

Understanding Service Pathways in the Treatment of Childhood Anxiety while Identifying Key Components of Parent Supported Intervention Models

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Introduction

- Globally and provincially, anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorders in children and youth^{1,2}
- Majority of children will not receive treatment for their mental health disorder³, if they do the treatment offered is often not evidence-based nor the most effective treatment method (i.e. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)^{4,5}
- Parental involvement in treatment for childhood anxiety is expanding, but the elements that are included in these treatment methods remain unclear compared to more traditional methodologies^{6,7,8,9}.

Two Research Aims:

- 1) Understand families help-seeking behaviours & what barriers to treatment are perceived by parents
- 2) Examine the therapeutic elements of parent-led intervention models

Methodology: Study 1

Participants

- 27 parents of children 12 years of age or under exhibiting anxiety symptoms
- Resided within Southwestern Ontario
- 93% were female, identifying as the child's mother

Procedure

- Completed an online questionnaire entitled Service Use Questionnaire
- Modified from the 2014 Ontario Child Health Study's section on Service Use with additional questions on barriers added by researchers

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics were used to describe characteristics of parents and their child
- Frequency counts were used to compare parents of children with and without a diagnoses help-seeking behaviour

Methodology: Study 2

Procedure

- Scoping review was constructed using PRISMA-ScR guidelines
- Keywords were inputted into 3 databases; PsycINFO Ovid, PubMed, & Cochrane Library
- Inclusionary criteria: children 13 & under, parental component, anxiety primary target, published after 2000, English
- Exclusionary criteria: parental component unclear/missing, comorbid diagnosis of neurological disorder, therapist-child interaction
- After screening 74 results, 7 studies were included in final analysis

Data Analysis

- The charting framework outlined by Arksey and O'Malley¹⁰ was used to extract information on each intervention

Results: Study 1

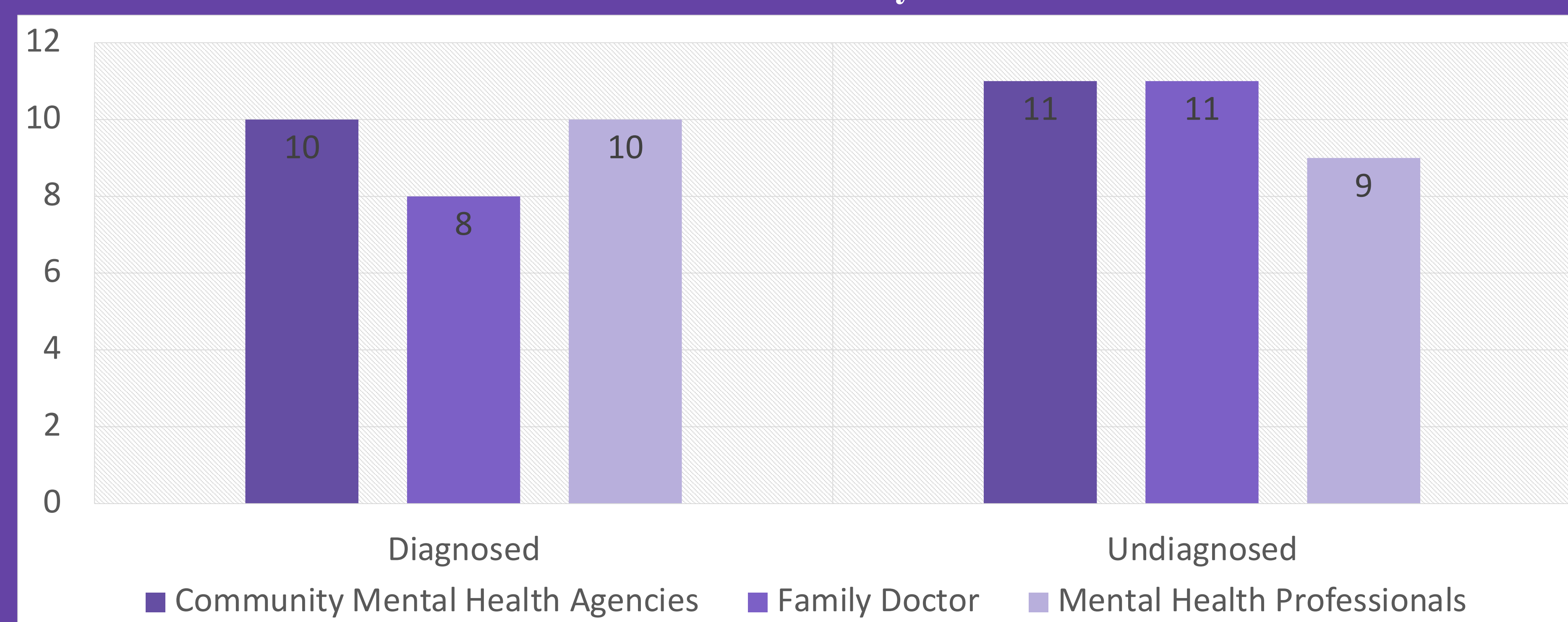


Figure 1. The top three service providers accessed by families in Southwestern Ontario and corresponding number of families who indicated accessing services in the past 6 months

