



Effective Health Care

Parental Alienation Syndrome

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- The topic, *Parental Alienation Syndrome*, is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.

Topic Description

Nominator(s): Patient/consumer

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness of therapeutic and non-therapeutic approaches to prevent or treat parental alienation syndrome (PAS) in children and adolescents.

Staff-Generated PICO

Population(s): Children and adolescents at-risk of experiencing, or experiencing parental alienation syndrome (PAS)

Intervention(s): Therapeutic approaches to prevent or treat PAS, such as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), cognitive therapy and school counseling

Comparator(s): All other treatment options

Outcome(s): Prevention of PAS; improved family functioning; decreased PTSD, suicidal ideation, anxiety, fear, anger and aggression in children and adolescents

Key Questions from Nominator: For children and adolescents experiencing parental alienation syndrome (PAS), what is the comparative effectiveness of therapeutic prevention and treatment approaches?

Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see [http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/.](http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/))
- Parental alienation syndrome refers to a disorder in which a child, on an ongoing basis, belittles and insults one parent without justification, due to a combination of factors, including indoctrination by the other parent (almost exclusively as part of a child custody dispute) and the child's own attempts to denigrate the target parent. Parental alienation syndrome is not recognized by any professional association and is not listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual

of Mental Disorders or the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems of the World Health Organization (WHO).

- There is limited research on parental alienation syndrome. Although we found some literature focusing on methods to improve internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children and adolescents experiencing parental divorce, the available literature does not adequately address the nominator's key questions. Therefore, the topic of parental alienation syndrome is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.