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Scott, Suzi J. and Totsika, V and Hastings, R (2019) BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS OF ACCESS TO EARLY INTERVENTION FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 63 (7). pp. 740-758. ISSN 0964-2633.

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.1111/jir.12657>

Link to record in KAR

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Document Version

Author's Accepted Manuscript

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BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS OF ACCESS TO EARLY INTERVENTION FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

S. Scott,¹ V. Totsika² & R. Hastings¹ ¹ Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research, University of Warwick, United Kingdom ² Division of Psychiatry, University College London, United Kingdom Introduction: Early identification and early intervention (EI) is important for families of children with developmental disabilities (DD).

Access to EI has been shown to improve a range of child and family outcomes and is advocated in international policy. However, there are significant concerns regarding both the timeliness and levels of access to EI. The present review aimed to identify barriers and facilitators of access to EI.

Methods: A literature review of research on the identification of needs and access to EI for families of children with DD was conducted. A general pathway of accessing EI, depicting the logical sequence of accessing support, was used to synthesise evidence on barriers and facilitators of access across three key phases: recognition of potential need; screening and/or formal identification of need; and access to EI. Results: Various factors which influenced the process of accessing EI were identified, such as system-wide processes, service design, referral procedures, funding streams, policies, and characteristics of the child, family and clinicians. Factors identified acted as barriers, facilitators, or modifiers of the process of accessing EI. Implications: Our results indicate that multiple factors appear to influence access to EI. Implications for the provision of EI and support for families of children with DD will be discussed in relation to facilitating access for families. Keywords Early Intervention, Developmental Disabilities, Families, Children A COMMUNI