

**Neuropsychology Abstracts**

**Title:** PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH IN TRANSITION-AGE INDIVIDUALS WITH SPINA BIFIDA

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**Background:** The transition of adolescents and young adults with spina bifida (SB) into adulthood is a critical developmental stage thought to influence long-term psychological outcomes. Based on a social-ecological theoretical framework, the primary aims of this multi-center research were to explore the psychological health in transition-age individuals with SB and to identify individual, familial, and healthcare system factors associated with healthy psychological functioning.

**Method:** Sixty-one transition-age individuals with SB (Mean age = 21.03 years) completed a self-report questionnaire packet that included standardized measures of attitude toward SB, family satisfaction, assessment of Chronic Care Model (CCM) healthcare services and psychological health. Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to test the hypotheses that (1) the combined effects of the individual, family, and environmental factors would explain variability in psychological health and (2) the proximal individual (attitude toward SB) and family (family satisfaction) functioning variables would be more strongly related to psychological health than the distal environmental factor (assessment of CCM healthcare services).

**Results:** Twenty-four participants (39%) scored in the clinical range for psychological distress. The overall model inclusive of individual, family, and environmental factors explained a significant amount of variance in psychological health (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .21,  $p < .01$ ). Psychological health was significantly related to a positive attitude toward SB (R<sup>2</sup>change = .17,  $p < .01$ ) and satisfaction with family functioning (R<sup>2</sup>change = .08,  $p < .01$ ) but not CCM healthcare services (R<sup>2</sup>change = .00,  $p > .05$ ).

**Conclusion:** Prevalence of self-reported psychological distress in this sample of young adults with SB was higher than general population estimates (6.7%) and was consistent with estimates from other previously reported SB cohorts. Several key proximal variables in t