AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution:

(A-17)

Introduced by: American Academy of Pediatrics

Subject: Inclusion of Developmental Disabilities curriculum in undergraduate, graduate and continuing medical education of physicians.

Referred to:

Whereas, One in six children aged 3 through 17 years have a one or more Developmental Disabilities (DD).1 DD’s are a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas and include intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder, hearing loss, cerebral palsy, learning disability, ADHD, vision impairment, and other developmental delays. These conditions occur among all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and become manifest during the early developmental period, typically impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person’s lifetime2; and

Whereas, Individuals with DD are living well into adult life, with approximately 5 million of the US population living with a DD and about one in ten US families directly affected by a person living with a DD3 and the great majority of individuals with DD across the age span receive their health care in integrated community and primary care settings rather than specialized centers2; and

Whereas, Numerous areas of disparity in both health and health care access have been identified for this population,4-5 such as:

* vision and hearing impairments, as well as common dental disease, often undiagnosed;
* incomplete immunizations;
* prevalence of obesity and cardiac disorders;
* respiratory disorders as a common cause of death;
* sexuality-related health concerns;
* frequency of musculoskeletal disorders, as well as endocrine disorders;
* needs for screening for cancer; and
* prevalence of co-morbid behavioral conditions and psychiatric/psychotic disorders; and

Whereas, The vast majority of medical students and residents do not receive training specific to the care of people living with DD6-7; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association reaffirm Medical Care of Persons with Developmental Disabilities H-90.968 and Classification for the Intellectually Disabled as a Medically Underserved Population as adopted in Resolution 805-I-10; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association recognize the importance of managing the health of children and adults with developmental disabilities as a part of overall patient care for the entire community  
; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA support efforts to educate physicians on health management of children and adults with developmental disabilities, as well as the consequences of poor health management on mental and physical health for people with developmental disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage allopathic and osteopathic medical schools to develop and implement curriculum on the care and treatment of people with developmental disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage graduate medical education programs to develop and implement curriculum on providing appropriate and comprehensive health care to people with developmental disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage continuing medical education providers to develop and implement continuing education programs that focus on the care and treatment of people with developmental disabilities.

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3. President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Available at https://acl.gov/Programs/AIDD/Programs/PCPID/index.aspx. Accessed February 28, 2017.   
  
4. Sullivan WF, Berg JM, Bradley E et al. Consensus Guidelines for Primary Health Care of Adults with Developmental Disabilities. Canadian Family Physician. 2011; 57(5) 541-553.

5. S.M. Havercamp and H.M. Scott. National Health Surveillance of Adults with Disabilities, Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and Adults with No Disabilities. Disability and Health Journal 8 (2015) 165 e172.  
  
6. Holder M, Waldman HB, Hood H. Preparing health professionals to provide care to individuals with disabilities. Int J Oral Sci 2009;1(2):66–71.

7. Krahn G, Hammond L, Turner A. A Cascade of Disparities: Health and Health Care Access for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities research Reviews 2006;12:70-82