

Crisis Care for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Needs Assessment for the Guild for Human Services



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Background and Host Organization

- The Guild for Human Services provides educational, residential, and clinical services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Massachusetts.
- Mental illness is a significant challenge in this population that leads to frequent emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalizations.
- The Guild aims to improve care for these individuals when they experience mental health crises.
- Needs assessment goals:**
 - 1) Identify current gaps in mental health services.
 - 2) Review established models of care for this population.

Methods

- Qualitatively analyzed 13 semi-structured interviews with Guild leadership, leading IDD experts, and state partners.
- Analyzed the Guild's admissions records from 1/2017 to 2/2021.
- Reviewed secondary data about IDD from CDC, AHRQ, and MassHealth.
- Conducted literature review of models of care in PubMed and PsycINFO to determine best practices that the Guild may incorporate.

Limitations

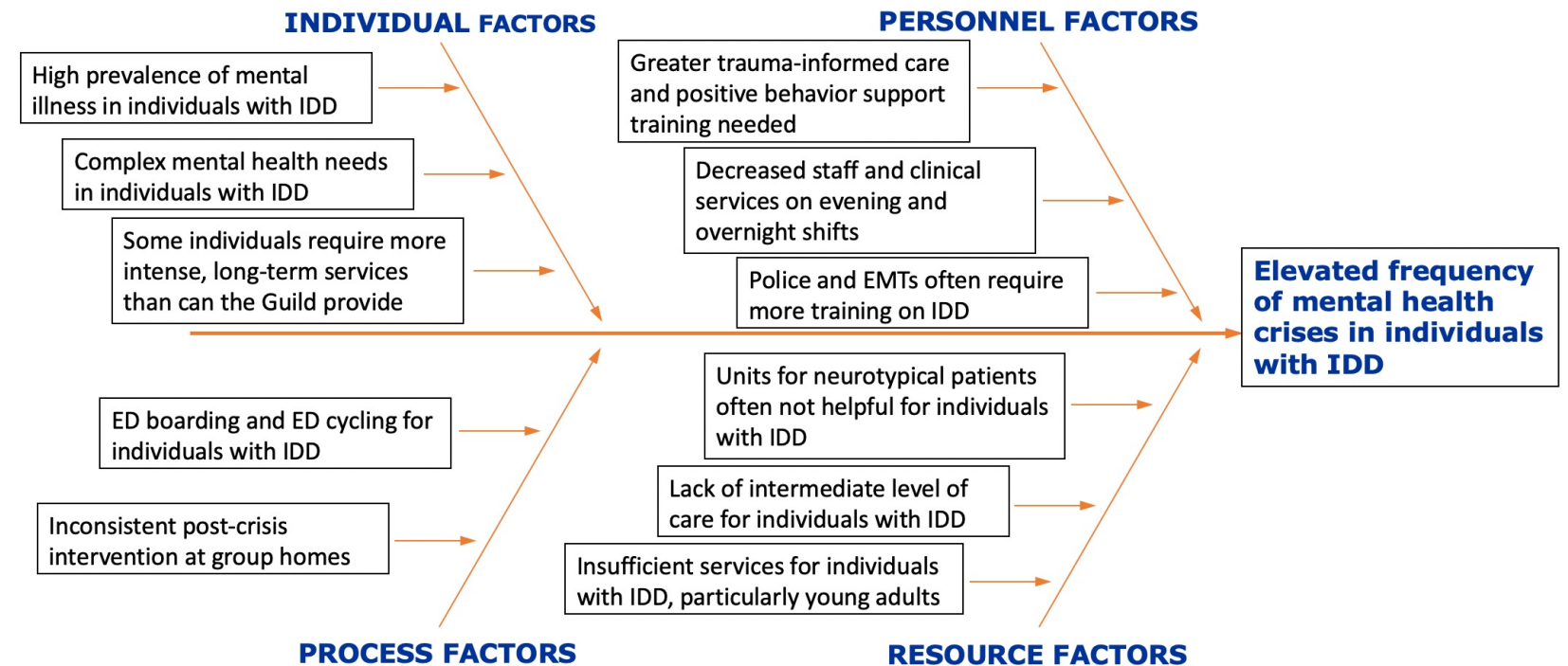
- COVID-19 pandemic presented logistical challenges to interviewing Guild students, residents, and parents.
- The Guild's reliance on paper records precluded access to individual patient records during the pandemic.
- Majority of secondary data sources and peer-reviewed studies focus specifically on autism spectrum disorder.

Next Steps

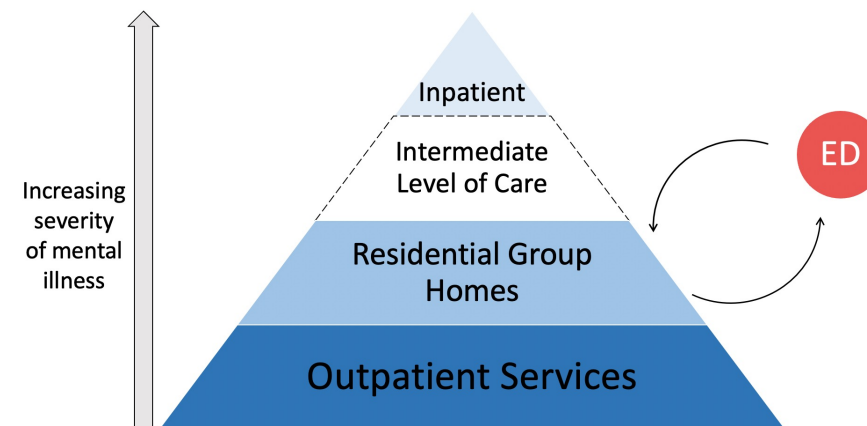
- Guild students, residents, and family members should be invited to collaborate in the planning process.
- Presentation of findings to the Guild's leadership and Board of Trustees.
- Further develop partnerships with state agencies to improve care for individuals with IDD when they experience mental health crises.

Key Findings

- 1 Cause-and-effect diagram of factors that contribute to the elevated frequency of mental health crises in individuals with IDD.



- 2 The lack of an intermediate level of care between group homes and inpatient units contributes to ED boarding and ED cycling.



3	The Guild and Massachusetts have recently invested in greater clinical resources for individuals with IDD.
4	Diagnoses of IDD are increasing in frequency, but access to specialized mental health services remains limited. Mental health services are particularly limited for young adults (age 18-22) who age out of youth services but are a poor fit for adult services.
5	There is a growing body of research on interventions for individuals with IDD in mental health crisis. Common themes include multidisciplinary clinical teams, highly structured environments, and high staff-to-patient ratios with extensive training on IDD.