



The Comprehensive Health Assessment Program

*...improving
the health of
adults with
intellectual
disability*

The Comprehensive Health Assessment Program (CHAP) is designed to help minimise the barriers to healthcare for the intellectually disabled by prompting health care and screening.

Developed at The University of Queensland by Associate Professor Nick Lennox, the program is used in Australia by the New South Wales and Western Australian Governments, as well as the Endeavour Foundation (Qld) and other non-government organisations.

How CHAP works

CHAP is a tool designed to prompt a comprehensive health assessment for adults with intellectual disabilities. This may potentially help doctors make better diagnoses, provide appropriate treatment and ultimately ensure an overall better health status.

The CHAP tool is a two-part questionnaire requiring collaboration between the person with the intellectual disability, their supporter and their GP.

The first part of the questionnaire creates a comprehensive health history and is completed by the parents, paid support staff and/or person with the intellectual disability.

The health history is then taken to the person's GP. Working with the person and their supporter, the GP fills in the second part of the questionnaire. Here, the GP is prompted to be aware of commonly missed, poorly managed or syndrome specific health conditions and performs a review of the person's health.

On completion of the GP's review, a health action plan should be agreed upon by the GP in collaboration with those involved in providing support or the person themselves.

Evaluation of CHAP

CHAP has been validated through five Australian studies. These studies focused on adults with intellectual disability, who had high to low support needs, and in adolescents.

A recent article by Associate Professor Lennox on adults with intellectual disabilities was published in Australian Family Physician (August 2004) and can be accessed at:

www.racgp.org.au/folder.asp?id=1038

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