CAP training in Europe: Similar challenges, different systems

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“Children are not simply small adults”, states the UEMS CAP training Logbook. The core identity of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CAP) has been at stake for the last few decades in Europe. CAP is an independent specialty in 23 countries, a subspecialty in eight countries, but five countries do not have any structured CAP training. Training differences are marked even within the EU member countries, not only in terms of content of training programs, but also relevant to duration, trainee selection, and graduation procedures. Interestingly, only half of the countries have integrated psychotherapy training as a full component of CAP training. The UEMS CAP Board published a Training Logbook, which has already helped new EU member countries to implement their own training program. We will discuss the discrepancies and similarities in CAP training programs across Europe, and the challenges that have arisen through harmonization processes.

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Early intervention in ASD

Su-S-017
The influence of T-ASK on parenting stress
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Parenting a child with ASD is associated with high stress. There is evidence that high levels of parenting stress counteract the effectiveness of early interventions for ASD. T-ASK is an early parent-based communication-focused training for pre-schoolers with ASD, that is conceptionally based on a German-wide accepted group training for parents with specific language delayed children. In T-ASK, parents learn how to behave more synchronic in everyday social-communicative situations to improve their child’s initiating and responding communication acts and to increase mutually shared attention. Currently, T-ASK is getting evaluated in a randomised-controlled study on 24 pre-schoolers aged 3–6. For assessing the severity of distress among these parents, the evaluation includes the German version of the Parenting Stress Index, one of the most widely used instruments for measuring parenting stress in families of children with ASD. Results will be discussed.

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Su-S-018
Joint attention and communication in an early intervention programme
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Joint attention is the process of sharing one’s experience of observing an object or event, by following gaze or pointing gestures. This early developing set of behaviors plays a critical role in both social and language development and is specifically impaired in children with autism. In this study, joint attention behaviors were taught to 18 children with autism aged 24 to 48 months in the context of an early start Denver Model Approach.

Methods.– The ESDM Curriculum Checklist was used to evaluate the children level. Learning objectives were constructed and a multiple baseline design was used to evaluate intervention effects. The intervention occurs in a play-based interactive style using a joint activity frame. Parents are involved and participate in the child training.

Results.– A significative improvement of the joint attention capacity is obtained for the group. An improvement in other domains like communication is also obtained. A single case design was used and this approach permits the analysis of individual differences in joint attention learning.

Discussion.– Young children with autism can learn joint attention in a natural setting with professionals and with parents even if the rate of progression can vary from a child to another.

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Su-S-019
Managing repetitive behaviours: A new parent group based intervention for the treatment of repetitive behaviours in young children with ASD
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There is an emerging evidence base that earlier delivered interventions may improve outcomes and “prevent” secondary disturbances for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families. Many of these interventions are delivered by parents but most focus on social communication. Parents rarely receive specific advice on how to understand, manage and reduce the impact of their child’s repetitive behaviours, despite our knowledge that parents’ ratings