

Factors predicting parents' perceptions of family-centred practice in early intervention settings

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Introduction. Family-centred practice (FCP) is a guiding philosophy of service provision in early intervention (EI) settings; however the implementation of this approach can be challenging for service providers, including occupational therapists, working in this field. The aim of this study was to investigate the factors that predict parents' perceptions of FCP in EI settings.

Method. Participants completed the Measure of Processes of Care (MPOC-20), the European Parent Satisfaction Scale About Early Intervention (EPASSEI) and a demographic questionnaire which included participants rating their perceived level of knowledge, importance and satisfaction with a FCP approach. A multiple linear regression analysis was completed to identify the significant independent predictive factors of the five MPOC-20 subscales. Ethics committee approval was obtained from Monash University and the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Results. Participants included 63 parents (response rate of 28%) of children attending Yooralla Early Childhood Intervention Services, Melbourne, Australia. Overall, six factors were found to make a significant, unique contribution to the prediction of parents' perceptions of FCP, which included: care for the parents (EPASSEI subscale 1), care for the child (EPASSEI subscale 2), model of care (EPASSEI subscale 5), parents' rights (EPASSEI subscale 6) and parents perceived level of importance and satisfaction.

Conclusion. The results of this study make a valuable contribution to the evidence base available regarding FCP, by providing the first insight into the factors that predict parents' perceptions of service providers' implementation and use of this approach. By focusing on improving the quality of care in the areas found to predict parents' perceptions of FCP, health professionals, including occupational therapists, can target strategies to improve care in these areas in an endeavour to maintain, improve or implement a FCP approach in EI settings.