

Autism & I/DD: Changing Demographics, Rising Needs

Why This Matters

The needs of individuals with autism and intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) are changing rapidly. Higher rates of profound autism, more complex medical and behavioral challenges, and a growing aging population mean that providers, families, and healthcare systems must prepare now for the future.

National Statistics

- It is estimated that approximately **2.1% of adults in the United States have autism**. Older individuals are less likely to have received a diagnosis.
- Adults with autism and I/DD have almost **5x more annual health care spending**
- Adults with autism are up to **3x more likely to develop dementia**; as many as 1 in 3 may be affected
- **Autistic individuals are at greater risk for many health conditions**. Individuals with profound autism-- requiring 24 hr support- are at even greater risk for sleep disorders, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disorders, and gastrointestinal disorders

Bancroft by the Numbers

- Approximately **20%** of individuals in Bancroft's residential programs are **over age 40**
- **6% are age 65+**
- **75%** of Bancroft's adult population has an autism diagnosis
- **Nearly half (44%)** have a co-occurring mental health condition
- **93% of children** admitted to Bancroft have experienced trauma prior to admission
- Bancroft residents see a large number of medical specialties, with an **average of 9 appointments annually**

Trends We Are Seeing

- **Rising prevalence of profound autism:** Children admitted now often present with multiple psychiatric and medical diagnoses, and many will remain in services into adulthood.
- **Higher acuity in admissions:** Adults entering care require more intensive supports than even 5 years ago.
- **Growing older adult population:** Individuals are living longer, but often with more health needs — from mobility issues to dementia.
- **Healthcare as a primary challenge:** Medical issues are now the top reason for discharges from aging programs.

How the Collaborative is Leading the Response

- **Research & Grants:** Advancing studies on profound autism, health, and mental health.
- **Healthcare Partnerships:** Mobile clinic with Cooper, Inclusive Wellness Center with Rowan & Virtua.
- **National Conversations:** Roundtables and seminar series on aging, dementia, and autism.

Partner With Us

We invite funders, policymakers, physicians, and community partners to join the **OneBancroft Collaborative for Community Health** in building solutions for the future.

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About Bancroft

Bancroft offers a range of programs and resources that are designed to help children with autism unlock their potential and prepare for a bright future. We invite you to visit our Children's Services page to learn more about how we can support your child on their journey to success. We also offer programs for adults with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities including day and vocational programs, as well as residential services. Visit our Adult Services page to learn more.

