

Toolkit for Being Inclusive of Participants with Disabilities





Why?

To share best practices for planning, promoting, recruiting, and facilitating evidence-based programs with participants with disabilities



Disability and Evidence-based Programs

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 22% of adults in the United States have some type of disability, with rates of disability increasing with age.
- While people with disabilities represent a diverse group, they are more likely to be obese, smoke, have high blood pressure, be inactive, and have not completed high school. This results in adults with disabilities being 3 times more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or cancer.
- Evidence-based programs (EBPs) offer proven ways to promote health and prevent disease. They are based on rigorous study of the effects or outcomes of specific interventions and or model programs, and developed into a specific curriculum. They demonstrate reliable and consistently positive changes in important health-related and functional measures.
- Examples of EBPs for North Carolina include the Living Healthy with Chronic Disease Self Management Education programs, A Matter of Balance, Tai Chi for Arthritis, and Walk With Ease. More information about these programs can be found at www.healthyagingnc.com.



Recruitment and Accommodation: Before the Program Begins

- Distribute concise, clear marketing materials that include images of people with disabilities to promote the program
- Share general guidelines of the program with interested participants
- All print materials used throughout the program should be made in such a way that individuals with low vision can read them
- Consider having a “Session 0” to acquaint agencies, staff, and participants with the program
- Make it standard registration procedure to ask potential participants about any accommodations they might need throughout the program, but do note that you may not ask a potential participant if they have a disability/what type of disability they may have. They must volunteer that information, but *all participants* may request accommodations regardless of documentation/volunteered information



Pop Quiz Q: Registration Dos and Don'ts

Candice is preparing to lead a CDSME workshop through her local Area Agency on Aging. On the registration form she plans to distribute, she includes the following statement: “If you have a disability recognized by the ADA, please describe it and any accommodations you might need during the workshop.” It is appropriate for Candice to require this information of her potential participants.

- a. True
- b. False



Pop Quiz Q: Registration Dos and Don'ts

Candice is preparing to lead a CDSME workshop through her local Area Agency on Aging. On the registration form she plans to distribute, she includes the following statement: “If you have a disability recognized by the ADA, please describe it and any accommodations you might need during the workshop.” It is appropriate for Candice to require this information of her potential participants.

False, you may not ask an individual whether or not they have a disability; they must volunteer that information to you.



Recruitment cont'd: Access, Transportation, and Location

- If at all possible, host the program in a location that can be accessed via public transportation and be sure there are sidewalks or smooth pathways to the building's entrance
- Choose a location on the first floor of a building or with elevator access, with a pathway at least three feet wide to the entrance of the room, furniture that can be moved around, and enough space for participants using wheelchairs or scooters
- A wheelchair accessible restroom should be closeby
- Visit the site yourself prior to the first program session to ensure all accessibility guidelines are met



Pop Quiz Q: Location Accessibility

When choosing a location for a program, leaders should consider:
(choose all that apply)

- a. Accessible parking spaces with clear signage
- b. Chairs and tables that cannot be rearranged
- c. Rooms on the first floor or with elevator access
- d. Rooms that are very large and very loud



Pop Quiz Q: Location Accessibility

When choosing a location for a program, leaders should consider:
(choose all that apply)

Accessible parking spaces with clear signage and rooms on the first floor or with elevator access



Communicating with People with Disabilities: General Tips

- Don't speak in "baby talk"
- Avoid over-asking participants with disabilities if they are okay
- Review program expectations and guidelines
- Study techniques for redirection to help group stay on task
- Reduce distractions for participants
- Be open to participants taking notes, doodling, using stress balls, etc
- Provide extra attention to participants during breaks or after a session if needed
- Be aware that you may need to repeat yourself: talk slowly and distinctly
- Be aware that a participants' caregiver may attend a session



Pop Quiz Q: General Tips for Communication

Which of the following is NOT a general tip for communicating with people with disabilities:

- a. Consider ways to reduce distractions for participants
- b. Speak to every participant in adult language; avoid baby talk
- c. Frequently ask participants with disabilities if they are okay
- d. Be open and tolerant to participants taking notes, doodling, using stress balls, etc.



