



Health and Disability: Partnerships in Action

A teaching and learning resource in disability health and interprofessional education



Health and Disability: Partnerships in Action is a new teaching and learning package, produced through an interprofessional collaboration between dentists, dietitians, medical practitioners, nurses, occupational therapists, paramedics, physiotherapists, social workers, speech pathologists and students.

The package focuses on:

- **Interprofessional education and practice** - providing a platform for interprofessional education and a springboard for appreciating the value and importance of interprofessional collaboration.
- **Disability health** - exploring issues in the health and healthcare of people with developmental disabilities.

The Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria (CDDHV) strives to improve the health and healthcare of people with developmental disabilities through a range of educational, research and clinical activities. For over a decade the Centre has worked with medical schools in our State to ensure all Victorian medical graduates have opportunities within their course to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge required to provide high quality care to people with disabilities. In recent years CDDHV teaching has also been requested by and delivered to a range of other health professional students and practitioners. Through the development of curricula and teaching and learning resources in this area, the Centre has gained a strong national and international reputation for health professional education in developmental disability health.

In recent years there has been an increasing recognition of the importance of interprofessional partnerships in healthcare. People with chronic and complex healthcare issues require the contribution of health professionals from a range of disciplines if they are to achieve and maintain optimal health and function to enable them to participate in and contribute to their communities.

At the CDDHV, we recognise that those living with a disability are the experts on their own experience, and consider their direct involvement in and contribution to the education of healthcare professionals is essential. We also believe that by improving their understanding of the health issues of people with disabilities and those who support them, health professionals will acquire valuable attitudes, knowledge and skills applicable to many other people in their practice populations. These populations include those with communication or cognitive difficulties; those with complex chronic medical and social issues; those for whom working with a carer is an essential part of healthcare provision; and those whose disadvantage and/or vulnerability requires health professionals to provide proactive healthcare and advocacy.



The partnership and collaboration between people featured in the video stories and the health professionals involved in development of 'Health and Disability: Partnerships in Action' has led to the production of a powerful, personal teaching and learning resource. Working through this resource facilitates an understanding of the health and healthcare issues experienced by people with developmental disabilities.

The **'Health and Disability: Partnerships in Action'** teaching and learning package comprises:

- **DVD based video stories**
Six DVD based stories form the heart of the package. Each tells the personal story of someone with a disability, and explores issues relating to health and healthcare. The experiences shared by people with disabilities and those who support them in their lives provide a real-life context for learning. Each DVD is accompanied by its own booklet of learning activities and sample responses to those activities.
- **Student Workbook**
A compilation of learning activities for all six video stories.
- **Tutor Guide**
A compilation of learning activities and sample responses for all six video stories.
- **Knowledge Base**
A 272 page, full colour textbook extensively illustrated with photographs of the people featured in the DVD stories.

For more information contact CDDHV
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This project was jointly funded by the Monash University Learning and Teaching Performance Fund and the Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria (CDDHV).

The CDDHV is funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services, Disability Services, and is a joint initiative of Monash University and the University of Melbourne.

Synopses of the video stories:

Each story runs for between 13 and 20 minutes and each may be viewed either as a complete story or as short clips highlighting key issues.



Sara's place

Sara, aged 33, lives in a self contained unit at the back of her parents' home. Sara has cerebral palsy, is fiercely independent and has achieved a remarkable degree of independence and self reliance, despite her severe physical disability.

In this story, Sara is found by a support worker from the local council after having fallen while transferring from her bed to her electric wheelchair. Sara's speech is difficult to understand and communication issues between Sara, council worker, and paramedics are highlighted. Sara is taken by ambulance to the emergency department where she is assessed and admitted to the ward. An assessment is then conducted by the care coordinator, with both Sara and her mother, and modifications to Sara's home required to maintain her independence are discussed.



Rheita's holiday

Rheita and Rob have been married for 12 years. Rheita, aged 42, and Rob have mild intellectual disabilities. Rob also has a physical disability that necessitates him using a wheelchair or electric scooter for mobility. Rheita is Rob's primary carer. They live together in their home with a menagerie of much loved pets, including a dog, cat, and aviaries of budgerigars and cockatiels.

In this story, Rheita is about to go on a holiday to see her sister in Queensland. A social worker comes to meet with Rheita to address some concerns about how Rob will manage in Rheita's absence. The interview takes place in Rheita and Rob's home.



As Matthew grows

Matthew is a 15-year-old adolescent boy who lives with his parents, Boon Hock and Guek, and brother Benjamin in Melaka Malaysia. Matthew loves exercising in the park, going to school and dressing smartly like his brother. Matthew has an intellectual disability and autism, and attends a special school.

In this story, Matthew's parents reflect on the time around the diagnoses of his disabilities, and their experiences with health care professionals. They describe the changes in Matthew as he has grown from child to adolescent. The impact of Matthew's developmental disabilities on his life and that of his brother and parents are explored, and their hopes and plans for the future are discussed.



Checking in with Jacqui

Jacqui is a 28 year old woman who lives with four other young adults in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. Jacqui has Down syndrome and is supported in her daily activities by the disability support workers who staff the house in which she lives.

During the week, Jacqui works in a supported employment program. In the evenings and weekends, she engages in a range of activities with her boyfriend, family, friends and housemates. Jacqui particularly enjoys bowling, swimming, going out for dinner and seeing movies. Jacqui maintains a close relationship with her family and sees them regularly. Recently, Jacqui went on a trip to Sydney with her key worker, Julie, and is now saving for her next holiday.

In this story, Jacqui visits her general practitioner for an annual Health Assessment. She is seen first by the practice nurse and then by the GP. Jacqui is supported in these consultations by Julie.



Journey with Megan

Megan is a delightful nine-year-old girl who loves swimming, bike riding, watching her brother play basketball, chatting with people, and playing with string. Megan has a severe intellectual disability and associated communication difficulties. She also has intractable epilepsy, insulin dependent diabetes mellitus and a mitochondrial disorder. Megan's complex medical conditions make her participation in daily life more difficult than is experienced by the average nine-year-old. Contributions to her care from a wide range of health professionals are required to maintain her health and wellbeing.

In this story, Megan and her mother, Sally, attend a consultation with a paediatrician who explores the medical and social issues arising for Megan and her family that relate to her disabilities and health issues.



Chris and Clive

Chris is a 24 year old man who lives with his father, Clive, in the Western suburbs of Melbourne. Chris has severe physical and intellectual disabilities and consequent high support needs. His personal care is provided by Clive. Despite the challenges inherent in meeting all Chris' daily requirements, he and Clive enjoy a very active and social life. Chris attends a day program during the week and he and Clive go square dancing, tenpin and carpet bowling, shopping and visiting friends in the evenings and weekends. As Clive says, they are "rarely at home all day".

In this story, a window is offered into Chris and Clive's world. Through hearing about and seeing their daily life together, Chris and Clive provide us with a rare opportunity to gain insight into the resilience, challenges and rewards inherent in their relationship.