

GLEPHA NEURODISABILITY SIG

Welcome to our February newsletter! At our next meeting on the 07th of February 2025. We will have a presentation from from Dr. Lisa Whittingham, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Disability Studies at Brock University in St. Catharines. Her research focuses on encounters between justice professionals (e.g., police, lawyers, etc.) and persons labelled with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In her talk, Lisa will discuss the results of her project examining registry-based programs maintained by police services in Ontario. She will discuss how autistic individuals are constructed and police officers' perceptions of how these programs can be used during encounters.



CALL FOR ABSTRACTSDATES
16 DECEMBER 2024 – OPEN
31 MARCH 2025 – CLOSED
30 APRIL 2025 – SELECTED NOTIFIED

CONFERENCE CONVENOR:



MAJOR PARTNERS:



CONFERENCE CO-CONVENOR:



GLEPHA NEURODISABILITY SIG

ANNOUNCEMENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – ELECTION RESULTS

We are pleased to announce that the following GLEPHA members were elected to the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting held November 19th, 2024:

President: Richard Bent (Canada) re-elected

Secretary/Treasurer: Bill Stronach (Australia) re-elected

Ordinary Members: Larissa Engelmann (UK), Megan M. Parry (US)

Each were elected to their positions for a two-year term – 2024-2026. Larissa and Megan are new members on the Board and bring considerable experience and passion to these roles.

SIG MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

FEBRUARY'S SIG MEMBER SPOTLIGHT IS: SHAREFA DUHANEY

Where are you currently working, and what is your role?

I am a 3rd year PhD student in the College of Public Health at The Ohio State University.

What project are you working on at the moment?

I am currently working on how justice entities in Ohio might integrate accommodations for both types of brain injury (BI), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Hypoxic Anoxic Injury (HAI), from strangulation or other forms of oxygen deprivation, into office procedures, trainings, and referral policies to improve access to justice services and rehabilitation supports for domestic violence survivors and probationers living with BI. To address this, I am currently conducting focus groups with justice staff (probation, victim advocates, attorneys, pre-trial, etc). This work is being used to build into my dissertation research I hope to propose and begin next year which will examine the prevalence of brain injuries in offenders currently on probation. I will also conduct sit down interviews with probationers as well to get a better understanding of their brain injury and determinants faced when navigated the justice system and services.



What research or work would you like to see in future?

I love the work being done on brain injury and strangulation overseas and am so happy the work is being done. I would like to see more research on this topic across more countries such as the United States, where this research is lacking. I would like to see more research on community-based violence and how that can contribute to the probation to incarceration pipeline due to unaddressed brain injuries.

What motivates your work in Neurodisability/Law enforcement

The unheard voices of communities. There's a growing body of research on brain injury and its effects on the brain and body and the impact of those within justice settings, however, I don't see a lot of research that centers the voice of those individuals. Thinking about the opportunity to highlight how they experience the system, or the ways they speak about the needs they need to address brain injury for example – putting their voices and needs at the front of the work motivates me to work even harder as these voices are often ignored.

What are the biggest barriers of implementing support and/or diversion for people with Neurodisabilities in the Justice System in your opinion?

I think one of the biggest barriers is education. There remains a lot of stigma and misconceptions about those with Neurodisabilities in the justice system. The first course of action would be to educate and train staff and even those within the system to recognize the signs and the consequences. Maybe then we can begin to work to implementing support that will be effective and efficient.

It is a sunny Saturday with no looming deadlines... where would we find you?

Depending on the temperature, usually in the garden. I love plants (both indoor and out). When time allows, I enjoy caring for them and watching the fruits of my labor. Seeing first hand how beautiful things can still be in a mountain of stress. If it is cold, you can find me inside pruning and planting, and watering my houseplants.

SIG RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Relationships between neurodivergence status and adverse childhood experiences, and impacts on health, wellbeing, and criminal justice outcomes: findings from a regional household survey study in England

Charly Wilson, Nadia Butler, Zara Quigg, David Moore and Mark Bellies

Abstract

Background Evidence indicates that neurodivergent (ND) populations may be more at risk of experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), compared to neurotypical (NT) populations. However, this evidence has typically not examined a comprehensive set of ACEs and has only included ND individuals on the basis that they have a diagnosis. Very little research has examined the impacts of ACEs on negative adulthood outcomes for ND populations. The current study aimed to examine the associations between neurodivergence and experiences of ACEs, and the impact of being ND and experiencing ACEs on health, wellbeing, and criminal justice outcomes.

Methods From November 2023 to April 2024, a household survey using representative sampling was undertaken with 5395 residents of an English region aged 18 + years. Neurodivergence status was measured using one self-report item. Nine ACEs were measured using validated self-report items. Outcome measures included: poor general health, low mental wellbeing, ever being arrested, and ever being incarcerated. Multinomial regression models were used to examine relationships between neurodivergence status and ACEs. Binary logistic regression models were used to examine independent relationships between neurodivergence status and ACE count and each outcome measure. Generalised linear models with an estimated marginal means function were used to estimate the increased risk of each outcome for different combinations of neurodivergence and ACE count status (NT less than four ACEs (reference group), NT 4 + ACEs, ND less than four ACEs, ND 4 + ACEs).

Results A higher proportion of ND individuals experienced each ACE type than NT individuals. While controlling for socio-demographics, ND individuals were more likely to experience a greater number of ACEs than their NT peers. While controlling for socio-demographics, each outcome measure was more likely amongst those who were ND, and each outcome measure except for poor general health was more likely amongst those with higher ACE counts.

Conclusions The combination of being ND and experiencing ACEs could additively increase risks of experiencing poor wellbeing and criminal justice outcomes by a greater extent than expected. Preventing and responding to ACEs

YOU CAN READ THE PAPER HERE:

[HTTPS://LINK.SPRINGER.COM/ARTICLE/10.1186/S12916-024-03821-1](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12916-024-03821-1)

Have any news for the next SIG newsletter? Conferences to promote? Collaborative research opportunities? New papers published? Want to be the next spotlight member?
Please email Winnie: nkoanasamantha@gmail.com

[HTTPS://GLEPHA.COM/SPECIAL-INTEREST-GROUPS/NEURODIVERSITY-LEPH-SIG/](https://glepha.com/special-interest-groups/neurodiversity-leph-sig/)