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LONG-TERM OUTCOMES OF ADHD: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL STUDY PUBLICATION TRENDS

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Introduction: As awareness of ADHD has increased throughout the world, interest has grown beyond the constellation of ADHD symptoms, including long-term effects and impact on people's lives.

Objectives: To examine the consequences of childhood ADHD and the relevance of these outcomes in different world regions.

Aims: This analysis examined the publication trends of studies of long-term outcomes of ADHD over time and among world regions.

Methods: Study identification followed Cochrane guidelines. Twelve databases were searched for reports published in English 1980-2010. Limiting criteria were designed to maximize study inclusion while maintaining a high level of study rigor: the studies were to

(1) be peer-reviewed,

(2) be primary study reports,

(3) include a comparator group or baseline, and

(4) report outcome results measured for a mean of 8 years (prospective studies, range of all studies was 6 months-40 years) after the start of the study, in late adolescence, or adulthood.

The fully-defined electronic search yielded 4615 citations, which were then reviewed manually based on the titles and abstracts, yielding a final of 371 studies.

Results: Study publication trends analysed included: publication year, country and world region of origin, outcome types, and study types. In general, the numbers of studies published per year globally has increased substantially (from 2 in 1980 to more than 40/year in 2007 and 2008) with differences observed between Europe and North America.

Conclusions: Analysis of publication trends can provide insight into outcomes of ADHD and the focus of specific world regions.

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