

# Recognizing patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) refers to various lifelong limitations in intellectual functioning and conceptual, social, or practical skills that emerge in persons before the age of 18 years. These limitations differ in severity and type among people with IDD and can vary during a person’s lifespan. Intellectual and developmental disabilities encompass intellectual disability, developmental disability, and autism spectrum disorder.

In order to access funded services in the developmental disabilities sector individuals must meet eligibility criteria as set out by the local Ministry (e.g., in Ontario: the Ministry of Community and Social Services in the “Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act. , 2008”.) Follow the steps in Figure 1 that help navigate this process.

Labelling patients as having IDD in medical records has potential adverse as well as beneficial effects. Both need to be discussed with the patient.

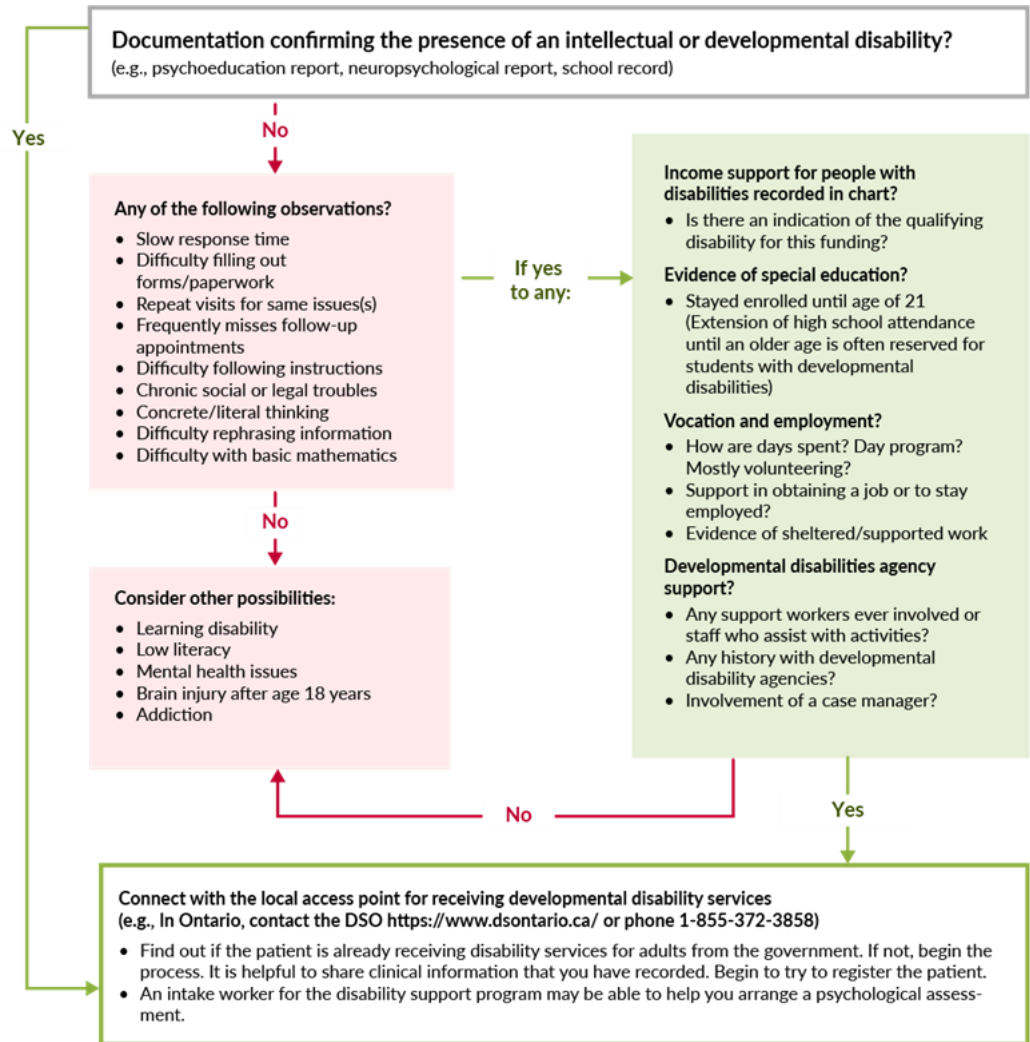


Figure 1: Steps to recognizing patients with possible IDD

If a patient does not meet the eligibility criteria, but you still have concerns, there are resources available that can still be of use in adapting communication and processes to meet the needs of patients who have difficulty understanding information or carrying out tasks independently (see the Developmental Disabilities Primary Care Program at <https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/>).