# MMW Aging Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Caregiver Education Program Needs Assessment

## Abstract and Summary of Results

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# Abstract

## Purpose
The purpose of this assessment is to understand the training and capacity needs of professional care providers to support aging adults with (IDD) in Northern Ontario and Indigenous communities. The key research questions are:

1. What level of experience and training do care providers have in working with AAIDD?
2. What are the perceived training priorities among care providers that will enhance their ability to support aging adults with IDD?
3. What barriers and facilitators do care providers experience in supporting AAIDD?

## Methods
An online survey was designed to assess the experiences and knowledge of care providers that support adults with IDD. Measures were identified from three key research studies that evaluated training and capacity building among care providers of adults with IDD (Hole et al., 2013; Rose et al., 2014; Wark et al., 2014) and were validated by the aging and IDD specialists on the research team.

The research team participated extensively in partnership building to enhance buy-in and participation in the survey. Team members reached out to organizations supporting individuals with IDD in Northern Ontario, including developmental services, health and mental health, respite services, Indigenous services, supports for aging individuals, housing and homelessness, and corrections. Initial emails and phone calls were directed at individuals and organizations with pre-existing relationships with Surrey Place and the MMW program. Those contacts were asked to support the team in creating connections with other relevant individuals and organizations. One hundred and five individuals were contacted using this snowball method. The team also engaged Ontario 211, an online repository of community programs and social services, and acquired additional contacts for all listed developmental services, mental health, aging, and Indigenous service organizations in the target geographic area, resulting in an additional 121 "cold call" contacts. Preliminary relationship-building meetings were completed with 27 individuals and three groups to garner interest in the project and encourage survey participation and distribution among colleagues. Two executives at developmental disability-focused organizations spoke with us extensively via email and distributed the survey on our behalf to their staff.

## Participants
Of the 105 responses, 75% of respondents represented developmental service agencies, including Community Living agencies and group homes, and 25% of respondents represented other health and support service agencies. There was diverse community representation across Northern Ontario, where 55% of respondents were from communities with less than 10,000 residents, and 45% were from communities with 15,000 residents or more, with two respondents from Toronto. Only 16% of respondents identified and Indigenous.

# Results

## Training & Experience
- 63% reported ten years or more supporting adults with IDD, and a further 13% had 6-9 years of experience
- 85% of respondents reported that they had <u>some or no</u> training in supporting Aging adults with IDD.
- 79% said that they <u>did not</u> have Indigenous knowledge of IDD

## Knowledge of Aging and IDD
- 84% of respondents reported having <u>some or no</u> knowledge of Aging and IDD topics
- 54% reported that they <u>did not</u> know about MMW services, and a further 31% reported that they knew a little about MMW

## Challenges & Barriers
- 40% of respondents reported challenges in their relationships with clients, including not understanding what to expect from clients as they age, not being able to predict client reactions to different situations, and getting to know their likes and dislikes
- 67% of respondents reported challenges in their caregiving environments, including not having enough time in a day to attend to their client's needs, inability to make changes to their client's environment to support their behavioural needs, and not having support from coworkers to help care for their clients
- 51% of respondents reported challenges in their client's care network, including family members not involved in their care, not being able to access services and supports they need, not being provided with a personalized care plan, and not supported by a team of care providers

## Learning Preferences
- 83% of respondents would like more training in supporting people with IDD
- Behaviour management techniques were the most frequently selected desired topic for training, followed by care planning and assessment and IDD in general
- A self-guided, online training course (n=54) was the most frequently selected learning preference, followed by a combination of online and face-to-face courses (n=44) and a live facilitated online course (n=39)

# Conclusion

In this sample of well-educated and experienced care providers in Northern Ontario, there is a substantial deficit in training and knowledge of topics relating to aging and IDD. An aging and IDD online training course that addresses behaviour management techniques, care planning and assessment, and IDD in general could build the capacity of care providers to support adults living with IDD as they age. This survey provides limited insight into the perspectives of Indigenous care providers, and additional investigation is required.