Satisfaction Ratings

- Family doctors were rated as less helpful for families of children without a diagnosis when compared to the satisfaction ratings of families of children with a diagnosis

Barriers to Seeking Help

- Parents did not know where to get help
- Parents thought they could manage the symptoms themselves

Results: Study 2

Article & Date	PSYC ED (1)	EXP (2)	RLX (3)	PS (4)	PASM (5)	PP (6)	RM (7)	CT (8)	Treatment Sequence
Salari et al. (2018)	X	X	X	X			X	X	1,3,4,2,6,7
Hiller et al. (2016)	X	X	X	X	X				Condition 1: 1,8,2,4 Condition 2: 1,8,5,2,3,4
van der Sluis et al. (2012)	X	X		X	X				1,4,2,5
Comer et al. (2012)	X	X				X			1,2,6
Lebowitz et al. (2014)	X			X*				X	1,4,8
Comer (2020)	X	X				X			1,2,6
Novick et al. (2019)	X	X		X	X		X		Condition 1: 7,2,4 Condition 2: 1,7,2,5

Table 1. Eight identified therapeutic elements and the treatment sequence of the included elements identified from the reviewed interventions

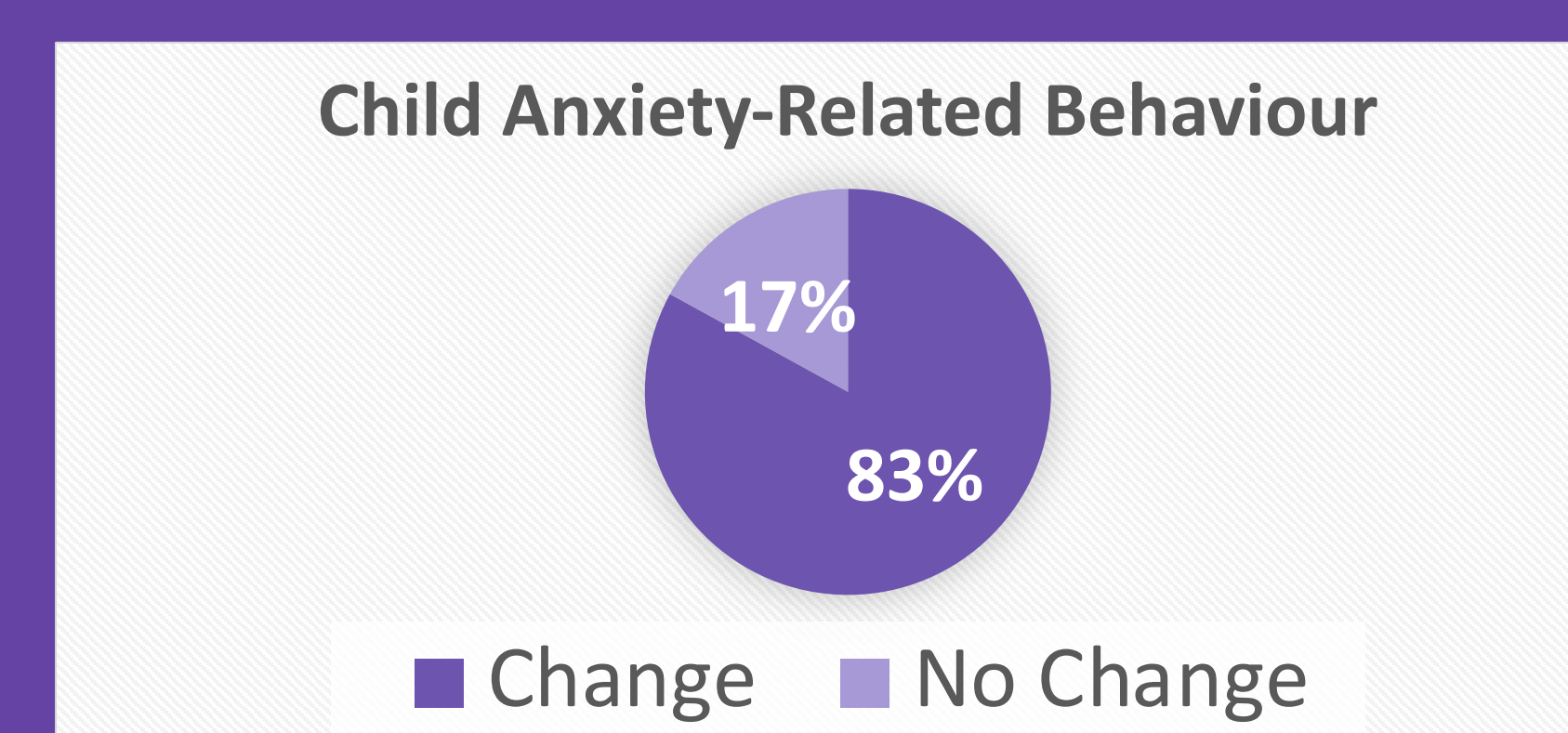


Figure 2. Interventions that reported changes in child anxiety-related behaviour

