Iowa's Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

Provide training, technical assistance, and fidelity monitoring for entities responsible for developing and implementing evidence-based practices for individuals with serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, and co-occurring conditions in Iowa.

ACT
Assertive Community Treatment

IPS
Individual Placement and Support

PSH
Permanent Supportive Housing
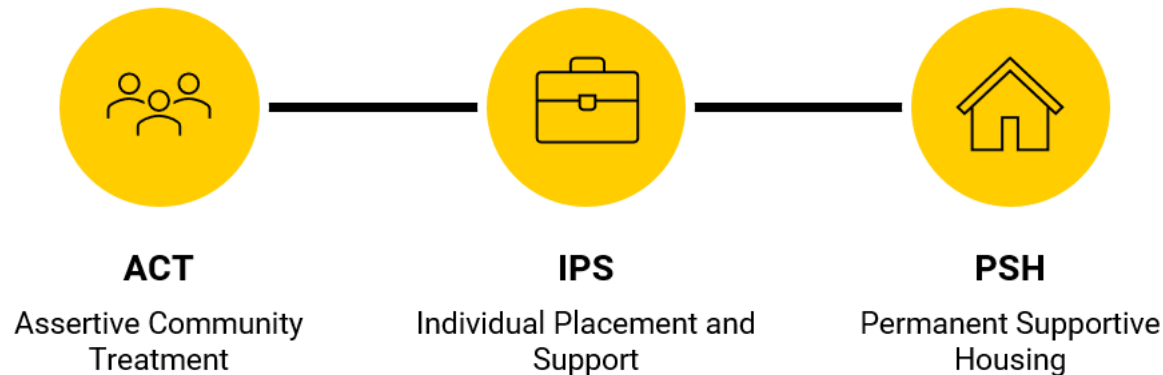
Training Objectives

Participants will gain knowledge of the concept of neurodiversity and specific diagnostic categories including intellectual disabilities, brain injury, and learning disabilities.

Participants will gain knowledge of universal design principles in the context of behavioral health.

Participants will be able to identify opportunities for implementing universal design principles in their respective behavioral health settings.

INTRODUCTION

Disability

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990:

- Any long-term mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as: walking, speaking, breathing, seeing, hearing, learning, working, caring for oneself (grooming, budgeting, cooking, dressing, etc.), or performing daily tasks (doing housework, laundry, driving, etc.).

World Health Organization:

- Any condition that is (1) impairing, (2) limits activity and/or (3) restricts participation.
    1. Impairment in a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning; examples of impairments include loss of a limb, loss of vision or memory loss.
    2. Activity limitation (e.g., difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving)
    3. Participation restrictions (e.g., working, social and recreational activities, obtaining health care)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Disability and Health Overview*

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one "right" way of thinking, learning, and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits.

