



Editorial Team

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Latest Developments With Regards to Global Developmental Delay (GDD)

Global Developmental Delay (GDD) affects about 1% to 3% of the population worldwide. It denotes a delay in two or more developmental domains of fine motor, speech and language, cognition, social and interpersonal, and activities of daily living, affecting children under the age of 5 years.

Research in GDD is still ongoing and governmental bodies in Singapore are starting to fund and encourage initiatives to help this vulnerable population. Knowing about the latest happenings in the field is immensely helpful to loved ones of children with GDD, where they are able to learn more about the complexity of this special need of the child and gain better access to services tailored to address the child's needs.



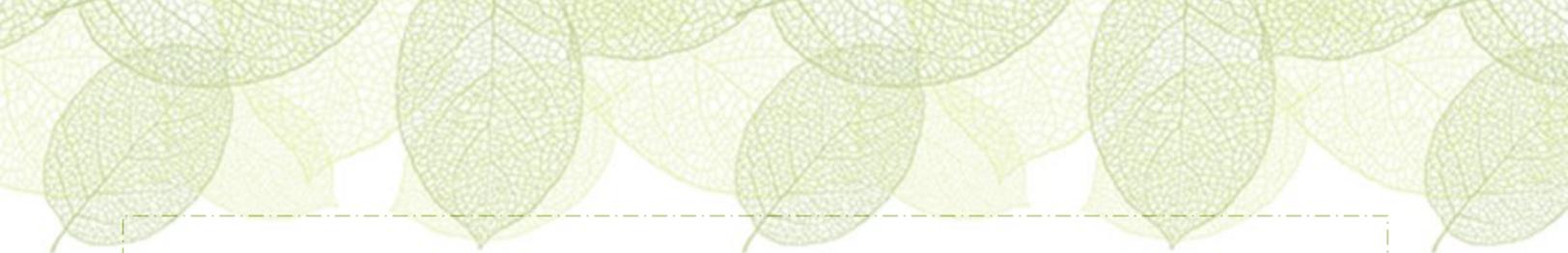
1. Scientific advancements

Based on recent investigations with relation to children with GDD, it has been shown that due to recent advances in genomic medicine, children with GDD can be better examined using genetic testing to find out the root cause of their developmental delay and also allow for more targeted treatment for the individual. As such, it can be said that whole genome sequencing/exome sequencing may become the primary investigation of choice for all children with unexplained GDD and that other investigations will be secondary to this and used primarily for phenotyping. Being able to isolate the reasons behind the manifestation of the child's developmental delay would reduce the need for extensive testing and assessment by other existing methods and will allow for the child to be prescribed with appropriate care at an earlier stage.

2. Improved Access to Services in Singapore

Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) in Singapore provides therapy and educational support services for infants and young children with special needs. It equips them with necessary skills and helps develop their potential, thereby overcoming developmental delays as far as possible. As of July 2019, the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) will be progressively rolling out more customised Early Intervention (EI) services. Services will also be made more affordable. Fee changes to the EIPIC, Development Support (DS) and Learning Support (LS) programmes will take effect from 1 April 2019. This means that children with special needs will be able to receive more affordable help as the programme enables EI centres to receive government funding for providing their services.





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