ADHD and everyday life: Healthcare as a significant lifeline

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Journal of Pediatric Nursing, Volume 35, July–August 2017, Pages 105-112
DOI: http://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2017.03.001.

Abstract

Aim
The aim of this qualitative study was to explore parental experiences of how healthcare practices and healthcare professionals in hospital clinics in Denmark influence everyday life of parents with a child with ADHD.

Design and Methods
The methodology was focused ethnography. Participant observation and interviews were used as the primary data collection methods. Fifteen families of children with ADHD were included from somatic and psychiatric hospital clinics.

Results
Three main themes emerged from the experiences of the families: When the house of cards collapses in everyday life, Treading water before and after receiving the ADHD diagnosis, and Healthcare as a significant lifeline.

Conclusions
Accessibility to healthcare, trusting relationships and health care professionals recognizing how ADHD pervades all aspects of everyday life appear to be important factors in providing a lifeline for parents to help them regain confidence and control in disruptive phases. The parents depend on help from healthcare professionals and family-centred care to manage the complex challenges of everyday life.