

Identifying Information Needs of College Students with Learning Disabilities and Attention Disorders

Mackenzi Slamka, Haley Benner, Claudia Luna, Luis Villarreal, Sharon Medina, MOT, OTR/L, Consuelo Kreider, PhD, OTR/L

BACKGROUND

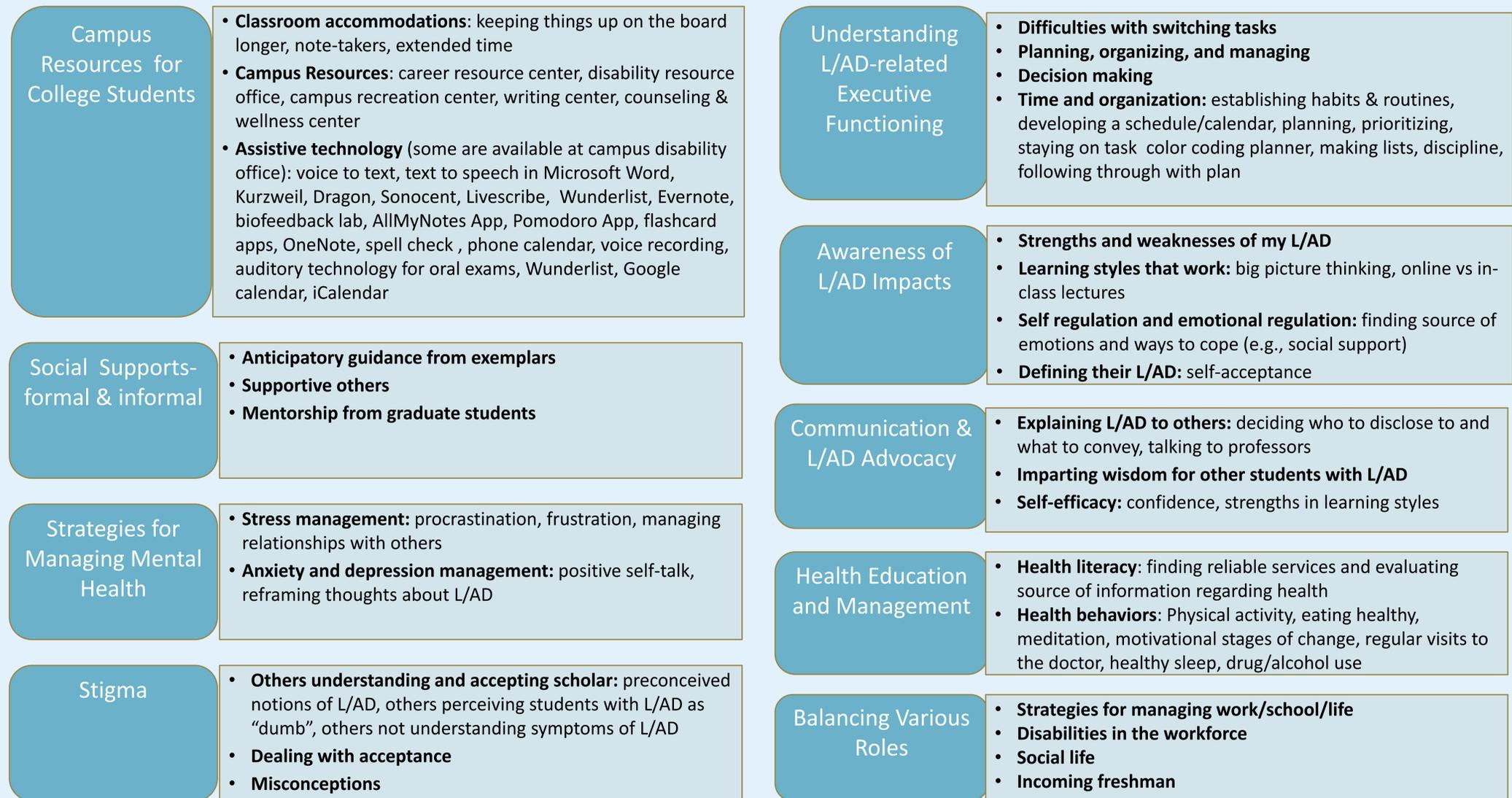
- Students with disabilities have lower postsecondary completion rates than their peers in the general population¹.
- Particularly at risk are students with Learning and Attention Disorders (L/AD), which make up almost half the population of students with disabilities in college².
- Students with learning and attention disorders (L/AD) face challenges in managing demands related to their college roles and L/AD-related symptoms^{3,4}.
- **Purpose: To identify information prevalent to college students with L/AD transitioning through the college setting with the goal of guiding interventions towards these knowledge needs.**

METHODS

- Participants were 52 undergraduates with L/AD from a larger study to develop supports for students with L/AD.
- Participants met monthly in groups to receive L/AD-related educational content and engage in discussion.
- Data came from 30 psychoeducational group sessions that included the educational content, focused questions, and transcripts from associated discussions.
- Qualitative strategies were used to assess information needs of students with L/AD.
- Rigor was enhanced by attendance of meetings and multiple coders of the data came to consensus of interpretation of the data.

RESULTS

Figure 1. Types and examples of information needs of college students with L/AD



CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

- Results include information needs, types and examples from educational information that was presented to the students as well as feedback provided from the students which combine to explicate a framework for supporting students with disabilities who are enrolled in college.
- Findings can be used to develop and/or refine occupational therapy interventions for young adults transitioning through a college pathway, gearing information given to them to be useful and beneficial for success through this transitioning time.
- Limitations: This is a preliminary analysis. The information needs from the transcripts and meeting educational material will be analyzed next to include interactions between the information needs and types to better conceptualize the information for future use. In addition, this is a secondary analysis from data collected as part of a larger study.

References

1. Newman, L., Wagner, M., Knoke, A.-M., Marder, C., Nagle, K., Shaver, D., & Wei, X. (2011). The Post-High School Outcomes of Young Adults with Disabilities up to 8 Years after High School: A Report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2). NCSER 2011-3005. *National Center for Special Education Research*.
2. Parker, D. R., & Boutelle, K. (2009). Executive Function Coaching for College Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD: A New Approach for Fostering Self-Determination. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 24*(4), 204-215.
3. Kreider, C. M., Bendixen, R. M., & Lutz, B. J. (2015). Holistic Needs of University Students with Invisible Disabilities: A Qualitative Study. *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics. DOI: 10.3109/01942638.2015.1020407*
4. Kreider, C. M., Medina, S., Lan, M. F., Wu, C. Y., Percival, S. S., Byrd, C. E., ... & Mann, W. C. (2018). Beyond Academics: A Model for Simultaneously Advancing Campus-based Supports for Learning Disabilities, STEM Students' Skills for Self-regulation, and Mentors' Knowledge for Co-regulating and Guiding. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1466. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01466



Acknowledgements

This research is based upon work supported by the U. S. National Science Foundation under Grant Number (HRD-1246587). This work is also supported in part by the NIH/NCATS Clinical and Translational Science Award to the University of Florida (UL1 TR000064) and the NIH National Center Medical Rehabilitation Research (NICHD) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (K12 HD055929). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NSF or NIH.