



## SHP Student Interns for Research and Scholarly Activities Project Proposal Form

**Instructions:**

Please fill each box to the right of the required fields, obtain the required signature and return via email to Michele Sisco ([mcoral@shp.rutgers.edu](mailto:mcoral@shp.rutgers.edu)) by **March 24, 2025**.

If you are sending attachments, please ensure your contact information is added to all your forms.

**Faculty Contact Information:**

Date submitted:	3/22/25
Faculty Name:	Aaron Dallman
Department/Program:	RMS/ OTD
Telephone number:	2543716350
E-mail:	<a href="mailto:Ad1764@shp.rutgers.edu">Ad1764@shp.rutgers.edu</a>

**Project Detail:**

Project Title: (56 characters max)	A Gap Analysis of Healthcare Services for Neurodivergent Children
Hypothesis:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Objective 1: Describe to what extent healthcare practitioners understand and implement neurodiversity-affirming and strengths-based interventions (NDA/SBIs).           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the level of knowledge and understanding of NDA/SBIs among healthcare practitioners?</li> <li>2. To what extent do healthcare practitioners currently implement NDA/SBIs in their clinical practice?</li> <li>3. What are the common challenges or barriers that healthcare practitioners face in implementing NDA/SBIs?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Objective 2: Describe the attitudes, beliefs, and barriers that impact why some practitioners are not using NDA/SBIs.           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the prevailing attitudes and beliefs of healthcare practitioners regarding neurodiversity and NDA/SBIs?</li> <li>2. How do these attitudes and beliefs influence the adoption of NDA/SBIs in clinical practice?</li> <li>3. What are the specific barriers that prevent healthcare practitioners from implementing NDA/SBIs?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Description:	Over a lifetime, the medical costs of autism and other

<p>(Include design, methodology, data collection, techniques, data analysis to be employed, evaluation and interpretation methodology for research component)</p>	<p>neurodevelopmental conditions are twice that of stroke and hypertension combined. Recently, a paradigm shift has emerged within the field, shifting care provision from a medical curative model into a wholistic acceptance and strengths-based approach. This pioneering change to the healthcare system has been widely circulated and accepted among the patients themselves, but has unknown integration into healthcare practice. Neurodiversity-affirming and strengths-based interventions (NDA/SBIs) have been suggested to be an alternative intervention approach that is effective in improving outcomes for autistic youth and the autistic-community prefers these interventions to replace non-SBIs.</p>
<p>Specific Student Responsibilities:</p>	<p>In this iterative, LHS approach, our team consisting of a Rutgers researcher, and hospital administration/clinical staff, uses continuous data analysis and feedback loops to improve healthcare practices for ND children. We use mixed methods (primarily Qualitative) to understand these gaps in care. We will conduct interviews with autistic individuals (n=15), parents of autistic individuals (n=15), healthcare practitioners (n=15), and administrators (n=15) to elucidate these gaps. Interviews will be transcribed verbatim and analyzed using rapid qualitative analysis approaches. We will then share these findings back with each participant to continue the feedback processes. All participants will be drawn from a single hospital system within New Jersey. After completion of the data collection, we will leverage these findings to develop targeted trainings for these providers.</p> <p>Students will receive training by the PI (Dallman) in interviews. The Student will co-conduct interviews with the PI and assist with transcription and qualitative data analysis. The student will also assist with scheduling interviews.</p>
<p>Start / end date of project:</p>	<p>March 2025 – August 2025</p>

<p>WHAT OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS? (e.g., journal club, seminars, clinic, rounds)</p>	<p>Students will have opportunities to participate in journal clubs with the PIs research lab. In addition, they will have opportunities to join the PI’s research seminars.</p>
<p>WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO PRESENT OR PUBLISH THE FINDINGS WITH THE STUDENT? (e.g., national or state meetings, newsletter or journal, SHP poster day)</p>	<p>The manuscript for the study will be drafted in December, 2025. In addition, we hope to present these findings at the American Occupational Therapy Association Conference in 2026.</p>

---

**CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE BOXES BELOW AND PROVIDE REQUESTED INFORMATION.**

This project is:  clinical  laboratory  behavioral  survey  educational

Other: please specify\_learning health systems research \_\_\_\_\_

This project involves the use of human subjects (including chart review, retrospective studies and questionnaires).

Pending  Approved  IRB Protocol Number \_ Pro2024002602

***IRB approval must be obtained by June 2025***

---

 PT, DPT, PHD.

Signature of Department Chair

March 24, 2025  
Date