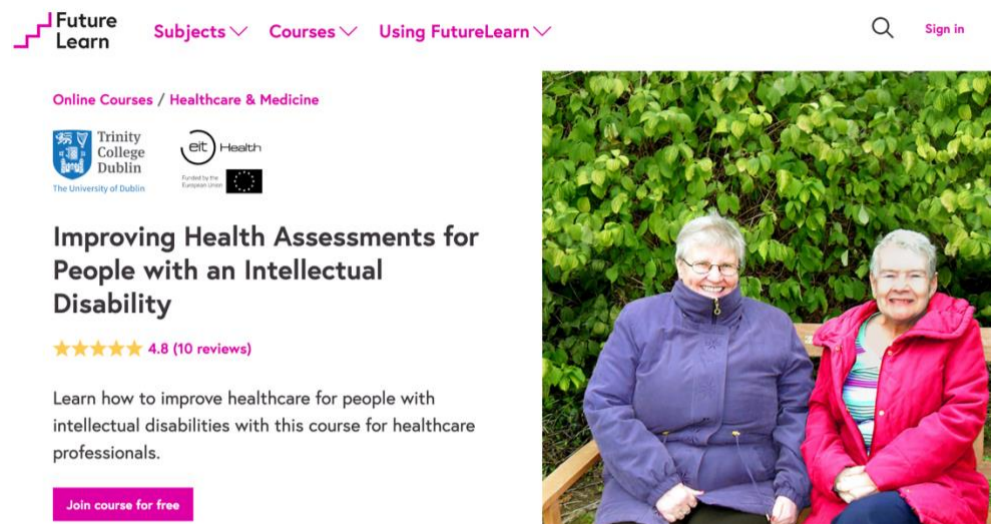


Future Learn: Improving Health Assessments for People with Intellectual Disabilities



Geography and scale:	Internationally accessible, online
Type of disability:	Intellectual Disabilities

Involved actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Learn • Trinity College Dublin (TCD) • EiT Health



Best practice description

The FutureLearn platform provides free and open online courses, including “Improving Health Assessments for People with Intellectual Disability”. The aim is to provide healthcare practitioners the knowledge to improve practice and include reasonable adjustment when engaging individuals with intellectual disability in health assessments. The course is taught through a partnership between Trinity College Dublin and EIT Health and was co-developed by people with intellectual disabilities to train health workers on improving care. The content focuses on health inequity, the healthcare landscape for people with intellectual disabilities, communication skills, reasonable adjustments, and best practices for assessing patients with intellectual disabilities. The course is accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and can be used as continuing professional development, in some jurisdictions. It provides two hours of content per week over three weeks.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- A previously developed comprehensive health assessment demonstrated the need for more implementation support and health worker training.
- Deinstitutionalization resulted in increased involvement of primary care doctors in health care for people with intellectual disabilities
- Higher prevalence of health conditions, health inequity, and lack of reasonable adjustments to ensure they actually are invited to health assessments, which contributed to high rates of undiagnosed or untreated health conditions among people with intellectual disabilities

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- Over 7,000 healthcare professionals have enrolled in the course in over 100 countries.
- The MOOC is now integrated as part of a module on the intellectual disability nursing programme of TCD Dublin.
- Expansion to post graduate programming in intellectual disability for healthcare professionals at TCD Dublin.
- 87.5% of participants noted a change in perspective about assessing people with ID, 83% noted a change in their approach to communication and 79.1% noted it contributed to their day to day work to make health assessment possible.

Critical success factors for best practice

- Online, flexible, and free materials continuously available
- Course was co-designed with people with intellectual disabilities
- Ability to use the course hours for Continuing Professional Development and courses’ accreditation
- Course provides practical techniques for adapting clinical practice
- Integrated into the undergraduate nursing curriculum at TCD Dublin

Impact statement

“The program has been absolutely fabulous, it is so needed and a great boost to everyone, promoting better practice when dealing with people with ID”.

Dr Eilish Burke, Ussher Assistant Professor at TCD Dublin. The creator also noted that this course provides targeted education in a convenient way for the learner promoting education and improvement to healthcare delivery for people with intellectual disability.

Lessons learned

- Wide reach and impact of a short course that is widely available.
- Importance of providing practical technique alongside clinical background.
- Need for robust research to inform evidenced based practice.

Sources & Useful Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Learn Website • Making Reasonable Adjustments to Support People with Intellectual Disabilities in Health Assessments • Health Assessment Impact Video
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