

# Understanding Health Differences in Oregon Adult Medicaid Members with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Plain Language Report

by the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)



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## How this Report was Funded

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The University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) received a grant from ACL #90UCPH0061-01. The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) also received funding from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and passed that through as a grant to the UCEDD to build capacity to support a public health workforce to serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

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## To Cite this Report

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# About the Project



The UCEDD contracted the Center for Health System Effectiveness (CHSE) to study data to see what health differences exist between adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Oregon and those without IDD. This report is based on the original report that CHSE did. This report gives information about adults in Oregon with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who used Medicaid insurance, who did not always get the same health care as adults without IDD. That can make them sicker or make it harder for them to stay healthy.

The information used in this report included information about health care visits in 2022. It compares Medicaid health care services of 2,066 adults in Oregon with IDD to that same number of adults in Oregon without IDD.

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## Where this Report Comes from



This plain language report comes from the UCEDD. It makes the main points easier to understand from the report "Evaluating Health Disparities of Medicaid Members Diagnosed with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Oregon." The original report was developed by the Center for Health System Effectiveness (CHSE).

CHSE, at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), is a research organization that thinks about how money and a lot of information can answer questions about health care delivery.

The UCEDD contracted with CHSE to look at information to find out what health differences there are for people with IDD in Oregon compared to those without IDD.

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## Why it Matters



There is limited information on health services for adults in Oregon with IDD. This report helps give specific information on health care services provided to adults in Oregon with IDD.

It's important to understand if adults in Oregon with IDD get the same quality and type of care as adults in Oregon without IDD. This, along with other important health information, can be used to improve health care services.

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# Health Disparities

This report looks at the health disparities of adult individuals with IDD in Oregon that had Medicaid insurance in 2022.

Health disparities are differences in health because not everyone has the same access to care, and some people face more obstacles than others to stay healthy.

Example: Some people with IDD may not have doctors who understand their needs, or they may have a hard time getting to a doctor.

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## Information in this Report

This report focuses on information to help answer a few questions. These questions shaped what the research focused on. The questions are:



What health differences do adults in Oregon with IDD experience?



Do adults in Oregon with IDD have a harder time getting the same health care as adults in Oregon without IDD?



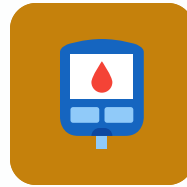
What could be done to fix these problems?

# Health Care Areas

The report by Center for Health System Effectiveness (CHSE) looked at how adults in Oregon with IDD get health care in six different areas. The health care for adults in Oregon with IDD was compared to the health care of adults in Oregon without IDD in these areas:



**Mental Health  
Care**



**Diabetes**



**Substance  
Use Disorder**



**Oral Health  
Care**



**Hospital  
Use**



**Cancer  
Screening**

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## Measures

Each area listed above has measures that help us understand how well a health care service or treatment is working. The measure looks at, or examines, how well a health care area is working.

Think of it like using a thermometer to see if someone has a fever—a thermometer is a tool that helps us understand what's going on. The 17 measures help us understand how well health care services are working.

This report highlights a few key findings from the 17 measures in six health care areas. For all the details, you can check out the online data dashboard and the original report.

# How the Data was Collected

## Medicaid Data

The report looked at information about people who used Medicaid in 2022. This information included codes that describe the health problems and treatments the people received.

## Data from Doctors Visits

Codes were used to identify people for the study and to keep track of the results of the study. Looking at these codes is called analysis. Analysis is the process of looking at something closely to understand it better.

## Race and Ethnicity

Some information was missing from Medicaid data about people's race and ethnicity. Information about race and ethnicity was gathered from a data set called Race, Ethnicity, Language and Disability (REALD).

## Age, Gender, Race, Location, and Statistical Significance

This study looked at people with and without disabilities, grouping them by age, gender, race, and where they live, such as in small towns or a big city. Looking at information in different ways helps researchers understand how these ways might influence the results.

The data also shows what is important and what isn't, meaning the results are unlikely to happen just by chance. If something is statistically significant, it means the finding is probably true and not random, making the results more reliable.



# Limitations

Limitations in research are things that can affect the result of a study. Here are some limitations in this study:



The study only includes people who received health care in 2022 and had Medicaid. It does not include adults in Oregon with IDD who did not receive care that year, or those without Medicaid.



Doctors must assign a diagnosis at each visit. They might not always include an IDD diagnosis, even if the patient has IDD. This means some individuals with IDD may not have been identified in the data that was used.



The Medicaid data used for this study only includes male and female genders, which may be a limitation.



