

Who We Serve

1 Who Needs Long-Term Services and Supports



Introduction

These slides contain content adapted from the Administration for Community Living's Person Centered Counseling Training Program. The content includes text and narration from online courses. To view original content or for more information, please visit nwd.acl.gov or contact NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov.

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Welcome! (1/3)

The No Wrong Door (NWD) system is designed to serve all people who may need any type of long-term services and supports (LTSS) regardless of their age, type of disability, income, or the source of payer. That being said, everyone served in the NWD system is unique. As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you will come into contact with many different populations, such as older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, immigrants, and many others. Keep in mind that not all people who need LTSS are people with disabilities and not all people with disabilities need LTSS. Some people you serve in the NWD system might not even identify as having a disability or even use the word ‘disability’ to talk about what’s important to them.

Welcome! (2/3)

This lesson will provide an overview of disability as a concept and why it is important for PCC professionals to be aware of disability as an identity and the different dimensions of disability, even though not everyone served in the NWD system will have a disability. You will also learn various definitions of disability according to certain laws and programs. This lesson is not meant to include an exhaustive list of all disabilities and their definitions, but rather to familiarize you with some.

Welcome! (3/3)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson: You will be able to explain what disability is according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 and describe state, federal and survey definitions of disability. You will also be able to describe what major life activities are and why they are important for people who need long-term services and supports (LTSS).

Types of Disability (1/3)

In the No Wrong Door (NWD) system you will serve all populations who may need any long-term services and supports (LTSS), regardless of payer. This includes people who represent a variety of ages, incomes, nationalities, citizenship statuses, cultures, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, languages, or disabilities. Remember, not all people served in the NWD system are people with disabilities. Just keep in mind that, as a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you may work with many people with disabilities.

— Types of Disability (2/3)

Every disability is different. Two people may have the same disability, but it can affect them in different ways. Some people are born with their disability; others acquire their disability later in life. Some people may have more than one disability or chronic condition. Also, some disabilities may be hidden or not easy to see.

Types of Disability (3/3)

Disabilities can affect a person's:

- Vision
- Movement
- Thinking
- Remembering
- Learning
- Communicating
- Hearing
- Mental and emotional health
- Social relationships

And many other aspects of their life and health.

Disability Identity (1/2)

Disability may seem straightforward and obvious to you, but it means something different for each person served in the No Wrong Door (NWD) system. As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you will work with many different populations so it's important to realize that although a person may come to you with seemingly disability-related needs, they may not identify as having a disability.

Follow the person's lead and be sure to listen to how they describe any disability-related needs. It is also important to realize that not all people will use the term "disability" or "disabled" when describing themselves, but this doesn't mean that they don't want or need the services that are often used by people with disabilities.

Disability Identity (2/2)

Also, people with the same medical diagnosis, health condition, or disability may have completely different experiences based on personal and social factors. These factors may include, age, race, socioeconomic status, cultural attitudes, social and family support, physical accessibility, access to technology, and usage of services. Listen carefully to the person you are serving and follow their cue on how to address their questions, wants, and needs. And remember, the person gets to decide how much they want to discuss their disability or service needs.

Disability and Identity

A Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional may serve a person who may have apparent disability-related needs, but the person may not identify as having a disability or even want disability-related services.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability (1/5)

A person may identify as a “person with a disability” or “disabled person.” However, depending on the federal, state, or local agency or community-based organization, the person may or may not be considered disabled for the purposes of receiving services, benefits or legal protections. In other words, the definition of disability can vary depending on the purpose for which it is being used, regardless of the individual’s personal identity.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability (2/5)

In the No Wrong Door (NWD) system, Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals should be familiar the many programs or services that offer long-term services and supports. Many of these programs or services have their own definitions of disability in order to determine eligibility.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability

(3/5)

Here are three examples of how the state and federal governments define disability differently:

- For purposes of nondiscrimination laws (for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act), a person with a disability is generally defined as someone who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more "major life activities," (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability

(3/5)

- To be found disabled for purposes of Social Security disability benefits, individuals must have a severe disability (or combination of disabilities) that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months or result in death, and which prevents working at a "substantial gainful activity" level. Meeting eligibility for Social Security disability benefits can be difficult and may vary by state and individual situation.
- State vocational rehabilitation (VR) offices will find a person with a disability to be eligible for VR services if they have a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a "substantial impediment" to employment for the applicant.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability (4/5)

These definitions do not include other programs or laws that apply to veterans, children with disabilities, and people who receive mental health services. There are many more definitions of disability from local, state, and federal programs.

