
Introduction

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This book is designed to provide state-of-the-art information regarding how mental illness presents in persons with developmental disabilities, along with providing assessment and treatment options that are reflective of best practice. This book was conceived as a way to help overcome many of the philosophical and practical obstacles that exist because of the way our service systems in Ontario are currently organized. It is our hope that, as a result of this book, there will be greater continuity of service between agencies and professionals, and improved service evaluation, delivery and follow-up.

As such this book has two objectives:

- ✓ first, that the reader should learn about the current state of the field and gain information that will assist in supporting persons with dual diagnosis return to a state of mental wellness;
- ✓ second, the reader will gain heightened awareness of the areas where early intervention and proactive support can enhance the emotional well-being of persons with developmental disabilities, as well as help in the prevention of mental illness and promotion of mental wellness in this population.

It is our hope that the readers will find this book useful in their workplace or home life, and that it will spark a renewed interest in this most challenging field. The book contains 18 chapters dealing with general areas from the nature of developmental disabilities and the mental health needs of this population, to areas of assessment and intervention. The authors of the book advocate an holistic approach to support and intervention for the person with developmental disabilities who presents with mental health problems, including biomedical, psychosocial and socio-environmental approaches. This theme is a common thread throughout this book.

Another integrating thread is the value placed on providing cross-sectorial collaboration, and defining the role of multiple disciplines working in collaboration. There are several chapters on integrated approaches to assessment and treatment and creation of multidisciplinary teams, social supports and responsive services for persons with dual diagnosis.

We have also included special chapters that address the life-span issues of persons with dual diagnosis, and special considerations for issues related to sexuality, offending behaviour, substance abuse, and legal matters.

The book is a blend of theory, science and practical information. Each chapter is organized to provide learning objectives, an introduction and expansion of the chapter topic, review questions, and resource lists to direct the interested reader to more material. Case examples are used throughout to illustrate how the material may be applied to real life situations.

This book was written with the help of 34 professionals who represent the following:

- various service sectors (health, social and developmental services, and criminal justice)
- a variety of programmes (medical, psychiatric, psychological, behavioural consultation, community support for persons with intellectual disabilities and head injury, district health councils, community policing, and specialized dual diagnosis programmes)
- disciplines of psychiatry, psychology, behaviour analysis, speech and language, occupational and physiotherapy, law, nursing, police, developmental services, social work and education.

We are also represented by authors from eight colleges and universities. The complement of authors brings a unique richness and breadth to the material.

Because of the different disciplines and training, you will notice a variety of discipline-specific terminology throughout the book that we have attempted to clarify through a glossary. However, the reader will also note that terminology differs between disciplines, and in accordance to where people were trained. The politically accepted phrasing of “person first” language is adhered to throughout the book. However, different disciplines and cultures refer to persons with intellectual disabilities in different terms: Canada now employs *intellectual disability*, the United States uses *mental retardation*, the United Kingdom uses *learning disabled* and many individuals universally use the broader and more encompassing term of *developmental disability*. Although there is some variation throughout the book that remains to respect discipline-specific use, the majority of our authors have selected the broader term of *persons with developmental disabilities*.

The authorship of this book is largely selected from professionals in Ontario, Canada. This is the origin of our training initiative. It also reflects a province with a large number of professionals dedicated to this area of study and practice. Ontario has long been dedicated to ethical and effective intervention for persons who are labelled as dually diagnosed. Ontario's recent past has seen many fine mentors and teachers who paved the way for today's services and visions. This book represents the work of many of today's leaders. It is our hope that we will in some way inspire tomorrow's clinicians, researchers and advocates.

Acknowledgements

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