Public Health and Disability: Moving Past the Medical Model

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1. Autism, Health, & the Medical Model
2. What Does MDH Do Related to Autism?
3. Key Takeaways
Autism, Health, and the Medical Model
Models of Disability

- **Spiritual Model**
  - Impurity & sin
  - Depend on “mercy” of others

- **Industrial Model**
  - Unproductive or incapable
  - Value placed on employability/$

- **Medical Model**
  - Idealized optimal health
  - Technical experts with power to “fix” or “cure”

- **Social Model**
  - All humans have inherent dignity & rights
  - Society is inaccessible

**Personal Characteristics x Environment = Disability**
What is the role of health & health care providers?
Routine Health Care

• Accessibility!
• Medical, dental, and mental health care
• Knowledgeable and equipped providers
Supports and Therapies

**GOAL:** Have the skills and supports in place to live a happy, safe, and self-directed life in their community.

**Communication**
- Technology (AAC)
- Speech therapy

**Sensory & Motor**
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy

**Skills & Behaviors**
- Behavioral & developmental interventions
- Social skills groups

**Co-occurring Conditions**
- Seizure medications
- GI medications (reflux, constipation)
- Nutrition counseling
- Mental health medication and/or counseling
Transitioning Off a Cliff

- Many services/supports provided in school
- Pediatric to adult health care
  - New providers and procedures
  - Limited coordination
  - Neurodiversity understanding in adult providers

More young adults with autism were disconnected from both work and education than their peers with other disabilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual disability</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Language impairment</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional disturbance</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning disability</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2
What does MDH do related to Autism?
Roles of Public Health

Building capacity of communities to support their own health

Understanding prevalence & trends

Identifying & addressing inequities

Sharing trustworthy health information

Preventing and addressing harm, especially for those most at-risk

Convening and collaborating with partners
MDH Programs for Children/Youth

• Promote Screening
  • Follow-along Program

• Facilitate Collaboration
  • (agency) Autism Interagency group
  • (clinical) Care Coordination grants

• Support Families
  • Family support grants

• Special Projects
  • Multicultural delegates
What is Screening?

Brief, simple tool to:
- See how a child is growing and developing
- Find any differences early
- Teach parents what to expect and how to support their child’s development

Does not diagnosis or “label” a child
- Helps decide whether a child could benefit from a closer look
Minnesota’s Follow Along Program

• Free!
• Available in 80 counties
• Helps you track your child’s development from birth to three
• Receive handouts and activities
• Assistance with referrals
• Enroll online:
  • https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/childrenyouth/fap/index.html
Screening in Minnesota

Settings
• Primary care provider, schools & child care, local public health/home visiting programs, child protection

AAP Bright Futures Recommendations
• Developmental screening minimally at 9, 18, and 24-30 months of age
• Autism-specific screening at 18 and 24-month visits

Instrument
• Most programs use Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3) and/or social emotional (ASQ:SE) screening
Diagnosis & Evaluation

Medical AND Educational
• Different paths, different services

Who can provide a diagnosis?
• Typically, licensed clinical psychologist
  • CMDE providers for eligibility

Detailed medical evaluation
• Developmental pediatrician + team
Other MDH Programs

- Center for Health Equity
- Injury & Violence Prevention
- Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives
- Office of Rural Health & Primary Care
- Emergency Preparedness & Response
Autism & COVID-19 Response

Disabilities and Unique Health Needs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

People with disabilities may have underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of COVID-19 and COVID-19-related complications or may have particular concerns. Below are some resources to address those concerns, including answers to frequently asked questions.

On this page:
- General information
- For caregivers
- For health professionals
- For school staff
- Frequently asked questions

- Reduced access to supports & services
- Home, community, health care, congregate care
- Opportunities and challenges with telehealth
- Concerns over rationing care
- Accessibility in testing, vaccination, and care
• The medical model isn’t the only way to think about health and disability.
• Early access to diagnosis and supports is important.
• We’re facing a lot of challenges, but making progress.
Thank you!

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