Pop Quiz Q: General Tips for Communication

Which of the following is NOT a general tip for communicating with people with disabilities:

Frequently ask participants with disabilities if they are okay



General Facilitation Guidelines

- Be sure to review the expectations and guidelines for the program, so that participants know what is expected of them
- Study techniques for redirection and cueing the participants to stay on-task. This can include referring to the guidelines and information on the flipcharts, transitioning to new topics, mentioning the need to stay on-task, etc
- Consider ways to reduce distractions for the participants. For example, in how the room is set up—windows have blinds down, not too much other noise outside of the meeting space. Also, be open to participants writing notes, coloring, playing with stress balls, etc
- Be aware of the need to repeat items, talk slowly and distinctly, and use easy-to-follow language. Be sure to repeat brainstorming questions



General Facilitation Guidelines cont'd

- As much as possible, refer to visuals like the flipchart and book to complement the auditory learning and group sharing
- When describing the pieces of an action plan, focus on the specific questions of the action plan and refer to the flipchart paper
- Participants consistently express that they enjoy the group interaction and the tips and techniques
- Describe that participants can get up and stand or move if they need to, as well as to use the restroom as needed
- Be open to participants writing notes, coloring, playing with stress balls, and doodling
- Some participants may need extra attention during breaks and before/after program to review information or discuss action plans



Interacting with...

A Participant with an Intellectual Disability

- Keep communication simple, using short sentences and completing one topic before moving onto the next
- Use repetition as needed
- Complete topics before moving on to the next subject
- Refer to charts when discussing topics
- If possible, provide information ahead of meetings in simple language
- a “Session 0” prior to the start date of the program to help introduce topics to participants who need preparation before
- Ask questions that require brief answers



Pop Quiz Q: Interacting with A Participant with an Intellectual Disability

When accommodating individuals with intellectual disabilities, it is important to: (choose all that apply)

- a. Review the rules of the program at the start of every session
- b. Provide discipline if the individual becomes agitated
- c. Encourage caregivers to review program materials between sessions
- d. Identify and meet with staff/caregivers if a participant does not understand activity goals



Pop Quiz Q: Interacting with A Participant with an Intellectual Disability

When accommodating individuals with intellectual disabilities, it is important to: (choose all that apply)

Review the rules of the program at the start of every session

Encourage caregivers to review program materials between sessions

Identify and meet with staff/caregivers if a participant does not understand activity goals



Interacting with...

A Participant who is Blind/has Vision Loss

- In advance of the program, ask if large print or an electronic or Braille version of documents is needed
- Always identify yourself and others in the group; take turns speaking
- Speak in a normal tone of voice
- Indicate when you are moving from place to place
- Be aware of lighting, glare, contrast, and magnification needs
- When offering directions, use descriptive language such as “left in 100 feet” or clock orientation such as “poster is located at 3 o’clock”
- Provide sighted guide services if needed
- Never pet or distract a working service



Interacting with...

A Participant who is Deaf/has Hearing Loss

- Speak in a normal tone of voice
- In advance of the program, ask if an interpreter or devices such as a pocket talker is needed
- If they are using an interpreter, talk directly to the person who is deaf/hearing impaired
- Let the person know if you cannot understand them; confirm that they can understand you as well
- If you are writing a message, do not talk at the same time
- Be patient with lag times or delays
- Make sure you have the attention of the person before you begin communicating with them
- Confirm with the interpreter and the participant the day before each program to be sure



Pop Quiz Q: Communicating with participants with hearing impairment

Michael is leading a Walk with Ease workshop. One of his participants, Joan, is deaf and engages with an interpreter to receive information from the workshop. Joan raises her hand and signs a question to her interpreter, who relays the question to Michael. Michael answers the question directly to the interpreter. Michael's response is inappropriate.

