**Updates from the SCATN...**

- Distribution of computer and teleconferencing equipment has begun! Many thanks are owed to Stephen Harris from the USC School of Medicine for coordinating the installation of this equipment at each of the SCATN physicians’ offices. Once installation is complete, physicians will have the capability to access SCATN consultants with expertise in the area of diagnostics, pharmacology, and behavioral treatment via teleconference at scheduled times. SCATN physicians are also invited to send questions related to the assessment and care of patients with Autistic Disorder.

- A SCATN Website is coming! We have been working hard at building a website for use by our network physicians. The SCATN site will contain Autism specific screening tools, information that will link physicians to providers of other services, articles of interest to those with interest in Autism, and much more.

**Of Interest in Autism...**


This paper is an easy read and provides information on a group of children with ASDs from areas similar to those in South Carolina. This study asked caregivers of children with autism spectrum disorders in a mix or rural/urban areas in Virginia questions about the age of diagnosis of their child, what information the parent/caregiver received about autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) from the professional who diagnosed their child, and what sources (their health professional or outside sources (the media including internet, books and videos, conferences, and other parents) they used to learn more about ASDs. The primary respondents were Caucasian/European American (88%) mothers (75%) with some college or a college degree (56%) with equal numbers living in rural, mixed rural/urban or urban areas. The mean age at diagnosis was 4 years 10 months, with 50% of the sample diagnosed later than 3 years 9 months. Developmental pediatricians (43%) diagnosed most of the children, followed by psychologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists in that order. Fewer than half of the professional provided further information with about 41% of the professionals talking to the families about ASDs and 45% providing literature and information on available resources with the most information from developmental pediatricians. No further information was provided by 18% of professionals and caregivers reported getting most of their information from the internet, books and videos (about 72%) and conferences and other parents (42%). This study again emphasizes the need for earlier diagnosis to facilitate early intervention and the authors recommended that all physicians receive specialized training about ASDs to improve on early screening and diagnosis and about empirically supported services. A major drawback to this study is that it does not provide any information on who referred the children for evaluation, whether this was the role of the families’ general pediatrician, and whether the professional who referred the child played a role in their ongoing care. See the full article at [http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2431/7/37](http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2431/7/37)