

Sample Role Descriptions

Triage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for signs that a patient may have a developmental disability (DD); takes long to answer questions, trouble with paperwork, arrives with a caregiver/staff, not coping well in the community, presents with behavioural issues, repeat visitor for same issue. • If you suspect a DD, document this! You are not making a diagnosis, rather, communicating clinically relevant information and emphasizing the need for adapted approaches. Consider a patient alert for people with DD - a way to trigger this information for your colleagues.
Clerical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out up-to-date caregiver/collateral information. • Many people with DD will be on social assistance. If so, look up their medication as you would for individuals over 65 (e.g. via Drug Profile Viewer). • If disruptive in the waiting room, alert a clinical team member. Suggest that the patient is relocated to a more quiet, less stimulating environment if at all possible.
Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen for DD, in case it is missed at triage. • Adapt communication approaches; ensure patient is in as least-stimulating space as possible. Engage with their caregiver for strategies (signs of pain; underlying causes; behaviour change). Consider offering an About Me tool (found in this toolkit) to elicit helpful information. • Review list of commonly missed diagnoses
Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) to see if the patient is connected to any developmental services. Ask for advice on crisis, transitional or respite services for this population. Ask for the Health Care Facilitator for the region. This person can help link with various sectors. • Offer short-term counseling to situational crisis, anxiety, etc. • Assess caregivers for burnout. Share resources on respite services. • Discuss crisis planning. Encourage that a plan is developed for next time.
Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review list of commonly missed medical issues. • Adapt communication approaches; ensure patient is in as least-stimulating a space as possible. Engage with their caregiver for strategies (signs of pain; underlying causes; behaviour change) • Review list of commonly missed diagnoses. • Provide a clear language discharge summary to the patient.
Pharmacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of prescribing guidelines for patients with DD: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Psychotropic medication issues, Rapid Tranquilization • Compliance, appropriate use, medicine review, use of psychotropics.
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a possibility of developing a patient alert? Can it trigger automatic referrals to SW? Can tip sheets be uploaded electronically and available to practitioners at the point of care?
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge on specialized services for people with DD and mental health issues (dual diagnosis) • Provide resources on crisis planning, and encourage development of a plan.