

Growing Healthcare Costs Disproportionately Affect Over 70 Million Disabled Americans

Enhanced training and new developments in software improve health outcomes and decrease healthcare costs.

CLEARWATER, FL, UNITED STATES, May 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As healthcare spending remains at an all-time high, the cost of care for disabled Americans continues to be disproportionately higher than for those without disabilities. Improvements in training and education have been found to decrease misdiagnoses, improve health outcomes, and reduce overall costs for healthcare providers and their patients with disabilities.



The National Health Expenditure Accounts (NHEA) provides official estimates of total healthcare spending across the United States. According to the [most recent NHEA report](#), healthcare spending increased 7.5 percent in 2023, reaching \$4.9 trillion or \$14,579 per person. While disabled Americans make up nearly 29 percent of the U.S. population, [disability-associated healthcare costs](#) account for over 36% of healthcare expenditures nationwide.

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Of the \$4.9 trillion spent on U.S. healthcare in 2023, [over 31 percent was spent specifically on hospital care](#). Disabled Americans have been found to utilize ER and hospital services at a significantly higher rate compared to those without disabilities. A lack of routine care is often blamed

for the increased need for emergency care services. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 1 in 4 adults ages 18-44 do not have a regular healthcare provider, and 1 in 6 adults ages 45-64 did not have a routine check-up in the past year.

“Routine healthcare isn’t just important—it’s lifesaving for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Too often, preventable conditions like aspiration or constipation escalate into emergencies simply because they go undetected,” states Dr. Craig Escudé, family physician and president of IntellectAbility. “Regular monitoring of health and detecting early signs of health destabilization are critical to catch comorbidities early, intervene appropriately, and ultimately improve both the quality and longevity of life for people with IDD.”

IntellectAbility provides tools and training to agencies, governmental entities, and supporters of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to foster early recognition and mitigation of health risks, thereby improving health and wellness.

People with IDD are at higher risk of severe health complications due to comorbidities, including aspiration, bowel obstruction, seizures, dehydration, and sepsis. While easily treatable, disabled adults face disproportionately higher mortality rates from complications related to these conditions.

Every routine doctor’s office visit provides an important opportunity for doctors to identify and diagnose the health issues of disabled patients before they become serious. Yet, most doctors receive minimal training on how to properly identify and diagnose health destabilization in people with IDD properly. This can lead to increased physician bias and fears about how to treat the specialized needs of these individuals.

“When physicians and supporters of people with IDD are equipped with specialized training and tools that enhance early recognition of often-subtle signs of health destabilization in people with IDD, outcomes improve dramatically,” states Dr. Escudé. Training empowers clinicians to provide accurate diagnoses, avoid costly and dangerous missteps, and build trusting, effective relationships with patients with disabilities. This is the foundation of equitable healthcare.”

In addition to providing training, IntellectAbility developed the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) to improve health outcomes and decrease costly emergency care for people with IDD. The HRST is used by agencies nationwide to measure healthcare acuity, inform direct support and nursing staffing needs, provide an electronic platform for nursing assessment data, generate health care plans and person-centered plans, inform rate-setting activities, and address continuity of care concerns related to direct support staff vacancies and turnover.

IntellectAbility provides tools and training to agencies, governmental entities, and supporters of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to foster early recognition and mitigation of health risks, thereby improving health and wellness. One such tool is the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST), of which they are the sole developer, producer, and distributor. The web-based HRST is the most widely used and validated health risk screening instrument for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. IntellectAbility also provides numerous health-related and person-centered service training for supporters of people with IDD. With an

unrelenting focus, IntellectAbility works to fulfill its mission of improving health and quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other at-risk populations. For more information, visit www.ReplacingRisk.com

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