Hello everyone, and welcome. My name is Shreeja Beeravolu, and I am the research lab manager at the Thrive FASD Lab, University of Rochester Medical Center, New York.

Today, I'll be presenting our study titled, ***"Mapping the New York State FASD Research and Capacity Network: Identifying Strengths and Opportunities for Statewide Coordination."*** This work was conducted in collaboration with the contributing authors that you can see on the main slide here.

Our study focuses on understanding how professionals working in the field of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or FASD, are connected across New York State and what these connections tell us about the opportunities to strengthen statewide collaboration.

On slide two, you'll see the main objective of our study.

We wanted to map the existing relationships among professionals working in FASD across New York State and identify both the strengths of the current network and opportunities for better coordination.

Essentially, we wanted to understand who's connected to whom, how they're working together, and where there might be gaps in those connections.

On slide three, I'd like to provide a little background on why these networks matter.

One of the challenges in FASD care is that individuals and families often need support from multiple systems, including healthcare, education, family services, etcetera. These systems, however, do not always communicate or coordinate effectively. This can create barriers to accessing appropriate services, ensuring continuity of care, and sharing resources.

We know that professional relationships play an important role in addressing these challenges. But before we can strengthen statewide coordination, we first need to understand the network that already exists.

That is where social network analysis comes in.

Social network analysis allows us to examine relationships between individuals and organizations, identify key connections, and understand how information and resources move through a network.

Our hope is that these findings will eventually help inform FASD service planning and capacity-building efforts across the state.

Moving on to slide four, I'll briefly walk you through our methodology.

We used a social network analysis approach with snowball sampling.

We began by inviting an initial group of professionals identified by our study team. These individuals completed a REDCap survey and nominated other professionals they knew who were involved in FASD-related work.

Those nominations helped us identify additional individuals to invite, allowing the network to expand through successive rounds.

The survey collected information about participants' engagement with the FASD field, their professional connections, and the nature of those relationships.

We've also categorized relationships into five levels, as you can see here, ranging from basic awareness or recognition to

communication, coordination, collaboration, and finally, partnership or integration.

This was important because knowing someone professionally does not necessarily mean you're actively collaborating with them.

By examining these different relationship levels, we could better understand not just the size of the network, but the strength of its connections.

On slide five, you'll see some of our preliminary findings.

A total of 63 professionals completed the survey across four rounds of nominations.

We identified 147 cumulative nominations.

The network map on the right provides a visual representation of the professional connections identified through the study.

One of our key findings was that New York State already has a broad network of professionals who are connected through FASD-related work.

However, when we examine stronger relationships such as collaboration or partnership, these connections appear to be concentrated within a smaller number of groups.

We observed one large cluster of collaboration along with several small groups, like I just mentioned.

We also identified a small number of highly connected individuals who were repeatedly nominated across different relationship levels.

These individuals may play an important role in connecting professionals, sharing knowledge, and supporting coordination across the network.

While there is an established professional network, there are still opportunities to strengthen the connections between different groups.

For example, strengthening peripheral connections, as you can see here.

On slide six, I'd like to highlight the main takeaway from our study.

New York State has an established FASD professional network, but stronger collaboration is not evenly distributed throughout that network.

This presents an opportunity to build on the relationships that already exist rather than starting from scratch. We do not need to reinvent the wheel.

One potential direction is to strengthen connections across organizations, professional sectors, and geographic regions, particularly between groups that may be currently working independently.

Understanding these relationships can also help us identify where additional coordination and FASD-related capacity may be needed.

This ultimately will support better sharing of knowledge and resources, more coordinated referrals, and equitable access to FASD-informed care for individuals and families across New York State.

Thank you.