

Criticality in developing Guidelines for ASD

Flavio Sartoretto (A.P.R.I.)

A.P.R.I. Associazione Cimadori Per la Ricerca Italiana sulla Sindrome di Down,
l'Autismo e il Danno Cerebrale

March 15, 2023

Summary

We deal with:

- Rules for Panel eligibility.
- Use of anti-psychotics.
- Persons in the Spectrum who cannot self-represent themselves.
- An example: Italian Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS).
- Conclusions

Introduction

- Recently, ISS published the "Linea guida per [...] bambini e adolescenti con disturbo dello Spettro Autistico"
- A panel of experts worked for over than two years in order to



write this guide.

- ISS allowed **only individual persons** to join the panel, no Association representative was allowed to join!

Introduction

- People with Autism Spectrum Disorder belong to two main categories: those who **can self-represent**, and those who



VS



cannot.

- In all countries, **persons who can self-represent are now invading the Panels** who should direct research and cure on Autism. The needs of those who **cannot self-represent themselves are now underestimated.**
- Only reputed, legal representatives of well-known Associations can counteract this imbalance.

Anti-psychotics for ASD

- The ISS Panel suggests to **use D2 blockers, i.e. anti-psychotics**, when dealing with children and adolescents in the Autism Spectrum.
- anti-psychotics, called D2 blockers to confuse ideas, are **recommended for Autism as such**, which is worse than prescribing them via the comorbidity principle.

Effectiveness of ABA

- ISS denies the greater effectiveness of ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) oriented interventions.
- **According to ISS, all therapeutic interventions are equivalent.** This is an implicit invitation to pursue the cheaper therapies.



Effectiveness of ABA

- Estimated costs of individual interventions:
 - 15,000 euros per month for the first intervention based on ABA called "Lovaas";
 - less than 500 euros per month for the DIR (Developmental, Individual-differences, Relationship-based).
- **The cost of Lovaas (ABA oriented) is exaggerated.** It seems made on purpose, in order to induce those who administer the public budget towards the cheapest methods, regardless of their effectiveness.

Conclusions

- Panels for guiding Research and/or Treatment of Autism **must include well-known, credited Association Representative.**
- ABA oriented therapies must be acknowledged as **more effective in Autism.**
- Prescription of anti-psychotics must be well tuned and monitored.