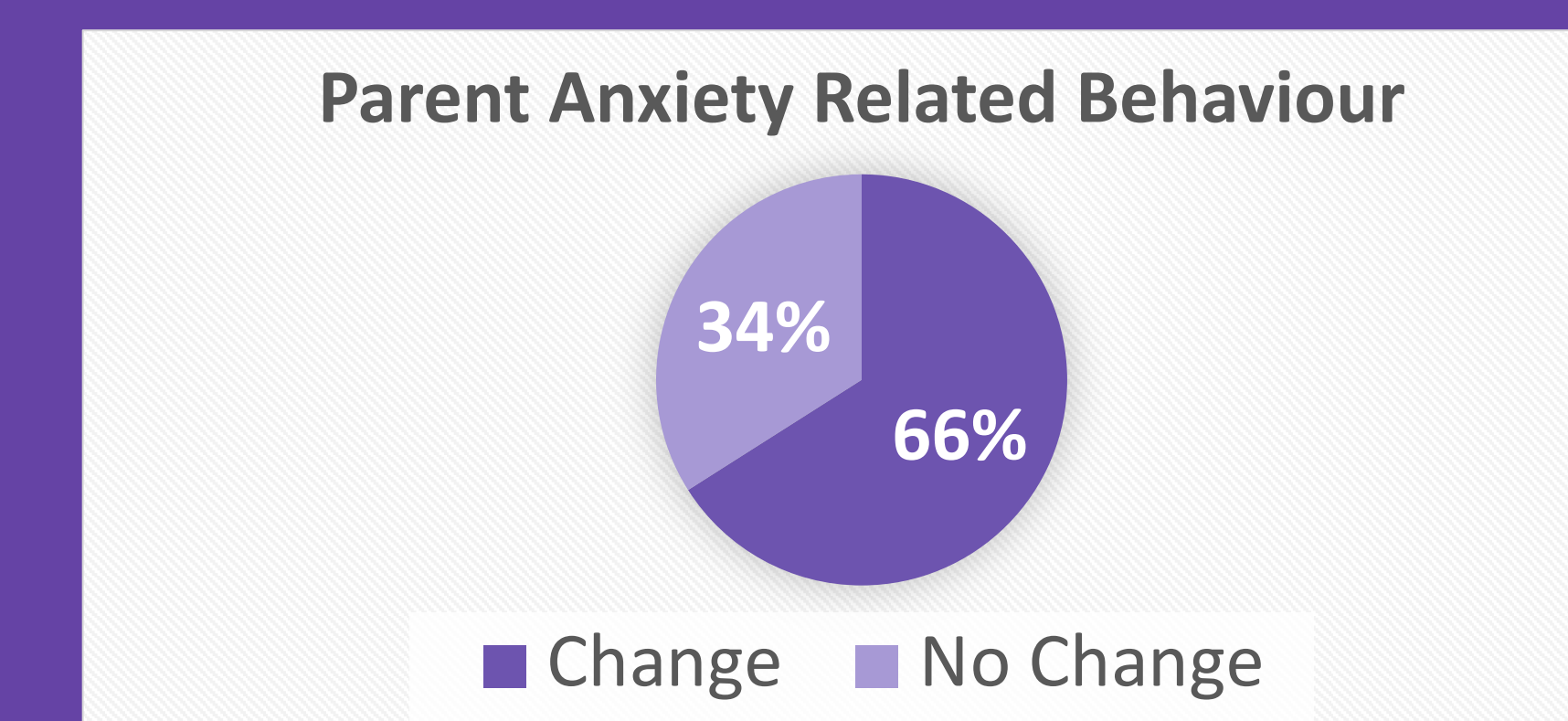


Figure 3. Interventions that reported changes in parent anxiety-related behaviour

Diagnostic Concerns

- 86% of interventions required a diagnosis or diagnostic levels of concern

Telepsychology

- Over half of the reviewed interventions included a telepsychology component

Conclusion

Implications

- There are still barriers present in accessing evidence-based treatment especially for those without a formal diagnosis
- Parent-led interventions show that when parents are provided with knowledge to help them advocate, participate, and even lead the mental health care for their child they can have a positive influence on treatment for childhood anxiety

Future Directions

- Early interventions involving parents are needed, as these could provide opportunities for children to get evidence-based support for less severe symptoms possibly combating levels of diagnostic concern later in the child's life

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