

Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities are much less likely to be screened for colorectal cancer

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According to new research, adults in Ontario with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are significantly less likely to be screened for colorectal cancer than the general population.

Provided by Queen's University

Hélène Ouellette-Kuntz, a Queen's researcher and lead author on the first study of its kind, found that Ontarians with IDD, such as autism and Down syndrome, were almost twice as likely to not be up-to-date with colorectal tests when compared to Ontarians without IDD.

"As individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities live longer, their risk of developing chronic conditions like cancer increases. Suboptimal screening may contribute to a greater cancer burden in this population," says Dr. Ouellette-Kuntz, professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences and a scientist at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES).

Partnered with Virginie Cobigo, a professor at the University of Ottawa and a scientist with ICES, the study examined Ontario residents between 50 to 64 years of age, with and without IDD.

Researchers were able to gather that being older, female, having a greater expected use of health care resources, and being enrolled with or seeing a physician in a primary care patient enrolment model were all significantly associated with higher odds of having been screened for colorectal cancer in the IDD population.

"As [colorectal cancer](#) is the third most common cancer diagnosed in Canada and is the second and third leading cause of cancer deaths among Canadian men and women respectively, these findings highlight the need for targeted interventions aimed at making cancer screening more equitable," says Dr. Ouellette-Kuntz.

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