

28% of Children in North Carolina Medicaid/CHIP Prescribed Antipsychotics: A Concerning Trend



28% Of Children In North Carolina Medicaid & CHIP Prescribed Antipsychotics Received No Psychotherapy (OPEN MINDS Weekly News Wire Book 2024)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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A study by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services found that 28% of children enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP were prescribed antipsychotics in 2017. This is a significant increase from the 15% of children prescribed antipsychotics in 2010. The study also found that black children were more likely to be prescribed antipsychotics than white children, and that children living in poverty were more likely to be prescribed antipsychotics than children from wealthier families.

Antipsychotics are powerful medications that are used to treat a variety of mental health conditions, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and autism. However, these medications can have serious side effects, including weight gain, drowsiness, and blurred vision. It is important to discuss the risks and benefits of these medications with a healthcare provider.

effects, including weight gain, sedation, and tardive dyskinesia (a movement disorder that can be permanent). In children, antipsychotics can also cause developmental problems and learning difficulties.

The study's findings are concerning because they suggest that antipsychotics are being overprescribed to children in North Carolina. This is a serious problem because these medications can have serious side effects, and they are not always effective in treating the conditions for which they are prescribed.

There are a number of reasons why antipsychotics may be overprescribed to children. One reason is that these medications are often used to treat behavioral problems in children. However, antipsychotics are not approved by the FDA to treat behavioral problems, and they are not always effective in doing so. Another reason why antipsychotics may be overprescribed to children is that they are often prescribed by primary care physicians who may not have the training or experience to prescribe these medications safely.

The study's findings highlight the need for more research on the use of antipsychotics in children. It is also important for parents and caregivers to be aware of the risks and benefits of these medications before they are prescribed to their child.

What can be done to address the overprescription of antipsychotics to children?

There are a number of things that can be done to address the overprescription of antipsychotics to children. These include:

- Increasing awareness among parents and caregivers about the risks and benefits of antipsychotics.
- Improving the training of primary care physicians on the use of antipsychotics in children.
- Developing guidelines for the use of antipsychotics in children.
- Conducting more research on the use of antipsychotics in children.

By taking these steps, we can help to ensure that children are only prescribed antipsychotics when they are truly needed and that they are used safely.

Additional resources

- National Alliance on Mental Illness: Antipsychotics
- National Institute of Mental Health: Antipsychotics
- FDA Drug Safety Communication: Certain Antipsychotic Drugs Carry Increased Risk of Death in Elderly Patients With Dementia



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