

# Integrating Wellness Goals into Personalized Care Pathways for Children and Youth with Disabilities

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## BACKGROUND

- Little is known about how wellness is promoted or addressed in the context of children's rehabilitation services.
- Research to date has focused on individual wellness dimensions (e.g., physical), with limited success in promoting overall well-being.

## PURPOSE

- To explore what wellness means to children and youth with a range of disabilities, what goals are important to them, and how their needs are addressed in rehabilitative settings.

## METHODS

- Conducted four 'World-Café'-style focus groups with three stakeholder groups: 1) youth with disabilities; 2) family members/caregivers of children/youth with disabilities; and 3) rehabilitation professionals who provide services to children and youth with disabilities.
- Recruited participants from Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital and Special Olympics Ontario.

## RESULTS

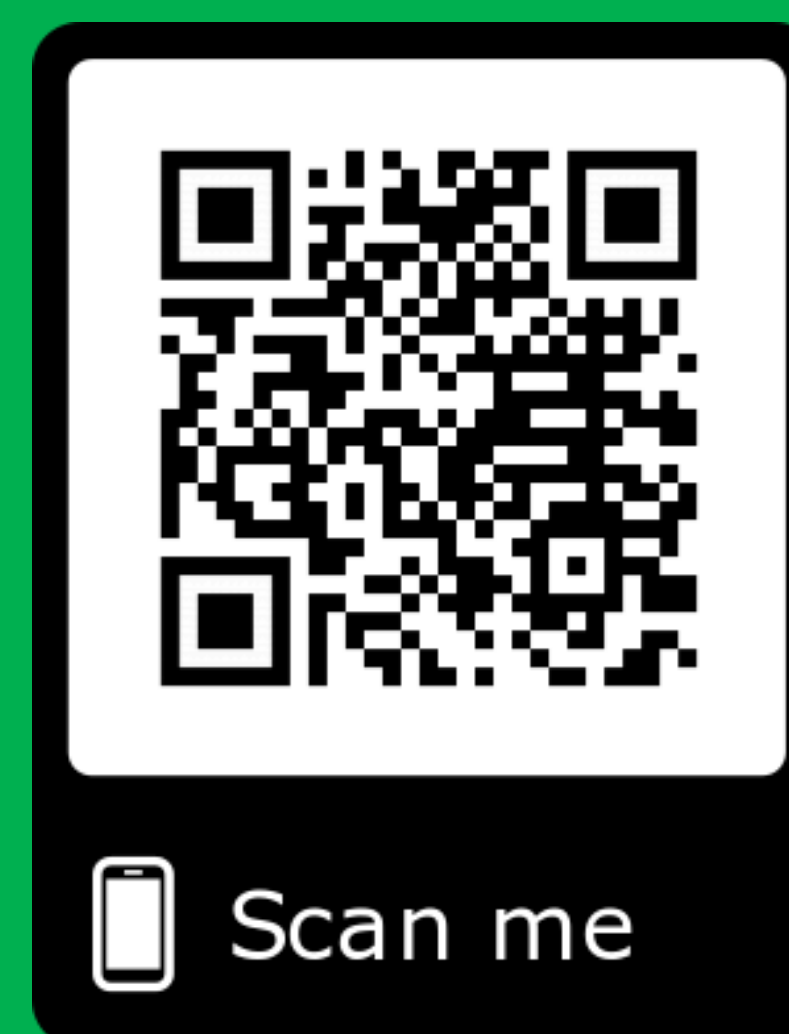
### Youth perspective:

- A sense of accomplishment, opportunities/exposure to activities, autonomy/choice, and social connection were important to their own wellness needs and goals.
- Having access to community services and personalized/tailored care was important to them when receiving wellness services.

"It feels like you don't need anybody's help and you can do it by yourself."

"I find that everything right now from Bloorview supports me in a way that doesn't make me need anything extra. I find that it all complements my life."

# WELLNESS for children and youth with disabilities means feeling a sense of accomplishment, having opportunities/exposure to activities, autonomy/choice, and social connections.



## RESULTS (continued)

### Parent perspective:

- Opportunities/exposure to activities, maintaining self-identity, and social connection were important to their own wellness needs and goals.
- Having access to community services, follow-ups, and health care providers that are adept at addressing wellness goals was important when receiving wellness services for themselves and their children.

"[...] your life is not just this one thing [...] it's multiple boxes. You have your work, you have your kids [...] that's the way to live."

"It would be nice to have one go-to person that could help me navigate, coordinate - that if you did get into a crisis, you could call, who could then help you connect out."

### Healthcare provider (HCP) perspective:

- Supporting opportunities/exposure to activities, autonomy/choice, and making social connections were important for addressing wellness needs and goals of clients and families.
- Building capacity around wellness needs, following up with clients' wellness priorities, engaging in interdisciplinary collaboration, and connecting clients with community services were important aspects of service provision.

"When I think of a client being well, and maybe this is my own perception, being heard or being included in the conversation and having a voice."

"If I raise that topic [of wellness] I'm not sure that I know that I have the resources of what to do with it next or I'm not funded to do that."

## KEY MESSAGES

- General consensus amongst youth, parents/caregivers, and HCPs on what wellness means, what wellness goals look like, and what services are important for wellness.
- Personalized wellness goals across multiple wellness dimensions should be co-created with clients, families, and HCPs, and incorporated more into programs at Holland Bloorview.
- HCPs need training and resources on how to address wellness in conversations with clients and families.

## NEXT STEPS

- Our long-term objective is to co-create, implement, and evaluate a Toolkit for Wellness Promotion, which will include information and resources for young people with disabilities, their families and health care and community service providers.

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