# Strengths
- This sample offers diverse community representation across Northern Ontario, with about half of the respondents coming from communities with less than 10,000 residents, and a

half from communities with 15,000 residents or more, including two respondents from Toronto
- This sample offers helpful insight into the perspectives and experiences of care providers in Developmental Service Agencies in Northern Ontario

## Limitations
- The convenience sampling used in this study limits its representation of the full population of care providers in Northern Ontario and leaves the results open to selection and nonresponse bias
- Self-reported data collected in this study may have resulted in responses that are overstated
- The perspectives and experiences of care providers in Kenora are under-represented for its relative population size
- This sample provides limited insight into the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous care providers

# Summary of Results & Conclusions

## Demographics & Work
### Results
- One-third of respondents resided in the City of Thunder Bay
- Only 3% of respondents lived in Kenora, the region's second most populated community
- 87 % of respondents identified as female
- 16 % of respondents identified as Indigenous (First Nation or Metis)
- 89% of respondents have completed post-secondary education (college or higher)
- 94% of respondents were aware of Developmental Services Ontario, of those, over half have made a referral to DSO
- 49% of respondents identified as development service or personal support workers, and 22% identified as a manager/director of an agency
- About half (55%) of respondents are from communities with less than 10,000, and 45% from 15,000 residents or more

### Key Conclusions
- This sample offers diverse community representation across Northern Ontario
- The perspectives and experiences of care providers in Kenora are under-represented for its relative population size
- This sample provides limited insight into the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous care providers
- This sample offers good insight into the perspectives and experiences of Developmental Service Agencies
- Given the strong response from Developmental Service Agencies, it was expected that the awareness of Developmental Services Ontario would be high

## IDD Training & Experience
### Results
#### Training
- 57% reported training or certification in supporting people with IDD. Of those that reported having training, 88% reported having a college or undergraduate degree
- 79% said that they did not have Indigenous knowledge of IDD

#### Experience
- 63% reported ten years or more supporting adults with IDD, and a further 13% had 6-9 years of experience
- The most frequent IDD supported are Developmental Delay, Autism, FASD, and Down Syndrome

### Key Conclusions
- This sample of care providers are well educated and experienced in supporting people with IDD

# Aging & IDD Knowledge
## Results
### Knowledge of Aging & IDD Topics
- 84% of respondents reported having <u>some or no</u> knowledge of Aging and IDD topics
    - 90% reported having <u>little or no</u> knowledge of Indigenous understanding of Aging
    - 80% reported having <u>little or no</u> knowledge of medication and its effect on Aging
    - 64% reported having <u>little or no</u> knowledge of the Aging process and stages that people with IDD move through
    - 63% report having <u>little or no</u> knowledge of different support needs at different stages of Aging
    - 62% reported having <u>little or no</u> knowledge of common health conditions with Aging and IDD
    - 59% reported <u>little or no</u> knowledge of emotional concerns among Aging adults with IDD
    - Respondents from Other (35%) agencies reported <u>higher knowledge</u> of Aging and IDD topics when compared to Developmental Service Agencies (30%)
    - Respondents from communities with 10,000 or less (38%) reported <u>higher knowledge</u> of Aging and IDD topics when compared to respondents from communities with 15,000 or more (33%)
    - Respondents with training in IDD reported <u>higher knowledge</u> of Aging and IDD topics (40%) compared to respondents with no training in IDD (31%)

### Training in Supporting Aging Adults with IDD
- 85% of respondents reported that they had <u>some or no</u> training in supporting Aging adults with IDD

    - Respondents from Other agencies (96%) were more likely to report that they have <u>some or no training</u> in supporting aging adults with IDD compared to those in Developmental Service Agencies (82%)

    - Respondents from communities with less than 10,000 (88%) were slightly more likely to report <u>some or no</u> training in supporting Aging adults with IDD than those from communities with 15,000 or more (83%).

    - Respondents with no training in IDD (90%) were more likely to report they had <u>some or no</u> training in supporting Aging adults with IDD compared to those with training in IDD (79%).