Differences in results might be due to IDD or other things that we cannot look at.



In some cases, there was not enough data to get results for different factors, like race and gender together. This might affect the results.



# CONTENT WARNING

On pages 15 and 16 in this report, there is information about mental health, feeling very sad, self-harm, and suicide. These are important topics, but they can be upsetting or hard to think about.

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**If you start to feel sad, worried, or upset, you can:**



**Take a break  
before reading  
more.**



**Talk to someone  
you trust about  
how you feel.**



**Call a support  
line if you  
need help.**

**Text or call 988 if you or anyone you know  
needs immediate mental health support.  
This number is open any time of day or night.**

# Health Care Area: Substance Use Disorder

Substance Use Disorder means the repeated use of alcohol, drugs, or the misuse of medication from the doctor that causes problems in people's lives.

What was measured:

## Screening for Alcohol or Other Substance Abuse Treatment:

- Percent of people who were evaluated by a professional to see if they have problems with alcohol, drugs, or medications prescribed by a doctor.

## Initiation of Substance Use Disorder Treatment

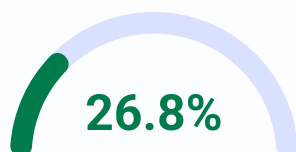
- Percent of people who started receiving services to help with problems caused by alcohol, drugs, or medications prescribed by a doctor.

## Engagement of Substance Use Disorder Treatment

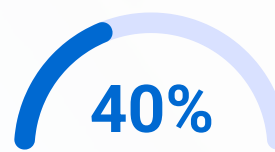
- Percent of people who continued receiving services for problems with alcohol, drugs, or medications prescribed by a doctor.



**Male adult Medicaid members with IDD were less likely to start Substance Use Disorder Treatment than male adults without IDD.**



**Males with IDD**



**Males without IDD**

Overall, adults with IDD in Oregon had similar results compared to adults without IDD.

## Next Steps

- ✓ There were no major overall differences in Substance Use Disorder screening and treatment for adults with IDD. All the rates were low. Males with IDD were less likely to receive substance use disorder treatment compared to males without IDD. Interviews could help identify where these services are lacking or difficult to access for Medicaid members with IDD.

# Health Care Area: Hospital Use

Hospital use focuses on emergency room visits and how often people come back to stay in the hospital after they are released. People use emergency rooms when someone needs quick care for a serious problem.

What was measured:

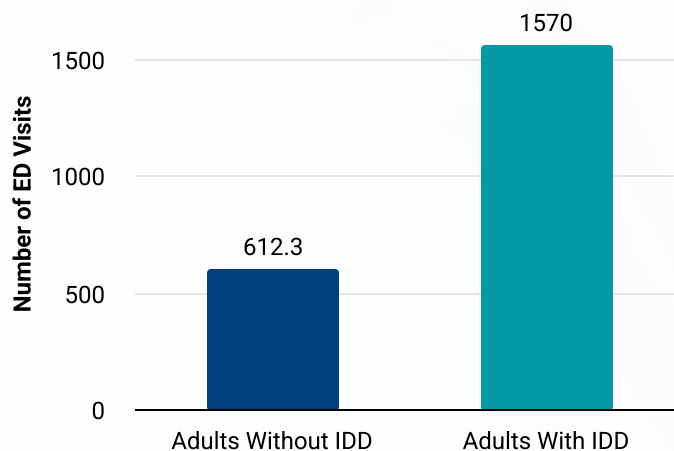
## Emergency Room Utilization

- Number of Emergency Room visits.

## 30-Day All-Cause Readmissions

- Number of hospital readmissions that happened within 30 days of a hospital stay, were unplanned, and could have been for any reason.

### Adults with IDD visited the Emergency Room 1.5x more than adults without IDD.



## Next Steps

- ✓ Researchers could look into rules and care plans in group homes about when people with disabilities need to go to the emergency room for certain health problems. This could possibly help to understand why people with IDD are going to the ER so much more often than people without IDD.
- ✓ To help reduce the number of people with IDD on Medicaid who go back to the hospital within 30 days, rules could be made for health care groups to report how they plan for care when someone with IDD leaves the hospital.

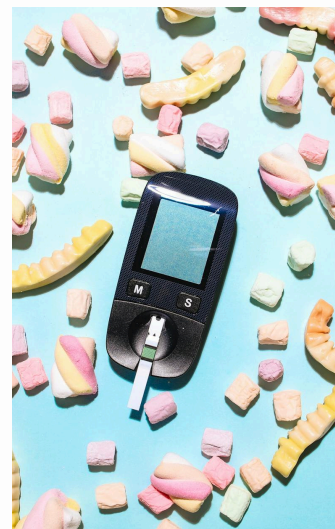
# Health Care Area: Diabetes

Diabetes is a health problem that happens when your body has trouble controlling the amount of sugar (called glucose) in your blood. Your body needs some sugar for energy. Too much or too little sugar can make you sick over time.

