

## Self-Injurious Behaviour in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Intellectual Disability

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### Background

- ◆ Previous estimates suggest 1 in 2 people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) show self-injury.
- ◆ Estimates are limited by poor description of ASD diagnosis and ability level.
- ◆ The characteristics of those with ASD who show self-injury have not been described in detail.
- ◆ Knowing the characteristics may help predict who is at risk for developing self-injury.

### Aims of the project

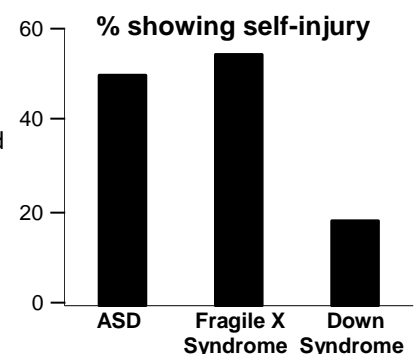
- ◆ To estimate the prevalence of self-injury in ASD, with robust description of ASD diagnosis and ability.
- ◆ To compare the prevalence of self-injury in ASD with Fragile X and Down syndrome.
- ◆ To evaluate the association between ASD characteristics and self-injury.
- ◆ To describe the associations between characteristics and the presence of self-injury in ASD.

### Methods

- ◆ Carers of individuals with ASD, Fragile X and Down syndromes completed questionnaires.
- ◆ Questionnaires included reliable and valid measures of ASD behaviour and self-injury.
- ◆ Questionnaires also assessed ability level, mood, repetitive behaviours and activity levels.

### Results

- ◆ Self-injury was displayed by 50% of the ASD group, 54.5% of the Fragile X syndrome group and 18.4% of the Down syndrome group.
- ◆ Self-injury was associated with higher levels of autistic behaviour in the Fragile X and Down syndrome groups.
- ◆ In the ASD group, the characteristics of impulsivity, overactivity, low mood, poor speech and poor self-help skills were associated with self-injury.



### Conclusions and future directions

- ◆ Self-injury is common in ASD, with 1 in 2 individuals engaging in self-injury.
- ◆ Self-injury is associated with the presence of ASD behaviours in individuals with genetic syndromes.
- ◆ In Down and Fragile X syndromes and ASD, the characteristics that are associated with self-injury may be used as risk markers for the purpose of targeting early intervention.
- ◆ Some of the characteristics associated with self-injury in individuals with ASD may indicate a role for impaired behavioural inhibition in the cause of self-injury.

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