### Training in Supporting Adults with IDD
- 49% of respondents reported that they had <u>some or no</u> training in supporting adults with IDD
    - Respondents from Other agencies (65%) were slightly more likely to report that they have <u>some or no training</u> in supporting adults with IDD compared to those from Developmental Service Agencies (44%)

- Respondents from Communities with 15,000 or more (42%) were slightly more likely to report some or no training in supporting adults with IDD than those from communities with less than 10,000 (54%).
- Respondents with no training in IDD (62%) were more likely to report they had some or no training in supporting adults with IDD than those with training in IDD (39%).

## Training in Supporting Aging Adults with IDD
- 85% of respondents reported that they had some or no training in supporting Aging adults with IDD

    - Respondents from Other agencies (96%) were slightly more likely to report that they have some or no training in supporting Aging adults with IDD compared to those from Developmental Service Agencies (82%)

    - Respondents from communities with 15,000 or more (84%) were slightly more likely to report some or no training in supporting Aging adults with IDD than those from communities with less than 10,000 (86%).

    - Respondents with no training in IDD (93%) were more likely to report they had some or no training in supporting Aging adults with IDD than those with training in IDD (79%).

## Awareness of Services
- 54% reported that they did not know about MMW services, and a further 31% reported that they knew a little about MMW
- 61% reported that they had some knowledge of community services, and an additional 8% reported they did not know about community services for adults living with IDD

## Key Conclusions
- There is a considerable deficit in training in supporting Aging adults with IDD in this sample of care providers across all demographics
- There is a considerable deficit in knowledge on topics relating to Aging and IDD in this sample of care providers across all demographics
- Topics with the greatest knowledge deficit are Indigenous understanding of Aging and medication and its effect on Aging

# Caregiving Relationships & Environment
## Results
### Relationships
- 40% of respondents reported challenges in their relationships with clients
    - 75% reported that their coworkers do not understand what to expect from their clients as they age
    - 61% reported that they do not understand what to expect from their clients as they age

- 44% reported that they <u>are not</u> able to predict how their clients will react to different situations
- 20% reported that they <u>are not</u> able to get to know the likes and dislikes of their clients
- There are no differences between demographic groups where 50% of all groups reported positive care provider relationships with clients.

### Environment

- 67% of respondents reported challenges in their caregiving environments
  - 71% reported that they <u>do not</u> have enough time in a day to attend to their client's needs
  - 67% reported that they are <u>not able</u> to make changes to their client's environment to support their behavioural needs
  - 62% reported that they <u>do not</u> have support from their coworkers to help care for their clients
  - There are no differences between demographic groups where 50% of all groups reported a positive care environment

### Care Network

- 51% of respondents reported challenges in their client's care network
  - 61% reported that their client's family members <u>are not</u> involved in their care
  - 58% reported that their clients are <u>not able</u> to access the services and supports they need
  - 49% reported that their clients <u>are not</u> provided with a personalized care plan
  - 34% reported that their clients <u>are not</u> supported by a team of care providers
  - There are no differences between demographic groups where 50% of all groups reported positive care networks

### Other

- In an open-ended question, respondents indicated that housing and transportation, in addition to access to services, are important barriers faced by their clients with IDD.

## Key Conclusions

There are challenges in caregiving environments and relationships that affect the capacity of the care providers in this sample in supporting their Aging clients with IDD.


# Learning Needs
## Results
### Training Content

- 83% of respondents would like more training in supporting people with IDD

- Behaviour management techniques were the most frequently selected desired topic for training, followed by care planning and assessment and IDD in general

## Learning Preferences

- A self-guided, online training course (n=54) was the most frequently selected learning preference, followed by a combination of online and face-to-face courses (n=44) and a live facilitated online course (n=39). Eighteen respondents indicated they preferred a self-guided text training course.

    - Respondents from communities with less than 1,000 selected self-guided, online training (n=3) and a combination of self-guided online training (n=3), followed by live facilitated online training (n=2) and one-on-one coaching (n=2). One indicated they preferred a self-guided text training course.

## Key Conclusions

- Online training is preferred among this sample of care providers
- Behaviour management techniques, care planning and assessment, and IDD, in general, are topics of interest

## References

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