

Email Blasts: “Did you know?”

Consider sending out these quick facts and figures as a way to foster awareness about the health disparities facing adults with developmental disabilities (DD).

Did you know...

(from the Atlas on the Primary Care of Adults with Developmental Disabilities, 2013, unless otherwise noted.)

- Adults with DD are more likely to live in poorer neighbourhoods and in rural areas than other adults. They also have higher rates of morbidity and are more likely to be diagnosed with a range of chronic diseases.
- In Ontario, annual health or physical exams were billed for only 22% of adults with DD in Ontario before the Canadian Consensus Guidelines were published in 2011 recommending “annual comprehensive preventive care assessments.”
- Despite comparable use of family physicians and similarities in continuity of care, adults with DD were more likely to visit emergency departments and to be hospitalized than the general population.
- Approximately one in five adults with DD were prescribed 5 or more medications at once. Antipsychotics were the most commonly prescribed medication.
- Compared to the general population, adults with DD were more likely to:
 - Have preventable hospitalizations
- Compared to the general population, adults with DD are less likely to:
 - Be screened for breast, colon, and cervical cancer
- The most able, who lived relatively independently are often the least ‘prepared’ for the Health Check. A telephone call by a nurse to confirm attendance and answer queries has been found to increase uptake (Jones et al. 2009).
- A Health Check adapted to the needs of adults with DD has shown:
 - 6.6 fold increase in detection of vision impairment
 - 30 fold increase in hearing testing
 - Increase in immunization rates
 - Increase in women’s health screening
 - Increase in new disease detection (Lennox et al, 2007, 2011, 2012)