neuropsychiatric symptoms and their families. The NEPSOS study is collaboratively designed and carried out by experts from the University of Turku and the University of Eastern Finland, including researchers of adolescent psychiatry, social work and special education, as well as expert organisations such as the Southwest Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare and the Nationwide Association of Different Learners. These organisations provide their expertise for the implementation and integration of the research results into the service system and the development of recommendations.

In this study, the appropriateness of services and service paths are examined from the perspectives of adolescents and families, professionals and interprofessional collaboration. The study has four different lines. Line 1 examines the relationships between a) the socio-economic status of the parent and the situation of the adolescent and b) neuropsychiatric symptoms and child protection support measures. Line 2 examines the experiences and views of adolescents and their parents concerning the functionality of the service system and the functional forms of psychosocial support. Line 3 studies the professionals' perspectives on the functionality of the service system and interprofessional collaboration in the context of adolescent service paths. Line 4 focuses on communication and interaction activities, including the implementation of the research results.

The NEPSOS study will provide knowledge and deepen the understanding of the following topics:

- How interprofessional cooperation is implemented in the service paths for adolescents with neuropsychiatric symptoms from the perspective of professionals from the fields of social work, adolescent psychiatry and education.

- How existing service networks meet the needs of adolescents and their families, and what kind of psychosocial support is provided to them by the professionals of social work, adolescent psychiatry, and special education.
- How psychosocial services and interprofessional collaboration are performed to improve the timeliness, targeting and integration of services for adolescents with neuropsychiatric symptoms and their families.

Furthermore, the impact of this study's findings will be manifested as practical recommendations and training materials for professionals. The NEPSOS study forms part of an interdisciplinary research consortium whose ongoing and future studies specifically aim at strengthening the integration of social care, health care and education for the health and wellbeing of children and families. Our experiences regarding interdisciplinary collaboration and the future results of the study can be applied internationally both in higher education and the integration of child social, health and education services.

Keywords: neuropsychiatric symptoms, adolescents, interdisciplinary collaboration, social work, adolescent psychiatry, special education.