



# DISABILITY & SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD)

## INTRODUCTION

This snapshot of information is intended to inform individuals, parents, professionals, and providers of the intersection between disability & Substance Use Disorder (SUD) among Hispanic/Latino populations in the US.

## PREVALENCE AMONG HISPANIC/LATINOS

According to the "immigrant paradox," immigrants and their descendants are more likely to experience a mental health disorder and an SUD as they lose cultural protective factors, based on how long they reside in the U.S. The process of acculturation or assimilation into American culture generally worsens mental health, but biculturalism can increase protective factors.<sup>3</sup>

## PHYSICAL & COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

In addition to having higher rates of Serious Mental Illness (SMI) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD), people with physical and cognitive disabilities also have lower treatment rates. Oftentimes, providers underestimate the barriers to accessibility of programs for people with disabilities.<sup>2</sup>



## LIMITATIONS & TREATMENT BARRIERS

- Disability-specific exclusions to care
- Insufficient behavioral considerations
- "Invisible disabilities" may skew perceived needs
- Accessibility range is inadequately discussed
- Insufficient resources to treat SMI, SUD, and disabilities
- Disabilities presented by SUD vary greatly
- Professionals differ in training & experience<sup>1</sup>

# How to Remove Treatment Barriers



## UTILIZE ADA RESOURCES

Treatment centers can visit [ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov) to ensure accessibility requirements are being met. ADA also provides resources that can help create an inclusive environment for people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

## EXPANDED TRAINING

Staff should be trained to inform clients about their program's ability to meet a range of access needs and provide information on how to make access requests, as well as how to respond to them.<sup>1</sup>



Staff can also be trained to offer voluntary brief cognitive screening during the intake/assessment interview. Understanding potential interactions between drugs for mental disorders or SUD and medications prescribed to people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

## LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY EFFORTS

Some local peer recovery support groups have accessibility committees that work to meet participants' access needs and provide available resources. Meetings may even be designated for those with certain comorbidities or polysubstance use.<sup>1</sup>

## REFERENCES

1. [Mental and Substance Use Disorder Treatment for People With Physical and Cognitive Disabilities](#)
2. [Substance Use Disorder Treatment For People With Physical and Cognitive Disabilities](#)
3. [Working with Latino/a and Hispanic Patients](#)

Click here to access our website for additional information.

[National Hispanic and Latino Addiction Technology Transfer Center](#)