

TITLE: Stuttering and Primary Medical Care: A Cross-Sectional Study

PI: Hector R. Perez, MD

Primary Care Research Fellow

New York University Medical Center

(646) 501-2684

Hector.perez@nyumc.org

ABSTRACT

Patient-centered care is one of six aims outlined by the Institute of Medicine in order to provide high quality health care. As defined by the Institute of Medicine, patient-centered care is “respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values.” Within primary care medicine, increased patient-centeredness has been linked to better health outcomes, increased satisfaction with care, and increased efficiency of care.

Patient-centered care in primary care requires a robust patient-doctor relationship and good patient-doctor communication. Barriers to good patient-doctor communication may develop among persons who stutter, who constitute a heterogeneous population for which difficulty with producing speech can lead to difficulty with and avoidance of speech. This may lead to a deficiency in patient-centered medical care, preventing appropriate autonomy, coordination, access, and support for patients and their families.

Based on previous work among adults who stutter, we believe there may be specific problems with health-related communication in this population. We found that some participants avoided discussing concerns about their health because of stigma about stuttering. Others reported missing or avoiding medical appointments because of stuttering. We propose a survey-based study in order to investigate the effect of stuttering on primary care experiences and patient-centeredness. We will recruit adults who stutter through online campaigns, and the data collected will be used to inform further research about health quality in this population.