

Community

When our community is in a state of peace, it can share that peace with neighboring communities.

The Dalai Lama

Developmental Disability

A developmental disability is a life-long condition that emerges before 18 years of age and affects an individual's ability to learn and function independently.

As a developmental disability affects intellectual and adaptive skills, these individuals are usually substantially below others in their age group in this regard, and often require support in many areas of everyday living.

Developmental disabilities vary greatly from person to person both in terms of level of disability (mild, moderate, severe, profound) and of limitations in the above life skills.

Developmental disabilities and mental illness are distinctly different and separate conditions. However, there are many people diagnosed with a developmental disability who are also diagnosed with a mental illness.

People with a developmental disability can suffer from all the same types of mental health issues as anyone else, including problems such as depression, anxiety or psychotic disorders.

Individuals with a developmental disability and mental health needs are often referred to as individuals with a "dual diagnosis".

We help educate the community about developmental disabilities through these programs:

- North Community Network of Specialized Care
- Training and Education
- Partnerships and Networking
- Research and Evaluation

North Community Network of Specialized Care

The North Community of Specialized Care increases capacity to make a positive difference for adults in our communities across the north with developmental disabilities and mental health needs or challenging behaviours.

Training and Education

- Implementation of videoconference and e-learning has greatly enhanced access to the latest technologies, methods, as well as specialized supports across the province, for staff who work in the field of developmental disabilities and mental health.
 - Through the coordination of 23 videoconference systems across Northern Ontario, Hands therapists are able to provide training opportunities to rural and remote communities.
 - Access to a leading edge and current Northern Resource library.
- For more information, please visit www.community-networks.ca.

Partnerships and Networking

- By improving the delivery of specialized services and promoting the sharing of training and research initiatives, Hands therapists engage in provincial collaborative efforts to increase resources and develop partnerships.
 - Through the construction of this integrated system, relationships are built across service sectors including developmental services, mental health, health, justice and education.
 - Through this broad spectrum of provincial relationships, other supports including Specialized Accommodation and Dual Diagnosis Justice Case Managers in districts across Northern Ontario are much more easily managed.
- For more information please visit www.community-networks.ca.

Clinical Services

- Expanded access to specialized clinical supports for adults living in rural and remote communities through videoconferencing, allows increased multi-disciplinary specialized clinical services to these individuals thus decreasing waitlists.
- This increased access greatly complements our Northern clinical teams with additional professional resources thus increasing multi-disciplinary clinical services to adults with developmental disabilities and mental health issues.

Research and Evaluation

Hands facilitates the development and implementation of Northern based research in the area of developmental disabilities, mental health and challenging behaviours.

In partnership with the Northern Universities and community agencies Hand's data analysis coordinator supports research and evaluation of Network activities and initiatives.



Hands

TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca

Helping families and everyone in them.

For more information call the toll free number at 1.800.668.8555 or visit the website at www.thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca.