

Health & Well-being for People with Disabilities

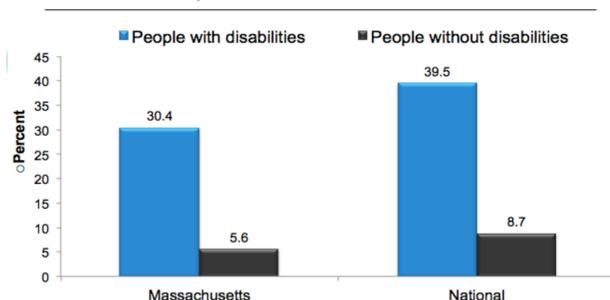


Barry Kriegsman, Christopher Goljan, Mayur Contractor, Michael Flynn, Miriam Madsen, Rebecca Compton
Linda Long-Bellil, JD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health

Population of focus:

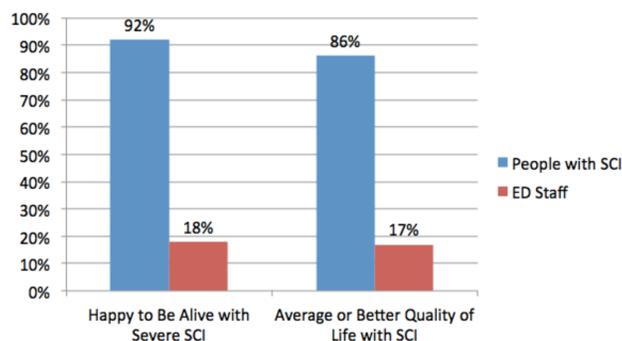
- 1 out of 6 people nationwide report serious limitations in functioning.
- Health care costs associated with disability are estimated at \$400 billion annually.
- We focused on people with independent living disabilities in MA between ages 21-64.
- As of 2011, 3.5% of the MA population in this age group (3.7% nationally) reported an independent living disability.
- **People with disabilities reported poorer health than those without a disability.**

Self-Reported Fair to Poor Health by Disability Status, MA and United States, 2010



- **Physicians bring their own biases to treatment of people with disabilities.**

Health Beliefs



- **One critical issue is EMPLOYMENT:**
 - As of 2011, 32.6% of this population lived below the poverty line.
 - Only 18.5% of this population was employed.

Service project at Worcester Public Schools:

- Spent a day preparing to paint a classroom with young adults with disabilities (ages 18-22) in the WPS Transition Program.
- Goals:
 - 1) Understand challenge of transitioning to adulthood for a person with a disability.
 - 2) Observe typical daily activities in the program and facilitate some new activities.
 - 3) Get to know some cool kids!

Activity 1: Discuss colors and vote on paint color.



Activity 2: Measure room for painting (and people for fun).

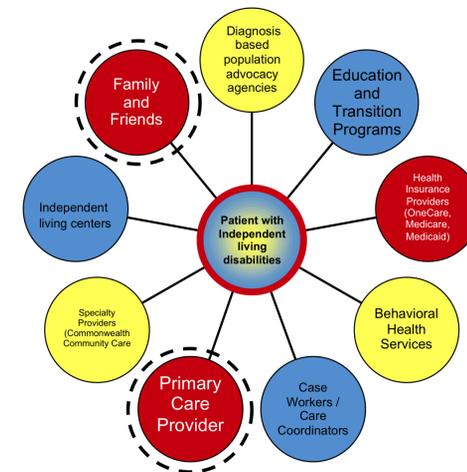


Activity 3: Panel discussion with students about their health care experiences



Our goals and how we achieved them:

- Understand the challenges to obtaining adequate health care access for people with disabilities as well as life with a disability.
 - We each spent a day shadowing an individual with a disability.
- Learn about services and agencies that are available for people with disabilities.
 - Center for Living and Working
 - Commonwealth Community Care
 - Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital
 - Mass Commission for the Blind
 - Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - NuMotion
- Learn about the new state initiative (One Care) aimed at improving health care for those in our population of focus that qualify for both Medicaid and Medicare (schematic for this population shown below).



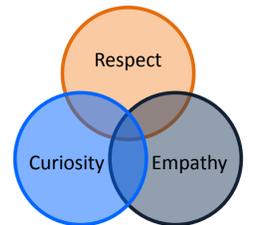
Reflections:

- Continuity of care from health care providers is needed for people with disabilities.
- People with disabilities often feel like their voices have not been heard. As health care providers, it is our job to advocate for these individuals and make sure their needs are met in a way that is compatible with their lives and goals.

Recommendations:

- Encourage ADA compliance at physicians' offices.
- Be aware of interpreter services.
- Be responsive to team members and team obligations (e.g. paperwork for disability services).
- Consider patient preferences.
- Keep open lines of communication.
- Maintain patient dignity.

"I need my primary care physician to interpret my medical concern in the context of my CP (cerebral palsy) – neither ignoring that I have CP nor attributing every concern I have to CP."
- P.K., Cincinnati, Ohio



References:

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Betancourt et al. Public Health Reports 2003
- Disabilitystatistics.org
- Gerhart KA et al. Annals of Emergency Medicine 1994
- Mitra, Monika. "Where in health is disability?"

Acknowledgements:

- UMMS
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- Center for Living and Working
- Commonwealth Community Care
- Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital
- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- NuMotion
- Worcester Public Schools