

# New Medical Training to Address the Needs of People with IDD

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Tuesday, November 30, 2021

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A research team from the Center for START Services at the Institute on Disability (IOD) at UNH has been approved for a \$50,000 grant awarded by the [WITH Foundation](#) to develop a companion training curriculum for the *Integrated Mental Health Treatment Guidelines for Prescribers in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD-MH Prescriber Guidelines)*.

The study will use the IDD-MH Prescriber Guidelines as a foundation to develop evidence-informed, easy to use training for medical students and residents in mental healthcare for persons with IDD. IDD-MH Prescriber Guidelines offers an overview of integrated health and psychopharmacological best practices in the treatment of patients with IDD. The recently published guide is organized into five topic areas: 1) The Lived Experience Perspective: Working with Patients and Supporters; 2) Psychiatric Assessment Considerations; 3) Medical Assessment Considerations; 4) Best Practices in MH Diagnosis and Treatment; and 5) Prescribing in Mental Health Crises.

“We enthusiastically support these efforts as they work to enhance training and curricula that improves the capacity of the healthcare community to address the needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said Ryan Easterly, Executive Director of the WITH Foundation in a recent press release.

Research Associate Professor Joan B. Beasley, PhD, will co-lead this project with Andrea Caoili, MSW, and Jennifer McLaren, MD, in collaboration with Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

“Treating patients with both a developmental disability and mental health challenge has previously been a very neglected topic in the medical community. The neglect of this topic often resulted in people with these challenges not having their needs met. Our guide was revolutionary in helping prescribers serve this population with the care and

knowledge they deserve. By translating our guide into a training, we will be able to reach even more providers-in-training to ensure people like me have our needs met,” says co-investigator Melanie Hecker, MA.

The Integrated *Mental Health Treatment Guidelines for Prescribers in IDD* and accompanying resources is a project of the [Center for START Services](#) at the [Institute on Disability/UCED](#), [University of New Hampshire](#), and is funded by the [WITH Foundation](#).

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#### COLLEGE OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES



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