



Partnership with Autistics for Successfully Supporting Adult Goals and Experiences

May 2024 – Year 1 Updates

The mission of the **PASSAGE Program** is to develop and implement the knowledge, resources, and supports that assist autistic teenagers in making a successful transition out of high school and into adulthood.

To help achieve this mission, we hosted a series of Priority Setting Meetings in February- May 2023. The goal of these meetings was to set the top initiatives for the PASSAGE Program collaboratively with our community. Meeting participants included a diverse group of autistic adults, caregivers of autistic young adults, Philadelphia autism organization leaders, community clinicians, and CHOP clinicians and researchers.

This purpose of this document is to review the PASSAGE Program Priorities and provide updates about our progress in the past year. If you would like additional details about the PASSAGE Program progress in 2023-2024, please email us at PASSAGEprogram@chop.edu

TRAINING AND EDUCATION RESOURCES

Goal: Engage effectively with the autism community and train the next generation of field leaders



The **Training and Education** topics voted as the top PASSAGE priorities are:

1. Provide training for general practice providers about the transition to adulthood for autistic youth
2. Provide Next Steps workshops for the autism community
3. Develop a relationship training for autistic young adults
4. Build a curriculum for school professionals and adult providers to bridge service changes
5. Make videos to help families understand the transition to adulthood

Over the past year, the PASSAGE Program has 1) conducted five trainings for many different types of providers, 2) hosted four Next Steps workshops for adolescents and adults, 3) planned a relationship workshop for Next Steps, and 4) built a directory of providers and services who are equipped to see autistic adult patients, including dentists, primary care physicians, transportation services, and employment organizations.

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Goal: Generate knowledge that will have immediate and tangible benefits to improve transition outcomes for autistic youth



The **Research** topics voted as the top PASSAGE priorities are:

1. Mental Health
2. Communication
3. Advocacy
4. Independence
5. Education

Over the past year, the PASSAGE Program has 1) submitted 5 grants focused on supporting transition-aged autistic people, 2) been awarded a multimillion dollar grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to study factors that promote independence for autistic young adults, 3) applied a \$200,000 donor contribution to studying autistic mental health, 4) received a \$50,000 grant from CHOP to pilot a new clinical intervention on independence and 5) engaged autistic consultants in all research projects.

CLINICAL PROGRAM

Goal: Deliver state-of-the-science evaluation, intervention, and consultation for local families navigating the transition to adulthood



The **Clinical** topics voted as the top PASSAGE priorities are:

1. Transition Assessments
2. Autism Evaluation (and re-evaluation)
3. Career Path Assessments
4. Mental Health
5. Independent Living Skills
6. Self-Advocacy/ Self-Understanding

Over the past year, the PASSAGE Program has 1) conducted over 35 transition assessments and 40 transition-focused consultation sessions, 2) conducted over 30 autism evaluation and re-evaluations, 3) collaborated with CHOP Career Path, and 4) piloted a new clinical intervention to enhance autistic youths' motivation to complete desired independent living skills. We're excited to announce that we will be expanding clinical staffing in 2024 to help serve more families in PASSAGE Clinic!