

My Profile Cards: The Importance of Providing Adequate Accommodations for Patients with Disabilities

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Objective:

Despite the high prevalence of disability reported in the United States, many physicians and health care workers report feeling unprepared or uncomfortable providing care to individuals with disabilities (Iezzoni et al., 2022). In addition, patients with disabilities frequently encounter significant barriers in health care settings, such as a lack of accommodations, incorrect assumptions or perceptions from health care providers regarding their disability status, and an overall reduction in health care access due to physical or organizational barriers (Morris et al., 2021; Clemente et al., 2022). This literature review examines the role of *My Profile Cards*; an accommodation instrument designed to facilitate and improve communication between patients with disabilities and healthcare providers. These cards include patient photos, demographic details, and personalized instructions for accommodations.

Method:

Researchers engaged in a comprehensive literature search related to accommodations in health care and patient experiences in a health care setting. The literature search was conducted using the following online databases: Springer Nature, PubMed Central, Wiley Online Library, Google Scholar, and PLOS One. The inclusion criteria required that articles be peer-reviewed, published within the last 5 to 10 years, and focused on healthcare-related appointments involving individuals with disabilities. Articles were excluded if they were not peer-reviewed or were published more than 15 years ago, ensuring that the literature reviewed was both credible and current.

Results/Conclusions:

Our findings reveal that while implementation of such tools remains limited, their use leads to improvements in patient-provider communication, increased self-advocacy, and provider perceptions (Morris et al., 2021). More specifically, 92% of patients with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome reported the cards to be helpful or very helpful in advocating for their needs during appointments (Loo et al., 2020). Furthermore, 86% of healthcare professionals noted an improved perception of patients with disabilities when the cards were used (Alencar et al., 2024). The cards effectively address key drivers of discrimination—such as provider assumptions, apathy, and lack of knowledge—by offering clear, personalized information that improves understanding and reduces bias (Ames et al., 2023; Morris et al., 2021). Overall, while *My Profile Cards* are underutilized, it is evident that they have the ability to improve perceptions of people with disabilities as well as supporting the healthcare experience for both patients and providers (Morris et al., 2021; Loo et al., 2020).

The review highlights the need for an integration of accommodation cards, such as adding them into electronic health records, to promote widespread use and overall communication (Mudrick et al., 2020). Highlighted by an Adjust Change Reform Framework (Mindy, 2024), future directions call for policy reform, broader research inclusion of marginalized populations, and systemic efforts to reduce disability-related stigma in healthcare settings.

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