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**PREVALENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS AND ACCESS TO CARE AMONG CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE MISSISSIPPI MEDICAID**

**OBJECTIVES:**

The aim of the present study is to evaluate the prevalence of several mental health diagnoses and utilization of anti-psychotic medications among the children (<18 years) enrolled in the Mississippi Medicaid.

**METHODS:**

A retrospective analysis was conducted using Mississippi Medicaid administrative claims data for the period July 2013 to June 2014. Beneficiaries were included if enrolled in Medicaid (fee-for-service or coordinated care), were less than 18 years of age at end of observation year and enrolled 3+ months during the observation year. Since most mental health diagnoses are of a chronic nature, diagnosis were assessed using claims for the period January 2012 to June 2014 in order to be as complete as possible. Treatments and costs estimates were based on the one year observation period. Access to care was measured as the proportion of care received from MDs in-county, in adjacent counties, and in other counties. All measures were computed for each county.

**RESULTS:**

387,838 children were identified in the observation period. Overall, the prevalence of ADHD (11.0%) was highest followed by developmental disorders (5.7%) and conduct disorder (4.4%). Children ages 11 to 18 had higher prevalence of mental health disorders than did other ages. CNS stimulants, antidepressants, narcotic analgesics and antipsychotics are the most frequently used mental health drug categories. The total annual cost was highest for ADHD patients (\$191 million), followed by patients with oppositional defiance disorder (\$115 million). Access to mental health care varied by county with the Mississippi delta region having poorer access to care as measured by the proportion of in-county MD visits.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Mental health disorders among children are a significant burden to the Mississippi Medicaid. The prevalence of mental health disorders varies significantly among counties of the state. Children from some counties of Mississippi have poor access to mental health care services.

*Statement to be included on poster*

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