

What is a Cognitive Communication Disorder (CCD)?

The term CCD refers to the communication impairment resulting from underlying cognitive deficits due to neurological trauma. These include difficulties such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and social interaction. Underlying cognitive impairments may include attention, memory, organization, information processing and executive functions.

What does a Cognitive Communication Disorder

Look Like? Examples are far reaching in pediatrics and adults. In young children, developmental considerations play a large role in establishing the presence of a cognitive communication delay/disorder. Ideally a child with an Acquired Brain Injury and or CCD should be monitored through development and into early adulthood. Functional limitations may be noted as a person's inability to return at pre-accident levels to work or school or to maintain personal relationships or community involvement.

Possible areas of difficulty may include:

- Read and/or process written language
- Interpret personal documents, forms or reports
- Completion of tasks in a noisy environment, getting started
- Limitations in cognitive tolerance and or ability to maintain focus
- Difficulty with planning and organization
- Difficulty with reasoning, problem solving, judgement

What experience / philosophies does Donna have that are unique to the TBI and Pediatric Learning Disabilities population?

Donna works with individuals from a functional perspective. Rehab goals focus on achieving progress through self-empowered practices. Based on the "thinking about thinking" cognitive approaches, words and self-talk become guiding principles in day to day transformation. Complete with tips, tools, exercises and scripts, rehabilitation, as a process becomes an opportunity to incorporate personal goals immediately into every day life. Becoming a conscious participant as a client in the process of rehabilitation is an essential component to Donna's therapeutic style. She also draws from personal experience in assisting a family member with a mild TBI. Complimentary and integrative therapeutic approaches may also be explored.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

The Rotary Children's Center, Ontario (8 /1988 to 10/1989)

Assessment, treatment and consultative speech and language services provided to children with physical and/or communicative disorders. Participated in the multi-disciplinary treatment and coordination of special services with outside agencies and in-centre professionals.

McMaster Hospitals Hamilton, Ontario (8/1990 to 9/1992)

Assessment, treatment and consultative services provided to children with moderate to profound communication difficulties. Responsibilities included augmentative consultation to surrounding School Board(s) personnel and communication with hospital team members. Services were also provided to adults in communication disorders including augmentative consultation to stroke patients as well as assessment and treatment as part of an inpatient rehabilitation team.

Grey County Board of Education, Ontario (9/1992 to 11/1994)

Senior SLP position including assessment, and consultative services provided to school age children.

Wentworth Board of Education, Ontario (12/1994 to 2/1995)

Responsibilities as above

Windsor Catholic Separate School Board (12/1995 to 9/1999)

Services as above with a dedicated interest in and focus on Language/Cognition and Literacy.

Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital, Ontario (10/1997 to 2001)

Acute Care providing assessment and remediation in language, cognition and swallowing with adult neurogenic patients. Includes also liaison and ongoing in service in a team centered environment with families, physicians and nursing staff.

District School Board of Niagara, Ontario (10/2002 to 6/2003)

Awarded Private Contract for Independent Speech and Language Assessment Services, School Age Population

Community Rehab, Ontario (10/2003 to 12/2006)

Private Contract SLP services, assessment and therapy to school age and adult clients via CCAC

Community Speech & Rehabilitation Services, Ontario (Private Practice 1997 to Present)

Provision of Private Speech and Language Services to Pediatric and ABI populations in the Windsor and Niagara Regions. Responsibilities include provision of direct assessment and therapy services to preschool, school age and adult populations (stroke, head injury and LD), and their families on a contract basis. This also includes community education and in servicing to local physicians.

EDUCATION

May 1986 Bachelor of Science Biology Major/Psychology Minor Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario

August 1988 Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology Bowling Green State University, Ohio, USA

CONTINUING EDUCATION SPEAKER AND INSTRUCTOR

September 1998 to present

Conventions: Ontario Association of Speech & Language Pathologists & Audiologists also American Speech and Hearing Associations. Attended numerous lectures, workshops and short courses in Speech & Language, Rehabilitation, Cognitive Communication, Business & Behavior Management. Ongoing self study and continuing education in the areas of Neurogenic, Advanced courses in Cognitive Communication, Human Behavior, and Learning Disabilities.

Additional 1999 to present: Numerous self study and formal courses in Mind Body Healing, Meditation, Relaxation Response, Psychoneuroimmunology, Nutrition, Visualization, PTSD, Complimentary and Alternative Approaches in Healing and Rehabilitation, Self Advocacy and taking personal responsibility in the process of recovery. Also instruct and coordinate 5-6 week courses on "Communication With the Self" and Mind Body Healing for both General Public and ABI Population.

2012 National Speaker: Speaker with Dr. Nancy Abram MD. Audience of Rehabilitation Professionals. Topic includes: Psycho-spiritual and Integrative Approach to Rehabilitation, Recovery and Mind-Body Healing.