

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is estimated that more than a million people in the US have a dual diagnosis of Intellectual or Development Disability (IDD) and Mental Illness (IDD/MI). These individuals have complex needs and present clinical challenges to professionals, programs, and systems. Clinicians face the challenge of diagnosing mental illness and providing appropriate mental health treatment for persons who have IDD/MI.

### NADD Competency-Based Clinical Certification Program

NADD, an association for persons with developmental disabilities and mental health needs, developed the NADD Competency-Based Clinical Certification Program to improve the quality and effectiveness of services provided to individuals with a dual diagnosis through the development of competency-based professional standards and through promoting ongoing professional development.

#### Advantages of Clinical Certification by NADD

Clinical certification through the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program validates and provides assurance to people receiving services, professional colleagues, employers, and third-party payers that a clinician has met the standards established by NADD for providing services to individuals with ID/MI. Certification attests to the clinician's competency in providing these

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***Alyse Kerr, MS, NCC, LPC,  
NADD-CC***

services. In addition to the prestige this Certification provides, it may benefit the clinician through greater employment opportunities, job security, and promotions. The certification is portable; clinicians moving to a different region bring their certifications with them and do not have to demonstrate or re-document their competence simply because they have moved.

One NADD Certified Clinician, Alyse Kerr, MS, NCC, LPC, NADD-CC says, “The NADD competency-based clinical certification has provided me with an avenue to verify a dual diagnosis specialty. My ability to provide clinical supports to individuals supported both by medical assistance and private insurances has been expanded by allowing me to gain access to closed insurance networks. These networks had been closed to me prior to receiving this certification, allowing this population to remain largely unserved outside of community mental health centers.”

### **Competency Areas**

The clinician seeking certification will be required to demonstrate mastery of the following five competency areas:

- Positive Behavior Supports and Effective Environment
- Psychotherapy
- Psychopharmacology
- Assessment of Medical Conditions
- Assessment

### **Qualifications for a NADD-Clinical Certification (NADD-CC)**

*One (1) of the following is required:*

- Licensure as an RN or a Master’s degree in a field providing services to individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities and co-occurring behavioral health disorders with at least seven years of experience delivering clinical supports for persons with

Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and co-occurring Behavioral Health disorders.

- Five years of experience delivering clinical supports for persons with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and co-occurring Behavioral Health disorders and licensure or certification in at least one of the following areas of practice:

Psychologist, Physician, Medical Doctors (M.D.), Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) Bachelor of Medicine /Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), Mental Health Counselor, Marriage & Family Counselor, Addictions Counselor, Licensed Clinical Social Worker; Physician's Assistant, Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioner; Occupational Therapists (OT), Physical Therapist (PT), or other similar USA or Canadian equivalent clinical licensure or credentialing. Final determination of clinical equivalence and experience relevance resides with the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program.

- Five years' experience and licensure or certification as a Licensed Behavior Consultant, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, (BCBA), a Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA), or recognition by your State/Province as able to provide behavioral assessment and training (e.g., Behavior Analyst). Final determination of clinical equivalence and experience relevance resides with the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program
- Primary teaching, training, or clinical supervision responsibilities in a post-secondary education or clinical supervision related to training toward the disciplines listed above with five years of directly related experience. (Please provide an explanation of relevant activities and experience.) Final determination of clinical equivalence and experience relevance resides with the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program.

*In combination with:*

The applicant must be able to thoroughly explain and demonstrate advanced expertise in at least one competency area and a general knowledge in the remaining competency as follows:

- Positive Behavior Supports and Effective Environment
- Psychotherapy
- Psychopharmacology
- Assessment of Medical Conditions
- Assessment

## References

In addition to providing copies of the applicant's curriculum vitae and professional license, the applicant must submit reference letters from three people able to provide a reference about the applicant's clinical skills, knowledge and values and experience with persons who have a dual diagnosis.

## Work Sample

Once the application has been reviewed and the applicant has been found to meet the prerequisites, the applicant will receive instructions to submit a work sample describing the assessment, diagnoses and treatment of a single person who has a dual diagnosis (IDD/MI). See Appendix C: Work Sample Guidelines. The work sample submitted should be between 5 and 7 pages in length and should concisely address these five competency areas:

- Assessment of Medical Conditions
- Clinical /Behavioral Assessment
- Positive Behavior Supports and Effective Environment
- Psychotherapy
- Psychopharmacology

The following components should be included in the submitted work sample:

1. Formulation/conceptualization of clinical problem(s)
2. Format for intervention
  - a. What were the goals/expected outcomes for treatment or intervention?
  - b. Other interventions that were considered and rejected, if applicable.
  - c. Why the selected intervention was chosen and why the rejected treatments were rejected, if applicable
  - d. Were there modifications or adaptations of standard treatment protocol to meet the unique needs of this

individual? If so, briefly describe these modifications/adaptations.

3. Landmark events or salient issues that arose during the course of treatment and how these were addressed within treatment or intervention
4. Reflection on issues that arise within the clinical approach and/or ethical concerns and/or issues relevant to cultural competency
5. How the clinical approach was informed by an understanding of intellectual disability or co-occurring mental illness

Prior to submission of the work sample, the applicant should review it to verify that the submitted content includes consideration of each of above listed competencies and work sample components.

NADD will assign two examiners to review the work sample to determine whether the candidate demonstrates competency in the five areas. If the work sample is found to be acceptable, the interview will be scheduled. The examiners may require submission of additional information – including, in some cases, resubmission of the work sample – before they approve scheduling of the interview.

### Interview

The final component of the certification process is an interview, which may occur in person, at a NADD conference, via web-based video conferencing, or by telephone. The applicant shall be presented with a case vignette approximately 24-48 hours before the interview, about which he or she shall be asked to verbally offer their thoughts and reflections (i.e., provide a case formulation and treatment plan). The interview shall also include resolution of any questions raised during other parts of the application process.

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**Cost**

The cost of the NADD Competency-Based Certification is \$375.00. A non-refundable application/exam fee of \$375.00 must accompany the application package. The NADD Competency-Based Certification is good for two years. The renewal cost is \$100.00. There is a continuing education requirement of 10 hours every 2 years in areas related to Mental Wellness and Mental Health for persons with IDD.

**Support for Applicants**

NADD is pleased to introduce a Mentoring Program for clinicians interested in NADD Clinical Certification. Mentors are available to clinicians who have begun the certification process or are interested in applying who would like the support of a NADD certified clinician.