

"Everything's Connected to Everything: Improving the Healthcare of Autistic and ADHD Adults"

Webinar presented by Mel Houser, M.D., Executive Director, All Brains Belong VT (9/19/2023)

Part 1: The status quo of healthcare is failing Autistic patients

Autistic Adults struggle to access healthcare

- 79.8% difficulty accessing primary medical care (Doherty et al 2020)
- 63-69% untreated health conditions (Doherty et al 2022)

Types of barriers to healthcare (Raymaker et al 2017; Doherty et al 2020; Doherty et al 2022)

- Environment
- Provider knowledge, skills, attitudes
- Systemic barriers

Autistic patients are dying

- Life expectancy 36-54 years
- Leading causes are premature cardiovascular disease and suicide

Part 2: Autistic and ADHD adults often experience a constellation of intertwined neuroimmune conditions.

Example component conditions of the constellation commonly impacting autistic/ADHD adults

- Hypermobility spectrum disorder
- Hypermobility spectrum disorder / Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome
- POTS/Dysautonomia
- Mast cell activation syndrome / disease (MCAS / MCAD)
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Fibromyalgia/Central Pain Sensitization
- Sleep disorders - OSA, RLS, PLMD
- Migraine
- Endometriosis
- Myalgic encephalomyelitis
- Long COVID
- *Many others*

Walk-through of the "Everything is Connected" free resources

- Patient resources - video, text, graphics, patient stories
- Clinician resources - peer-reviewed Clinician Guide with a primer for diagnosing and managing this constellation as one whole entity

Part 3: Neuroinclusive Healthcare

Neurodiversity & Access

- Neurodiversity: We all have different brains. Different brains do things differently: sensing, processing, thinking, behaving, communicating, learning.
- Neurodiversity paradigm: There is no one correct type of brain.
- Access needs: anything that *anyone* needs for full and meaningful participation. Everyone has access needs.
- Universal design (offering everything in multiple different ways) is best practice
- Defining access needs and the social model of disability

All Brains Belong is pioneering a new model for neurodiversity-affirming healthcare.

- Description of medical programs
- Description of community programs
- Description of education programs
- Description of employment support programs

Check out [Practical Strategies for Delivering Neuroinclusive Healthcare](#): ideas for any healthcare setting.