Training in pubertal assessment – First step to the observational pilot study PROSPEL (Premier Observatoire des Stades Pubertaires en Libéral)

M. Jesuran-Perelrozen a, d, e, O. Puel b, d, e, J. Mazzarino c

a. Cabinet d’endocrinologie pédiatrique, 14, rue du Rempart Saint Etienne, 31000 Toulouse, France
b. Cabinet de pédiatrie, 88, avenue Pasteur, 33600 Pessac, France
c. Faculté de médecine, Université de Bordeaux, 146, rue Léo Saignat, 33076 Bordeaux, France
d. APPEL : Association Française des Pédiatres Endocrinologues Libéraux
e. AFFRA : Association Française de Pédiatrie Ambulatoire

Introduction

Recent publications report an earlier age of onset of pubertal changes in the US (1,2,3) and Europe (4,5,6). Referrals to pediatric-endocrinologist for early puberty are increasing. Precocious puberty diagnosis is often delayed, especially in boys. Improvement in pubertal assessment (age at onset of puberty) by pediatricians and general practitioners is needed to participate in the PROSPEL study and to improve management of pubertal abnormalities.

Materials and methods

Private physicians were recruited in Bordeaux and Toulouse to participate in a training session on practical modalities for assessing pubertal stages according to Tanner’s classification. Slides showed breast development and pubic hair.

An orchidometer was distributed to each participant for testicular volume estimation.

The post-intervention assessment included a test administered on their mobile phone via the Kahoot application, and “blind” palpation of orchidometer beads.

Intra-individual reproducibility was analyzed by repeatedly presenting the same orchidometer element. Inter-individual reproducibility was assessed by a double examination of a number of children.

Discussion and conclusion

Our results validate our training methodology and certification process for participating physicians in the PROSPEL study. The results of the preliminary study attest to a good feasibility (7). We can consider extending the study to the national level and provide the first French data on the age at which pubertal signs appear.