

The Intersection of Disability and Chronic Disease



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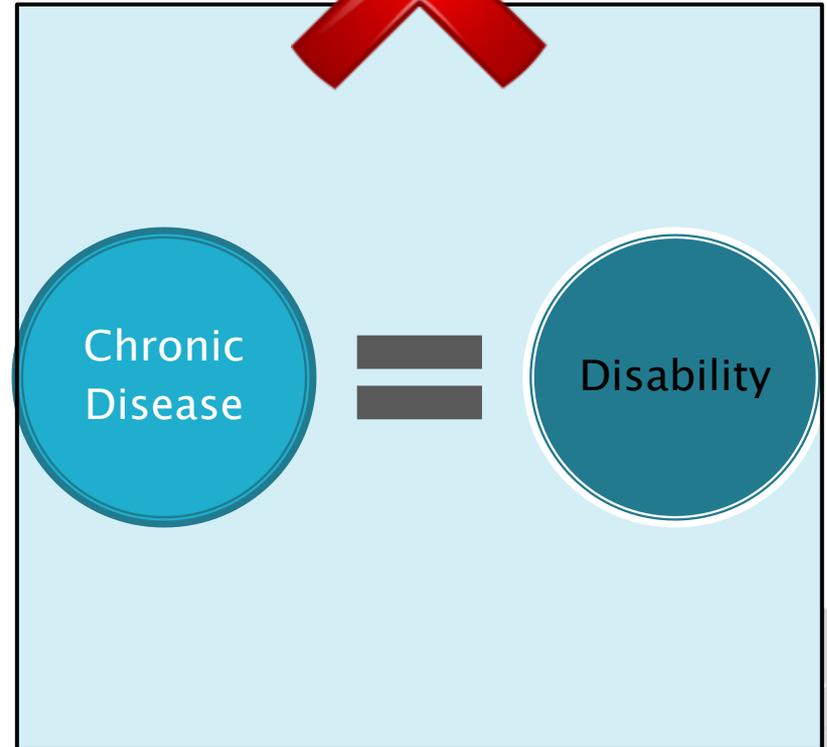
Chronic Disease

- ▶ Chronic diseases are : “...diseases of long duration and generally slow progression”
 - World Health Organization
(http://www.who.int/topics/chronic_diseases/en/)
- ▶ They are integrally related to health.

Disability

- ▶ Disability is defined as:
“...impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions...reflecting an interaction between features of a person’s body and features of the society in which he or she lives.”
- ▶ The preferred conceptual framework of disability is one in which it disability is separated from health, not integrally related to it.

Intersection between Chronic Disease and Disability



Temporal Relationship

- ▶ Chronic disease can result in disability (associated health conditions).
- ▶ PWD can develop chronic disease, related (secondary conditions) or unrelated (comorbid conditions) to the disability.

So what?

- ▶ People with disabilities experience chronic conditions at a higher rate than people without disabilities.
- ▶ Research has begun to document the disparities that exist between people with disabilities and those without disabilities.
- ▶ In order to do this we have we must first view disability as separate from health.

Setting the Agenda:

I. We must include disability as a demographic variable when we plan and conduct health disparities research;

II. We must continue to promote the idea: PWD can be healthy.

Setting the Agenda:

III. We must establish full and effective integration of PWD in clinical (not just qualitative) research and agenda setting

IV. We cannot solely focus on primary prevention; we must also promote health and prevention/self-management of chronic disease for the large number of people who already experience disability.