


**What we know and can do to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorian people with an intellectual disability**

Helen Matters and Phil Nott - 11 November 2011



### Introductions

- Helen Matters is a senior policy advisor in the Practice Improvement Unit, Disability Services Division, Department of Human Services. Helen was involved in the VPHS-ID 2009 project and manages a number of projects focusing on the health and wellbeing of people with a disability
- Phil Nott is a senior project worker in the Practice Improvement Unit, Disability Services Division, Department of Human Services. Phil coordinated the roll-out of Person Centred Active Support (PCAS) across the rural regions of DHS.

### Aims of this session

To provide you with a resource to incorporate into your teaching and learning.

We presented this workshop at the Disability Support Workers conference in Melbourne on 3 November 2011.

It takes about 90 minutes, but we will give you a flavour of it in the next 45 minutes.

Feel free to modify the resource to suit your programs.

### Victorian population health survey of people with an intellectual disability 2009 (VPHS-ID 2009)

The VPHS-ID 2009 identified key areas where the health and wellbeing of people with an intellectual disability varied greatly from the general Victorian population.

This workshop will go through these areas and ask you to think practically about how you might tackle them in your work environment.

At the end of the session we hope you will:

- have learned something about the VPHS-ID 2009.
- have developed some ideas to address the findings.
- be motivated to act as change agents to help other staff and managers to put into practice some of these ideas.

4

### Finding 1: Choice of drink when thirsty

Compared with the general Victorian population, people with an intellectual disability were much less likely to drink water (44.7% compared with 72.5%), and more likely to drink soft drinks when thirsty (30.4% compared with 10.1%).

This finding is important because soft drinks are linked to poor oral health and obesity which are both over represented in this population.

#### TASK (2 minutes)

On your own ...write down one idea you think will work about ways to promote water as a choice of drink for people with an intellectual disability.

### Response back to group

Four volunteers to report back to the larger group. One minute time limit per person.

Please pass your written ideas to the front, so we can capture the intelligence of this group (optional).

### Finding 2: Physical activity

The proportion of people with an intellectual disability undertaking adequate physical activity was lower (21.7%) than the general Victorian population (60.3%).

#### TASK (5 minutes)

With the person next to you ...write down one idea you think will work about ways to promote physical activity for people with an intellectual disability.

### Response back to group

Three volunteers to report back to the larger group. One minute time limit per person.

Please pass your written idea to the front, so we can capture the intelligence of this group (optional).

### Finding 3: Low rates of cancer screening

Only 14.8% of women with an intellectual disability aged from 20-69 years were reported to have had a Pap test in the past two years, lower than females from the general Victorian population (71.1%).

Cervical cancer can be largely prevented through screening. PapScreen Victoria recommends all women aged 18-70 years who have ever been sexually active should have a [Pap test](#) every two years, or one to two years after first sexual activity.

Only 55.2% of women with an intellectual disability were reported to have had a mammogram in the past two years. This is much lower than women from the general Victoria population (75.9%).

BreastScreen Australia is a national program targeting women aged 50-69 years.

### Cancer Screening Project

DHS and DH are about to start working with Cancer Council Victoria through their PapScreen Victoria program, and BreastScreen Victoria to address the under screening of women with an intellectual disability in cancer screening programs.

#### TASK (5 minutes)

In a group of four people ...discuss and write down:

- a barrier to screening for women with an intellectual disability.
- one idea you think will overcome this barrier.
- why this particular idea was chosen.

e.g. some people think women with an intellectual disability are not sexually active, so don't require pap tests.

### Response back to group

Four volunteers to report back to the larger group. One minute time limit per person.

Please pass your written ideas to the front, so we can capture the intelligence of this group.

### Finding 4: Community access

Compared with the general Victorian population, people with an intellectual disability were less likely to:

- help out as a volunteer (13% compared with 22.2%).
- get help from family, friends and neighbours, when needed (73.1% compared with 80.3%).
- access community resources (library, neighbourhood house, etc.) – (66.6% compared with 84.0%).

#### TASK (5 minutes)

In groups of four, share with each other the best story you know about ways people with a disability have been supported to access the community.

Pick the best story and write a dot point summary to share with the group.

### Response back to group

Four volunteers to report back to the larger group. One minute time limit per person.

Please pass written ideas to the front, so we can capture the intelligence of this group.

### Finding 5: Eye protection

Fewer people with an intellectual disability were reported to usually wear sunglasses when in the sun (40.3%), compared to the general Victorian population (74.0%).

Ultraviolet (UV) sun radiation does not just damage the skin. It can lead to eye complaints ranging from mild irritation to cataracts and cancer of the conjunctiva.

#### **TASK**

As a large group discussion:

**What practical ideas will help to address this issue?**

*Record the ideas on butchers' paper*

### Finding 6: Overweight

Over half of all people with an intellectual disability were overweight or obese (54.7%) which is higher than the general Victorian population (48.6%).

#### **TASK:**

As a whole of group discussion:

**What can we do to address this issue?**

*Record the ideas on butchers paper*

### Finding 7: Depression

People with an intellectual disability were more likely to experience depression (30.4%) compared to the general Victorian population (19.9%).

#### **TASK:**

As a large group discussion:

**What can we do to address this issue?**

*Record the ideas on butchers' paper*

**Depression in Adults with Intellectual Disability**

**Checklist for Carers – General Information**

**Who is the checklist for?**

The Depression Checklist is for use by carers, in particular paid support staff. It is intended to be completed on behalf of adults who are unable to report their own feelings or symptoms because of severe communication impairment.

**What does the checklist provide?**

It provides carers with a means of ensuring they have noted and recorded the information that is needed by a medical professional.

## Evaluation

We set some goals for this workshop. How did we go?

- Have you learned something about the VPHS-ID 2009?
- Have you developed some ideas to help address the findings?
- Are you motivated to act as change agents to help other staff and managers to put into place some of these ideas?

## Resources

The VPHS-ID 2009 report and fact sheets are available from:  
<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/survey/vphs-id.htm>

**Further information:**

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- Questions?
- Thoughts?
- Comments?
- Reflections?