- a. True
- b. False



Pop Quiz Q: Communicating with participants with hearing impairment

Michael is leading a Walk with Ease workshop. One of his participants, Joan, is deaf and engages with an interpreter to receive information from the workshop. Joan raises her hand and signs a question to her interpreter, who relays the question to Michael. Michael answers the question directly to the interpreter. Michael's response is inappropriate.

True, When interacting with someone with a hearing impairment/an interpreter, you should always address/make eye contact with the person communicating with you directly rather than communicating with the interpreter.



Interacting with...

A Participant with a Speech Disability

- Talk to people with speech disabilities as you would talk to anyone else
- Give the person your undivided attention
- Tell the person if you do not understand them
- Don't attempt to finish a person's sentences; be patient and let them finish their statements
- To obtain information quickly, ask short questions that require brief answers or a head nod
- You may ask the person to write down their answers or questions



Interacting with...

A Participant with a Physical Disability

- Interacting with a Person with a Physical Disability
- If the individual uses any equipment (wheelchair, cane, walker, etc.), consider this an extension of the person. Do not touch, grab, or lean against a person's mobility equipment
- If the individual uses a wheelchair, do not push their chair without first asking if they would like to be moved
- Always ask if the individual needs assistance before you give it to them.
- Don't be afraid to use phrases like "run to the store" or "let's go for a walk"
- Be sure the space is arranged appropriately
- Allow for food and drinks to be within reach of seated position



Implementation of Accommodations

- ASL interpreters should be given a clear line of sight to the participant in need of interpretation
- Workshop leaders should review workshop guidelines before every session and should encourage support systems of participants with intellectual disabilities to review workshop guidelines and material regularly
- Workshop leaders should be aware of service animal policies and guidelines
- Before a program begins (or if a participant shows up to a program with an animal), you may ask the individual:
 1. Is this a service animal?
 2. What tasks is it trained to perform?

If the answer is no/none, then you are not required by law to let the animal stay.

- You may not ask the individual what their disability is or require documentation for the animal. A service animal may or may not be wearing a vest designating it is a service animal. Allergies or a fear of animals is generally not a reason to prohibit a service animal.



Pop Quiz Q: Service Animals

Marcy wants to attend a Falls Prevention workshop, but is worried she won't be allowed to bring her service dog. Marcy emails you about her concerns: how do you respond?

- a. A service animal will only be allowed if it has a vest
- b. A service animal will be allowed as long as no one in the workshop has an allergy
- c. A service animal is allowed in the workshop; what tasks is it trained to perform?
- d. A service animal will be allowed if you provide documentation



Pop Quiz Q: Service Animals

Marcy wants to attend a Falls Prevention workshop, but is worried she won't be allowed to bring her service dog. Marcy emails you about her concerns: how do you respond?

A service animal is allowed in the workshop; what tasks is it trained to perform?



Additional Resources

Videos:

- “The Importance of Disability Inclusion” (specific to EBPs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VIXapvZq8E&feature=youtu.be>

PPT/Handouts:

- “Engaging People with Disabilities in Evidence-Based Programs (from NCOA)

<https://www.ncoa.org/resources/tip-sheet-engaging-people-with-disabilities-in-evidence-based-programs/>

- A 3-part exploration of Disability Language, Attitudes, and Justice

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y4bhMuDhc2NcAft4Zlpqp1UxFqdpMRrY>



Additional Resources cont'd

TED Talks:

- “I’m Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much”
https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much
- “The Mystery of Chronic Pain” (doctor perspective)
https://www.ted.com/talks/elliott_krane_the_mystery_of_chronic_pain
- “How I Fail at Being Disabled”
https://www.ted.com/talks/susan_robinson_how_i_fail_at_being_disabled



State Resources

- Centers for Independent Living in North Carolina
<http://www.ncsilc.org/centers/>
- NC Center for Health and Wellness at UNC-Asheville –
Healthy Aging NC Resource Center
<http://healthyagingnc.com/>
- North Carolina Office on Disability & Health, Division of Public
Health, North Carolina Department of Health and Human
Services
<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/disability-services>



National Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Disability and Health
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/people.html>
- National Council on Aging (NCOA)
<https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/chronic-disease/>