



Bermuda Hospitals Board

Eligibility and Referral Guidelines

How do we define 'intellectual disability'?

In line with international definitions, the Intellectual Disability Programme has responsibility for adults (age 18+) who meet the following criteria:

- a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), and
- a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), and
- which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development

This definition encompasses people with a broad range of disabilities. Many people with intellectual disabilities also have physical and/or sensory impairments. The presence of a low IQ alone is not sufficient reason for determining whether an individual should be provided with additional health and social care support by the Intellectual Disability Programme.

The definition covers adults with autism who also have intellectual disabilities, but not those with a higher level autistic spectrum disorder who may be of average or even above average intelligence.

Who does not meet the criteria for the programme?

In line with the definition of intellectual disability, a number of people who might be referred to the Intellectual Disability Programme would **not** be eligible for the service. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who:

- have learning difficulties or disabilities, such as dyslexia
- have mild intellectual impairments, even if they present behaviours that challenge
- have acquired brain injuries, including those with traumatic brain injuries caused by road traffic accidents, unless these were acquired in the developmental stages before adulthood
- are on the autistic spectrum who do not also have an intellectual disability

Priorities for Intellectual Disability Programme services

Priority groups for services include those people with an intellectual disability who have:

- a high level of additional health or other support needs
- the most significant degree of intellectual disability, usually severe and profound intellectual impairments
- additional challenging behaviours or mental health needs



The Referral Process

Referrals from the community are generally received during office hours by the case manager, who can be reached at 249-3807. Intellectual Disability Programme hours are 8am to 5pm on weekdays.

The Multidisciplinary Team holds weekly meetings in which new referrals are considered. The team then follows up with the referrer as soon as possible after the meeting to discuss next steps.

In out-of-hours emergencies, assistance for individuals with intellectual disabilities who have an acute mental illness is available through the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute 24-hour helpline at 236-3770.