

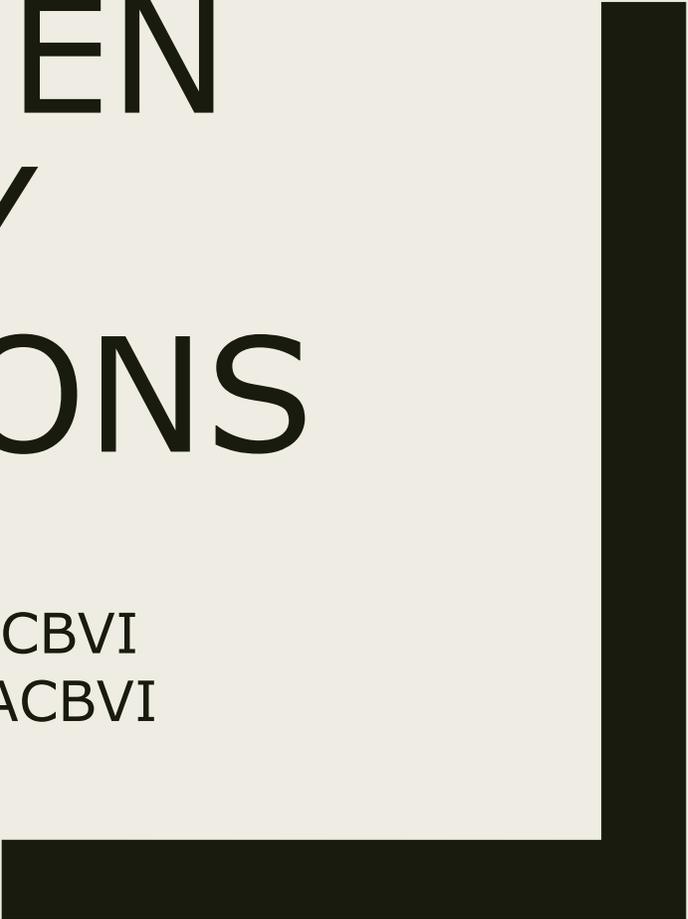


AT AND HIDDEN DISABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Presented by:

Virginia Thompson AT/IT Director ACBVI

Kristina Le AT Training Coordinator ACBVI



Objective:

- Understand the complexity of hidden disabilities as applied to making AT recommendations
- Recognize the need for further consideration when dealing with clients who have hidden/multiple diagnoses
- Be able to identify functional limitations of hidden disabilities and the AT that is available

Hidden Disabilities

- **Fibromyalgia** causes aches and pain all over the body, highlighted by "tender points" throughout the body (Office of Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).
 - Fibromyalgia is estimated to affect 2 - 4% of the population, with a female to male incidence ratio of approximately 9:1. (2017 National Data Bank for Rheumatic Diseases)
- **Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)** an autoimmune and inflammatory disease, which means that your immune system attacks healthy cells in your body by mistake, causing inflammation (painful swelling) in the affected parts of the body. (2017 Centers for Disease Control)
 - The risk of arthritis increases with age and arthritis is more common among women than men
 - By 2040, an estimated 78 million (26%) US adults ages 18 years or older are projected to have doctor-diagnosed arthritis. (2017 Center for Disease Control)

Hidden Disabilities

- **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)** can cause a wide range of changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions. TBI can be associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. People with severe injuries usually need rehabilitation.
 - An estimated 1.7 million people sustain a TBI annually.1 Of them: 52,000 die, 275,000 are hospitalized, and 1.365 million, nearly 80%, are treated and released from an emergency department (2017 Center for Diseases Control)
- **Anxiety Disorder** refers to anticipation of a future concern and is more associated with muscle tension and avoidance behavior.
 - *Types: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Phobias, Social Anxiety, and others*
 - Anxiety disorders are the most common of mental disorders and affect nearly 30 percent of adults at some point in their lives. (2017 American Psychiatric Association)

Hidden Disabilities

- **Ergonomic Considerations-** limited range of motion, loss of use of a limb, mobility issues, this could also be related to arthritis, carpal tunnel, Parkinson's Disease, use of prosthetic devices, wheelchairs, walkers, canes or any other issues with movement.
- **Cerebral palsy (CP)** is a blanket term for several disorders that affect normal, healthy movement.
 - affects normal movement in different parts of the body and has many degrees of severity. Causes problems with posture, gait, muscle tone and coordination of movement.