Harvard Health Publishing, *What is neurodiversity?*

Prevalence
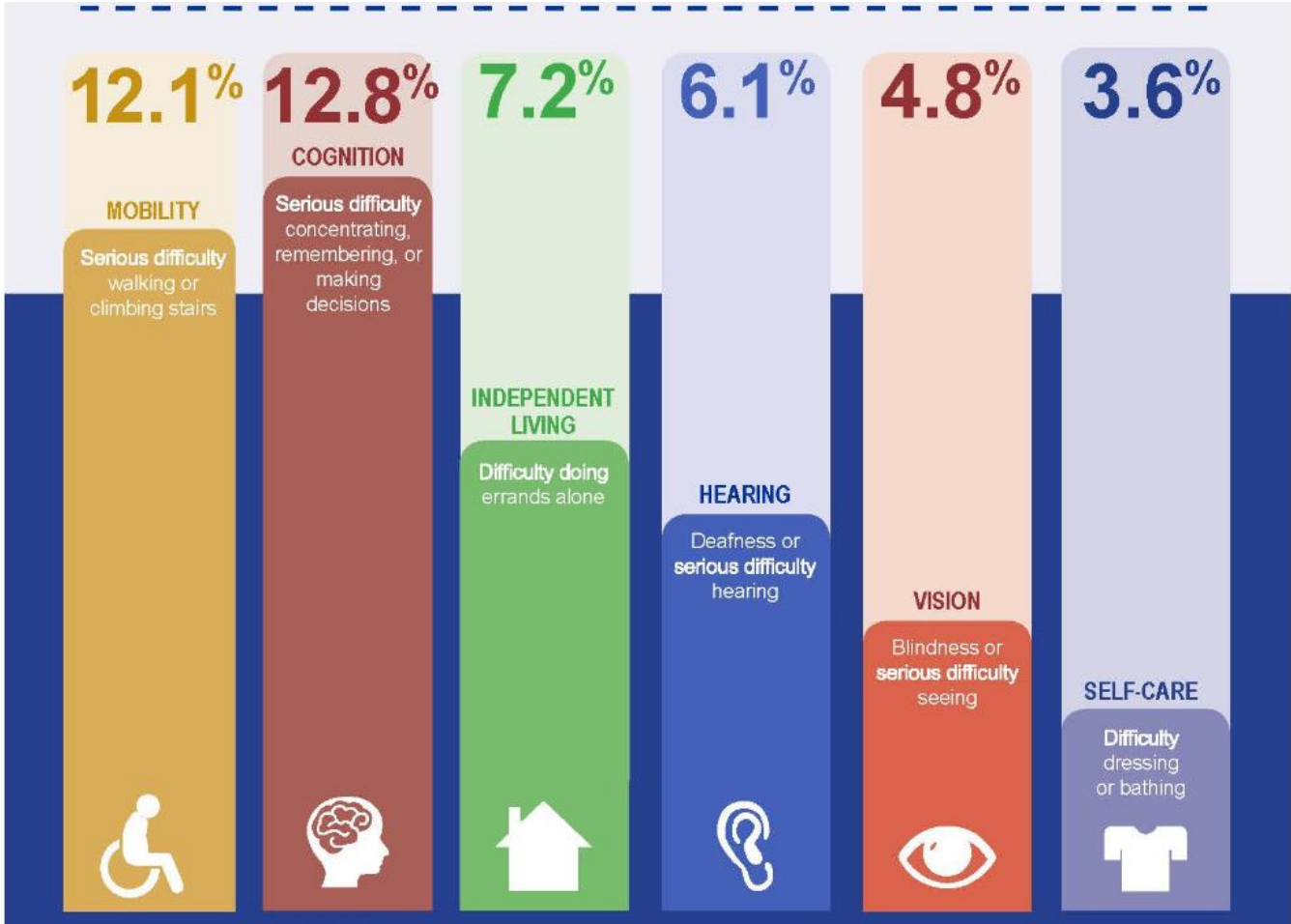
- Approximately 1 in 4 adults in the US have some type of disability

https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html

Social vs Medical Models of Disability

Social Model of Disability

- Disability is caused by the way society is organized/structured
- Limitations are the result of an environment filled with physical, communication, attitudinal, and social barriers
- People with disabilities, family members, and those advocating for change are the experts

Medical Model of Disability

- People are disabled by their impairments or differences
- Focuses on what a person cannot do or cannot be
- Professionals with specialized training are the experts

University of California, San Francisco Office of Developmental Primary Care, https://odpc.ucsf.edu/clinical/patient-centered-care/medical-and-social-models-of-disability

Person Centered Care

- People are the experts in their own lives

- Prioritizes an individual's needs and experiences

- Holistic, individualized, respectful, and empowering

Morgan and Yoder, 2011

Diagnosis

- Inequity regarding who gets diagnosed
  - Lack of access to healthcare, stigma surrounding disability, financial barriers, complex conditions

- Diagnoses are often tied to services and supports
  - Support services, financial assistance, legal protections, access to healthcare and treatment, community and peer support

Diagnosis

"When a label **obscures more than it illuminates**, the practitioner is better off discarding it and relying on common sense and human decency, like the lost sailor who throws away a useless navigational chart and reverts to orienting by a few familiar stars."

- Nancy McWilliams, PhD, ABPP

Universal Design & Accommodation

Universal Design

- The design of services and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

- Promotes access for people with disabilities but benefits all people.

Accommodation

- Making specific modifications or adjustments to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities. These modifications are often implemented on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to meet the unique requirements of each person.

What's the Difference?

Inaccessible design excludes people.

Accommodations give access to whoever is there at the moment. They often require extra work.