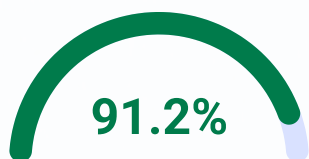
What was measured:

## Did people with diabetes get at least one HbA1c test in 2022?

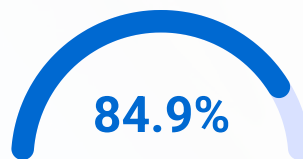
- Percent of people who had a blood test that checks how well diabetes is controlled over the past two to three months. It can also be used to see if people have diabetes.



**No differences were found in the number of Medicaid members with and without IDD who received at least one HbA1C test and had a diabetes diagnosis.**



**Adults with IDD**



**Adults without IDD**

## Next Steps

- ✓ No differences were found in how diabetes is treated, but how people are diagnosed with diabetes was not looked at. Future research could look at when people first find out they have diabetes to see if people with IDD who have Medicaid are less likely to be diagnosed early than those without IDD who have Medicaid.

# Health Care Area: Oral Health Care

Oral health care means taking care of your mouth, teeth, and gums to keep them healthy. It includes things like brushing your teeth every day, flossing to clean between your teeth, and visiting the dentist for check-ups and cleanings.

What was measured:

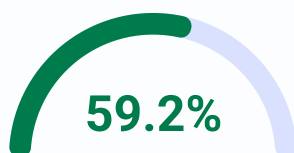
## Access to Any Dental Care

- Percent of adults in Oregon who had access to any dental services. For example, being able to see a dentist regularly to keep your teeth and gums healthy and prevent problems like cavities and gum disease.

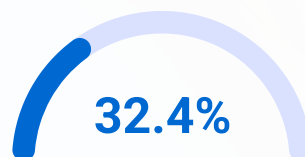
## Preventive Dental Services

- Percent of adults in Oregon who had any preventive dental care treatments such as check-ups, cleanings, or x-rays.

**Adult Medicaid members in Oregon with IDD had more access to dental care than adult members without IDD in 2022.**



**Adults with IDD**



**Adults without IDD**



## Next Steps

- ✓ Future research could look at the dental procedures that adults in Oregon receive to see if there are differences in the types of dental treatment people receive.
- ✓ Adults with IDD were able to get more dental care. More research could be done to figure out how that happened and if we can use the same ideas to help them get other types of care they need.

# Health Care Area: Cancer Screening

Cancer is a disease when cells grow in a way they shouldn't. Our body is made up of tiny parts called cells that grow in an organized way. When something goes wrong, cells start growing too much or fast. Extra cells can form a lump called a tumor or cause other problems in the body.

What was measured:

## Breast Cancer Screening

- Percent of women who received a breast cancer screening. Breast cancer screening is a test that checks your breasts for changes, like lumps, to help find cancer early when it's easier to treat.

## Cervical Cancer Screening

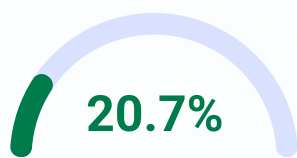
- Percent of women, ages 21-64 years, who had a pap smear during 2022. A pap smear is a test that checks for changes in the cervix, which is the lower part of the uterus, to help find cancer early when it's easier to treat.

## Avoidance of Non-Recommended Cervical Cancer Screenings in Adolescent Females

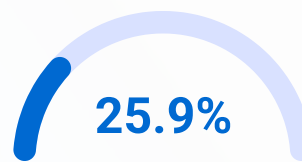
- Percent of women, ages 16-20 years, who did not get screened for cervical cancer. This screening is not medically recommended for this age group.



**Medicaid members with IDD had a lower cervical cancer screening rate compared to those without IDD.**



**Adults with IDD**



**Adults without IDD**

## Next Steps

- ✓ Ask the Oregon Health Authority to work with Oregon's Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) to figure out what might be causing low screening rates for people with IDD. CCOs are local health organizations in Oregon that help people get the care they need, like doctor visits, hospital stays, and other health services.
- ✓ Ask cancer advocacy groups to partner to dispel myths about cancer screenings through targeted educational campaigns for people with IDD. A myth is a story or idea that people believe is true, but it's not true.



