

CG/JC/U87 06831

30 May 1996

Clinic: 30.5.96

Dr. McMillin,  
220 Knock Road  
Belfast BT5 6QF

Dear Dr. McMillin,

Claire Roberts

dob 10.1.87

It was nice to meet Claire on first occasion at the Thursday morning clinic at the Ulster, May 30th. Claire, 9 years 5 months, is known to have moderate learning difficulties and history of seizures from 6 months to 4 years of age. She has been off Epilim for the past year and seizure free.

Most of the consultation was discussing Claire's behavioural problems with Mrs. Roberts.

The family and school both feel that Claire is not achieving her potential because of her "scattiness". It may take all morning to settle her for seat work at school and she bounces around both physically and verbally.

Claire appears to have difficulty both planning and reflecting as well as selecting her choices and resisting distraction. She also has trouble sustaining mental effort and monitoring her actions.

All of these traits are part of attentional difficulties. I think it would be very difficult to rate her behaviour using one of the classic scales for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Having said this I am using them less and less these days and feel it is legitimate to describe her as having attentional difficulties.

I think Claire's family have several therapeutic options and I just began to discuss these with Claire's mother, Jennifer, today. One reasonable option would be to consider a brief trial with stimulant medication. This may be Ritalin or perhaps Pemoline or Amphetamine. All 3 medications, while chemically different, have a similar side affect profile. I didn't discuss this in detail but many children have decreased appetite and some difficulty sleeping in the first week or two, if the child has motor tics they may be exacerbated with treatment.

- 2 -

Claire Roberts

Other medications which may be more useful for obsessive behaviour include the SSRIs. I described this to mother as the same group as Prozac. I have been very pleased with SSRIs used in children with depression and some with obsessive problems.

As you can see I am just beginning to open these issues up with the family. I would be very pleased after they have received this letter to meet with parents and continue this discussion as they see fit. I will leave the door open here.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. C. Gaston, MB ChB FRCP(C)  
Consultant Community Paediatrician

cc: Family

phone call July 22<sup>nd</sup> : Claire showing attention seeking  
behaviour. constantly "on the go". Parents coming in Aug 1<sup>st</sup> 9.45  
for discussion re therapeutics.