Accessible design means that current and future viewers will have access, without extra work.

https://accessibility.umn.edu/importance-accessibility/accessibility-vs-accommodation

Levels of Intervention

Adjust

- Simple changes that can be incorporated in a short time frame and/or with minimal cost or effort

Change

- These modifications require more time and resources but successfully contribute to the objectives of widespread change

Reform

- Long term effort that will lead to system transformation

Universal Design Principles

Equitable Use	**Flexibility in Use**	**Simple and Intuitive**	**Perceptible Information**
Is the design useful and usable to people with a wide range of abilities?	Does the design allow for individual preference and abilities?	Is your information easy to understand?	Is information communicated in an effective way?

https://www.mhddcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Universal-Design.pdf

Universal Design Principles

Tolerance for Error

Does the design minimize the consequence if a person makes a mistake?

Low Physical Effort

Can the design be used comfortably and effectively by people with a wide range of physical characteristics?

Size and Space for Approach and Use

Does the size and amount of space given allow for people to use it regardless of size, posture, or mobility?

https://www.mhddcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Universal-Design.pdf

Disabilities: Diving Deeper

Intellectual Disabilities

- Intellectual disabilities involve challenges with general mental abilities that affect functioning in two main areas:
  - Intellectual functioning (learning, problem solving, judgement, etc)
  - Adaptive functioning (activities of daily living like communication, personal care/hygiene, money management, etc)

- Adults with intellectual disabilities may have difficulty with tasks requiring abstract thinking, problem-solving, or social interactions.

- They may need support to live independently, manage finances, or understand social cues in various settings.

https://www.aaidd.org/intellectual-disability#.YiCGZi2cbZs

Intellectual Disability & Substance Use Treatment

- Ask simple questions and repeat them if necessary

- Teach refusal skills

- Avoid generalizing (i.e. explain that the same refusal skills that are used at a party can also be used at a bar)

- Have the individual repeat back a concept to make sure they understand

- Utilize role-playing

- Having the individual focus on specific goals (i.e. not cashing their SSI check at a liquor store)

https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/drug-addiction/substance-use-intellectual-disabilities/

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Brain Injury

- Brain injury results from damage to the brain due to accidents, strokes, or illness.

- Adults with brain injuries may experience a range of cognitive, physical, emotional, or behavioral challenges depending on the severity and location of the injury.

- They may have difficulty with memory, attention, emotional regulation, or motor skills.

https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury/about-brain-injury

Brain Injury & Homeless Services

- Staff should be attentive to possible signs of cognitive impairment can present – and be sensitive to how they can appear as noncompliance or uncooperative

- Consider the design of intake and intervention to allow adequate time to build a working alliance and engagement

- Awareness that sensitivity to noise and difficulty with social cues can make shared living spaces challenging

- Repetition can be helpful

https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/adapting-your-practice_final_10-22-181.pdf

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- ASD is a developmental disorder affecting communication, social interaction, and behavior.

- Adults with ASD may have difficulty with social communication, understanding non-verbal cues, and adapting to changes in routines or environments.

- They may have intense interests or sensory sensitivities that impact their daily functioning.

https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/autism-spectrum-disorder

ASD & Crisis Intervention

- Use clear, simple language and avoid abstract concepts or figures of speech. Be direct and specific.

- Reduce environmental stimuli such as loud noises, bright lights, or strong smells that may exacerbate distress.

- Allow extra time to process thoughts and formulate words

- Education on positive coping skills and distraction techniques

- Awareness of possible mistrust of helping professionals due to difficult interactions in the past

https://988lifeline.org/help-yourself/individuals-with-neurodivergence/

ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)

- ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsivity.

- Adults with ADHD may have difficulty with time management, organization, and maintaining focus in various settings such as work or school.

- They may struggle with impulsivity, leading to challenges in decision-making or interpersonal relationships.

https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/index.html

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ADHD & Supported Employment

- Strategies to reduce distractions

- Taking more frequent short breaks instead of fewer longer ones

- Time management tools

- Split duties into smaller tasks with shorter deadlines

Learning Disabilities

- Impacts how a person receives, processes, recalls, and/or communicates information

- Not primarily the result of intellectual impairment or other disabilities

- Challenges may include difficulties in reading, writing, or math despite average or above-average intelligence.

- Adults with learning disabilities may struggle with following written instructions, understanding complex forms, or expressing themselves clearly.

https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/All-Disorders/Learning-Disabilities-Information-Page