

## Understanding Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and Dual Diagnosis



### Definitions

**Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD):** are lifelong conditions that begin before age 18 and affect intellectual functioning (learning, reasoning, problem-solving) and adaptive functioning (daily living, communication, social skills) (*Surrey Place, 2019*)

**Dual Diagnosis:** A developmental disability and a co-occurring mental health condition Examples: Autism and anxiety, Intellectual disability and depression (*CAMH, n.d.*)

**Alternate Level of Care (ALC):** is a designation for hospital patients who no longer require acute, intensive care but remain in a hospital bed while waiting for a more appropriate setting, such as a long-term care home, rehabilitation facility, or home care supports. It often signifies a delayed discharge.

### Case Study: Anna

- Age: 34 years old
- Diagnosis:
  - Developmental Disability
  - ADHD
  - Autism Spectrum Disorder
  - Anxiety
  - Personality Disorder



Anna has been in hospital on a mental health in-patient unit for 7 months. She has been Alternate Level of Care for 3 months as the agency she is supported by has been hesitant about her safety in returning with the limited supports she receives through their supported independent living program.

She is nervous to return home and doesn't think she will get enough support that she needs, as she has been used to having nurses available 24/7 to support her when she is having difficulty coping.

The nurse is planning to come in to talk to Anna about discharge planning (returning back home).

This case study will demonstrate how a developmental support worker can advocate and support a person with IDD in relation to an ALC setting.

## Reflection Questions

- What went well?
- What could have been improved on?
- Can you think of any additional tools that could be helpful in supporting this situation?

## Support Strategies for People with IDD who are ALC and preparing for transition into community.



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## Notes



## Additional Resources



1. Adaptive Functioning and Communication in Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Fact Sheet. Edwards, B. & Temple, V., Developmental Disabilities Primary Care Program of Surrey Place, Toronto, 2019 <https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2.2-Adaptive-Functioning-and-Communication-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
2. American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. (n.d.). Definition of intellectual disability. <https://www.aaid.org/intellectual-disability/definition>
3. H-CARDD. (2019). About the H-CAARDD Program and Vita Community Living Services. Retrieved 2026, from The Nuts & Bolts of Healthcare: <https://nutsandbolts.ddtoolkits.com/about.html>
4. Surrey Place. (2018). Approaches to Care and General Considerations. Retrieved 2026, from Primary Care Tools: <https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/tools-2/general-health/>
5. Communicate CARE: Guidance for person-centred care of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. McNeil, K., Bell, E., Boyd, K., Heng, J., Sullivan, W.F., Vogt, J., Developmental Disabilities Primary Care Program of Surrey Place, Toronto, 2019. Care Program of Surrey Place, Toronto, 2019. <https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/1.1CommunicateCare.pdf>
6. Surrey Place. (2018). Primary Care Guidelines. Retrieved 2026, from Developmental Disabilities Primary Care Program: <https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/guidelines/>
7. Inclusion International & Down Syndrome International. (2022). Listen Include Respect <https://www.listenincluderespect.com/>