

*“It’s your body, and you have the right to know what’s going on, whether you have a disability or not, you have the right to know what’s going on, just to stay healthy” – self-advocate*

It is important for people with intellectual disabilities to have periodic comprehensive health checks. Health checks increase preventive care actions and new disease detection. Only 1 in 2 get the recommended health check. We asked family physicians, self-advocates, family members and support persons what can be done **now** to let people know about the health check?

## Top 10 Actions

- 1. Develop Easy-to-Read Health Check Resources:** Make simple guides with visuals explaining yearly health checks and how to prepare. Use positive, motivating messages like “Don’t miss out on good health.”
- 2. Educate Health Providers on Accommodations:** Teach providers how to make care accessible for people with intellectual disabilities (e.g., plain language, team-based care, support people).
- 3. Include Intellectual Disability in Medical Training:** Ensure all medical students and residents learn how to care for people with intellectual disabilities, focusing on person-centered and trauma-informed care.
- 4. Highlight Intellectual Disability in Family Medicine Evaluations:** Make intellectual disability a key feature in Canadian family medicine evaluations. This will encourage family medicine programs to prioritize learning about intellectual disabilities.
- 5. Enhance Transition Support Tools:** Update tools that help patients move from pediatric to adult care, focusing on health checks and making them easy to use. Ensure these include guidance for health checks and are accessible to both pediatricians and family physicians.
- 6. Promote Peer Support for Family Physicians:** Provide more opportunities for physicians to share tips and challenges in caring for patients with intellectual disabilities. Explore how to better connect members of Developmental Disabilities Interest Groups for timely practice support.
- 7. Create Health Check Infographics:** Create clear, visual materials showing the benefits of health checks to share at conferences and caregiver meetings.
- 8. Distribute Point-of-Care Handouts for Caregivers:** Give caregivers one-page guides on what a health check involves and how to prepare, provided by family doctors.
- 9. Promote Existing Training Tools for Support Workers:** Raise awareness of existing toolkits that help developmental service workers support health checks (e.g., Nuts and Bolts of Healthcare: A toolkit for Direct Support Workers)
- 10. Involve People with Disabilities in Education:** Include people with intellectual disabilities as teachers and experts in training medical students, residents, and service workers. Their lived experience is vital for creating effective education materials and training programs.

People with developmental disabilities in Canada have a right to good healthcare.

More people with developmental disabilities can benefit from a health check. You can help us make healthcare better for people with developmental disabilities. Join us by sharing this information.