# Health Care Area: Mental Health

Mental health care refers to when people get support taking care of their thoughts and feelings. The people who provide help might be a therapist, counselor, psychologist, social worker, or doctor.

What was measured:

## Nonfatal Suicide Attempts and Self-Harm

- Percent of people diagnosed with acute nonfatal suicide attempt and self-harm. Nonfatal suicide attempts and self-harm happens when someone hurts themselves on purpose but does not die from it. People who experience this need support and care to help them feel better and stay safe.

## Antidepressant Medication Management - Acute Phase Treatment

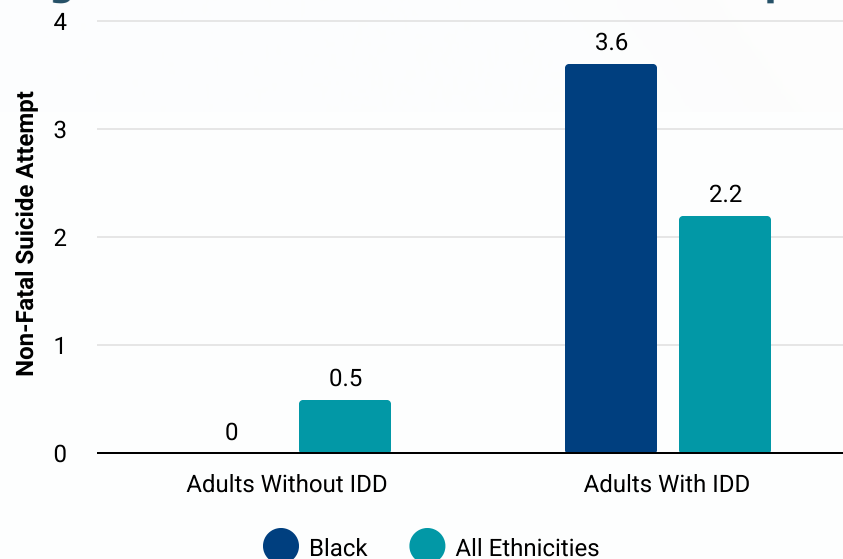
- Number of people with major depression, who were prescribed certain medication, and kept taking it for at least 12 weeks. Depression is a health condition that can make people feel really sad, tired and uninterested in things they usually enjoy.

## Antidepressant Medication Management - Continuous Phase Treatment

- Number of people with major depression, who were prescribed antidepressants, and kept taking the medication for at least 6 months.



### Black Adults in Oregon with IDD had 3x higher risk of non-fatal suicide attempts.





# Health Care Area: Mental Health

Mental health care refers to when people get support taking care of their thoughts and feelings. The people who provide help might be a therapist, counselor, psychologist, social worker, or doctor.

What was measured:

## Clinical Depression Screening

- Percent of people who had a clinical depression screening. Clinical depression screening is where a doctor or therapist asks questions to check for signs of depression.

## 30-Day All Cause Readmission After Hospitalization for Mental Illness

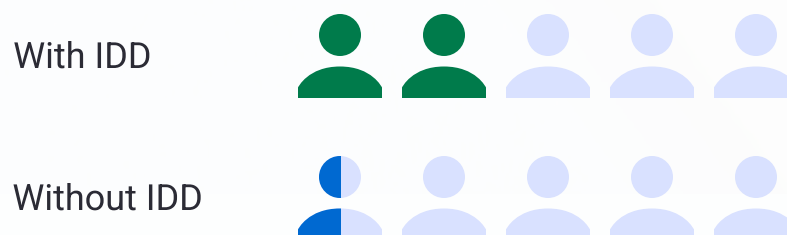
- Number of people who returned to the hospital within 30 days of being discharged for mental health related concerns.

## Emergency Department Visits for Suicidal Ideation

- Number of people who went to the emergency room because they were thinking about ending their own life.



**For adults with IDD, 2.2% of Medicaid members had a record of a nonfatal suicide attempt and self-harm compared to 0.5% of adults without IDD.**



## Next Steps

- ✓ To help increase the amount of therapists available, one option is to increase the amount that they get paid to provide treatment to Medicaid members with IDD.
- ✓ Researchers could interview adults with IDD who have attempted suicide to help identify gaps in the care that they received.

# THANK YOU!

OHSU UCEDD

If you would like to learn more about our work, please visit our website at: [www.ohsu.edu/ucedd](http://www.ohsu.edu/ucedd)

Contact us at: [ucedd@ohsu.edu](mailto:ucedd@ohsu.edu)