“Effective Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI) Protocols for Pediatric Primary Care”

Abigail Schlesinger, MD
Medical Director, TiPS
Clinical Director, Behavioral Science Division
Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh
Medical Director, Ambulatory Integrated Behavioral Healthcare
Associate Professor
Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC
Pittsburgh, PA

Dr. Abigail Schlesinger is a child and adolescent psychiatrist with an interest in increasing access to quality behavioral health and developmental services for children and families. She was instrumental in the development of the Children’s Community Pediatrics Behavioral Health (CCPBH), a service that embeds therapist and psychiatrist in pediatric primary care. CCCBH has won local, state, and national awards for efficiently improving access to care. Dr. Schlesinger has also been recognized for her own clinical and academic expertise as Physician of the Year at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) in 2013. She also formerly served as the training director of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Triple Board Programs at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh and Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic). She is currently leading the integration of developmental, behavioral, and community resources for Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, and has been appointed as the Medical Director for TiPS (Children’s Telephonic Psychiatric Consultation Service), and Medial Director of Ambulatory Integrated Behavioral Health for WPIC.

Abstract – Advanced
Anxiety disorders are one of the most common psychiatric illnesses in children, affecting between 6% to 20% of all kids. Therapy is an appropriate first step when children have mild anxiety, although it is useful for any child with an anxiety disorder. Combined treatment – with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and medication – has been most effective in children with moderate to severe anxiety disorders. There are many options for medication treatment of anxiety disorders. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are the first line medication treatment, as they have demonstrated the most efficacy for children and adolescents. Dr. Schlesinger’s presentation will provide additional information on when and how to use SSRIs in a pediatric primary care setting.

By the completion of this session, participants should be able to:
1. Determine when and how to use SSRIs in Pediatric Primary Care
2. Explain how to use SSRIs, regardless of access to a therapist
3. Discuss how to use psychiatry resources to promote effective care.
References:

