

Awareness of individual health and medication history

There are many issues that impact access to and coordination of quality health care services for individuals with developmental disability. Some things that represent the cornerstone of quality health care supports for everyone are:

- Preventive and routine screening
- Health promotion
- Early detection and treatment
- Follow up and communication of health care concerns

Unlike the general population, some people with developmental disability cannot report and describe signs and symptoms of illness, some do not have full medical histories and many rely upon direct support professionals to be their health care advocates.

Things that affect the quality of health care services that individuals receive:

- Difficulty on the part of the individual to communicate symptoms to both direct support professionals and health care providers.
- The need for better tools that would allow direct care professionals to effectively communicate the health care needs or issues of the individuals they support.

- Incomplete or poorly communicated information from the health care provider that impacts on follow-up and ongoing health care management.
- Lack of complete and thorough medical histories needed to enable a health care provider to make appropriate assessments, diagnoses and treatment recommendations.
- Lack of consistent routine/preventive health care screening standards adjusted for age and specific syndromes associated with mental retardation.
- Lack of systems to observe and report changes in health and mental health status.

What Should You Do?

Review:

- **Observation Signs and Symptoms folder**
- **Health History Information form**
- **Preparing for a Doctor's Appointment training**
- **Annual Health Screening Recommendations**
- **Health Review Checklist**
- **Health Review Checklist Guidelines**

