

When Mind Meets Balance: Barriers to Rehabilitation among Adolescents with Intellectual Disability: A Narrative Review

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ABSTRACT

Intellectual Disability (ID) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that is typified by a profound loss of intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour, which begins in the period of development. A 2022 study reported the prevalence of intellectual disability in India to be about 1.4-2%. Adolescence is a pivotal phase in life, as a significant number of adolescents with ID experience disruption in rehabilitation due to various barriers. The purpose of this narrative review was to review these barriers in rehabilitation among adolescents with Intellectual Disability. A literature review was performed through PubMed, Wiley online library, Science Direct, Frontiers, and Google Scholar with search results between 2012 and 2026. Twenty-six articles were reviewed, of which 15 met the inclusion criteria. The results showed that there were four significant types of barriers, including structural and service-level barriers such as lack of adolescent-

specific programs, financial constraints, transport problems and poor coordination of the services; Environmental barriers related to poor accessibility of infrastructure and insufficient therapeutic services; Psychosocial and family barriers including low motivation and decreased participation in rehabilitation; Transition-gap barriers due to poor rehab planning in this age group. These mutually supporting barriers cause a decreased involvement in rehabilitation and service discontinuity in the process of transitioning between school and community contexts. To sum up, adolescent intellectual disability embodies multidimensional barriers to rehabilitation, which are structurally determined. There is a need to have barrier-focused planning and organised transition systems to enhance functional outcomes and accessibility to rehabilitation services.

Keywords: Access to healthcare, Adaptive behaviour, Transition services.

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