Hidden Disabilities

- **Low Vision**- having visual acuity of 20/70 or less with best correction. Legal blindness best vision is 20/200 with correction or a visual field no greater than 20 degrees. (2017 American Foundation for the Blind)
- **Hard of Hearing**- any level of hearing loss which causes difficulties with express or receptive communication abilities. Ranges from mild hearing loss to profound loss.

Hidden Disabilities

- **Migraine Disorders-** Migraine headaches are the most common form of a vascular headache, which is an abnormal function of the brain's blood vessels (UVA Health, 2004). There are several different types of migraines that have different symptoms associated with them.
 - *Common symptoms include: Eye pain, Sensitivity to light or sound, Nausea, Vomiting, Severe pain, usually on one side of the head that some individuals describe as "pounding"*
- **Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS)-** an unusually severe sensitivity or allergy-like reaction to many different kinds of pollutants including solvents, VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds), perfumes, petrol, diesel, smoke, "chemicals" in general and often encompasses problems with regard to pollen, house dust mites, and pet fur & dander.
 - *Symptoms can include: burning, stinging eyes, wheezing, breathlessness, nausea, extreme fatigue/lethargy, headache/migraine/vertigo/dizziness, poor memory & concentration, runny nose (rhinitis), sore throat, cough, sinus problems, skin rashes and/or itching skin, sensitivity to light & noise, sleeping problems, digestive ulcers, and muscle & joint pain.*

Functional Limitation Considerations

- What limitations does the employee with this disorder experience?
- How do these limitations affect the employee's job performance?
- What specific job tasks are problematic as a result of these limitations?
- What accommodations are available to reduce or eliminate these problems? Are all possible resources being used to determine accommodations?
- Can the employee provide information on possible accommodation solutions?
- Once accommodations are in place, can meetings take place to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations? Can meetings take place to determine whether additional accommodations are needed?
- Would human resources or personnel departments, supervisors, or coworkers benefit from education, training or disability awareness regarding learning disabilities? Can it be provided?

Assistive Technology



Low Tech/No Tech -59% of all workplace accommodations cost \$0.00

Medium Tech- average cost is \$500 or less

High Tech- typically needed when working with clients who have cross functional limitations.

Examples of AT



Examples of AT



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Examples of AT



Examples of AT



Case Study

- Disabilities
 - TBI –right temporal brain age 12 onset
 - Auditory Processing Disorder
 - Memory
 - Intermittent Hearing loss due to TBI
 - Scoliosis with Bulging disc
 - Left ear physical damage with no residual hearing left side
 - Seizure disorder TBI related
- Uses ASL- primary communication
- Unable to benefit from CART
- Uses Smartphone for organization and memory
- Dog at home for environmental information and warning
- Current Issues for Work/School
 - *PhD level student*
 - Goal-Neuroscientist Clinical Researcher at a university
 - *Uses Mac and iOS devices*
 - *Samsung smartphone*
 - *No knowledge of accessibility features on any device*
 - *Carries all tech and textbooks with her in a backpack*
 - *Startled by others at her workstation, due to hearing loss*
- Current Issues for Home
 - *Neighborhood unsafe and relies on dog for home and alerting to people at door*
 - *Lives with hearing partner*
 - *No alerting devices in home for hearing*

Case Study Cont'd

- Recommendations

- *HOME*

- Silent Call Signature Series – alerting device including door mat at entry point, smoke detector, alarm clock with bed shaker, and personal pager.
 - Does not want doorbell on outside for fear of theft – wants to continue to use dog to alert for someone at the door

- *WORK*

- Mirror

- *SCHOOL*

- Request alternative format documents/textbooks from the university
 - Tablet and backpack to lighten the load as needs to carry all day

Group Case Studies (10 Min)

- Make 5 groups
- Assignment
 - *Read the Group Case Study*
 - *Handouts on different disabilities are in your packet*
 - *Follow the format on your poster to:*
 - Identify ALL possible disabilities and all current AT being used
 - Identify functional areas that need to be addressed
 - Recommend Assistive Technology to meet the functional limitations

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Recap and Final Thoughts