

New Study Finds That Specialized Care Reduces ER Visits for Americans with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Enhanced provider education and training lead to reduced healthcare costs and better health outcomes for disabled Americans.

CLEARWATER, FL, UNITED STATES, June 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Emergency Room (ER) visitation rates are significantly more frequent among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). A new study, published by the University of Florida College of Medicine, found that enrolling adults with disabilities in specialized care programs significantly decreased the need for emergency care services.



Published on April 3, 2025, [the study](#) tracks how specialized care programs, specifically the Program for Adults With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (PAIDD), impact the rate of ER visits for people with IDD. Those enrolled in PAIDD saw a statistically significant decrease in ER visits compared to adults with IDD who received care outside the program.

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Dr. Craig Escudé, President of IntellectAbility

People with IDD are at higher risk of severe health complications due to comorbidities, including aspiration, bowel obstruction, seizures, dehydration, and sepsis. Disabled adults suffering from these conditions face disproportionately higher mortality rates compared to those without disabilities.

“When adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to clinicians trained in IDD-related

health risk identification and mitigation, health issues are identified and treated early, helping to prevent serious complications and significantly reducing the need for emergency room visits," said Dr. Craig Escudé, President of IntellectAbility and a family physician with extensive experience in providing healthcare 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.

States are increasingly turning to managed care organizations (MCOs) to improve both the cost and quality of care. MCOs work with a network of providers to manage their members' long-term healthcare services and supports. With rising enrollment by individuals with IDD, MCOs are recognizing the need for enhanced provider education to support improved health outcomes and quality of life. IntellectAbility is partnering with leading MCOs to deliver specialized training that equips providers to identify early signs of health destabilization.

[According to a survey conducted by Harvard Medical School](#), only 40.7% of physicians rated themselves as feeling "very confident" in their ability to provide equitable care to patients with disabilities], and just 56.5% strongly agreed [they welcomed patients with disabilities into their practices. In response to this gap, IntellectAbility has collaborated with managed care organizations to support provider training. Among them are health plans affiliated with Elevance Health, which have taken proactive steps to elevate provider education and improve care quality. IntellectAbility values the opportunity to support organizations like Elevance Health in their efforts to strengthen care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"Specialized training equips providers with the knowledge and confidence they need to recognize and address the unique health needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities—improving outcomes, building trust, and ultimately saving lives," states Dr. Escudé. "When Managed Care Organizations, like Elevance Health affiliated plans, invest in training their provider networks, they become essential partners in reducing avoidable emergency room visits and promoting proactive, person-centered care."

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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