As a PCC professional, knowing these differences will help you tell the person you serve about available services and eligibility. This in no way takes away from the individual's disability identity or personal definitions of disability, even if they may be different than a program or agency's definitions.

State and Federal Definitions of Disability

(5/5)

State and federal programs have different definitions of disability for the purpose of determining eligibility for benefits or services. These definitions may not match up with or reflect a person's individual definition of disability or identity as a person with a disability. As a PCC professional knowing these differences will help you inform the person you serve about what services are available and if the person is eligible.

Survey Definitions of Disability (1/4)

It's important to have data on people with disabilities by age, gender, race, and location. Data on population changes among people with disabilities over time is also helpful. This kind of information can help agencies and organizations within the No Wrong Door (NWD) system, as well as other state and federal programs and officials, better allocate resources to where they are most needed. It can also help them plan effective programs for people seeking long-term services and supports.

Survey Definitions of Disability (2/4)

The federal government collects data on people with disabilities through surveys. The Census Bureau collects data on disability primarily through the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS developed questions on disability by defining various disabilities as the following:

- Sensory Disability: Conditions that include blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment.
- Physical Disability: Conditions that substantially limit one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying.
- Mental Disability: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more, the person has difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating.

Survey Definitions of Disability (3/4)

- Self-care Disability: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more, the person has difficulty dressing, bathing, or getting around inside the home.
- Go-outside-home Disability: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more, the person has difficulty going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office.
- Employment Disability: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more, the person has difficulty working at a job or business.

[Source: <http://www.census.gov/people/disability/methodology/acs.html>]

Survey Definitions of Disability (4/4)

Please note this is just one example of the different ways that organizations define disability. As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you may encounter similar definitions as you work with the various populations served in the NWD system.

To learn more about various surveys on disability used by the federal government:

<http://www.census.gov/people/disability/methodology/>

For more data on Americans with disabilities go to the Census Bureau:

<http://www.census.gov/people/disability/>

Major Life Activities (1/5)

There is no way a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional can become knowledgeable on every single type of disability or chronic health condition. Focusing on the individual's wants and needs, what is important to the person, can help you connect them with appropriate resources and services.

Major Life Activities (2/5)

Remember to always start with the important to issues, and then address the important for issues. It's critical that important for issues are addressed within the context of important to issues. The person may not choose to act on issues that are considered by others to be important for them. In that case, their PCC professional, others who know and care them, and/or their legal representative (who may have authority for decision-making) must work to understand why they are not interested in addressing those issues. Whenever possible, they should try to reach a solution.

Major Life Activities (3/5)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 defines disability as an impairment that limits one or more “major life activities.” These major life activities include, but are not limited to, the following: “... caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working...functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.”

[Source: <http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm#12102>]

Major Life Activities (4/5)

Again, this is just one way of defining disability. And, as we've discussed, a disability has additional dimensions that are outside of the individual, such as lack of housing, accessible healthcare, and discrimination.

The term major life activities may be used throughout many programs and agencies when assessing the types of services needed by a person, especially in planning for long-term services and supports. See the course Person-Centered Access to Long Term Services and Supports for more information.

Major Life Activities (5/5)

A Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional may serve a person who is having difficulties with some major life activities.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/3)

- Not all people who need long-term services and supports (LTSS) are people with disabilities, and not all people with disabilities need LTSS.
- Disability can affect a person's vision, movement, thinking, remembering, communicating, hearing, and mental and emotional health.
- There are many different types of disability, but even the same disability can affect people in different ways.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/3)

- Disability can also mean different things to different people, depending on a variety of factors such as age, race, culture, social and family support, and individual experiences.
- Federal and state agencies use different definitions of disability, but for programmatic or survey purposes may define disability by determining how much difficulty a person has doing major life activities.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (3/3)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson, you will be able to explain what disability is according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 and describe state, federal and survey definitions of disability. You will also be able to describe what major life activities are and why they are important for people who need long-term services and supports (LTSS).

Reflection on Learning Objective

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?