


**Date:** September 15, 2021 **DDSD-DDW Numbered Memo: 2021-06**

**To:** All DD Waiver Customized Community Supports – Group and Living Care Arrangement Provider Agencies

**From:** Jason Cornwell, Director  
Developmental Disabilities Supports Division



**CC:** Elizabeth Finley, RN Clinical Services Bureau Chief  
Developmental Disabilities Supports Division



**Subject:** Opportunity to host student nurses for IDD Clinical experience

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The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) is partnering with nursing programs in New Mexico to introduce undergraduate nursing students to Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) nursing.

Currently the DDSD-Clinical Services Bureau (CSB) is actively working with the University of New Mexico (UNM) College of Nursing, which has 5 programs statewide. In addition, other New Mexico Schools of Nursing are also interested in offering IDD as a special clinical experience in their communities.

Hosting a Clinical rotation in IDD nursing in your agency has two benefits:

1) It increases a nursing student's awareness and knowledge about IDD, which will improve future patient care in all medical settings. 2) It provides a positive clinical experience for students, which allows nursing students to see IDD nursing in the community as a promising job opportunity as they begin their nursing careers.

DDSD-CSB and the Nursing Schools in your area will provide support for the Provider Agency Directors and the Agency Nurses who will be working with the students. The school will establish an agreement (contract) between the Nursing School and your Agency. This agreement will have a provision for HIPAA and other requirements to ensure the safety and privacy of individuals with IDD. The Nursing School will appropriately screen nursing students to ascertain their interest and willingness to work with individuals with IDD and their families. Only fully vaccinated nursing students will be eligible to work with the individuals. Each Nursing School will have objectives for their student's experiences that will be available prior to starting the clinical experience with Agency nurses. The nursing students will partner with Agency nurses, learn key nursing skills, and will be able to assist the Agency nursing staff during routine tasks. The nursing students will not work as Direct Support Professionals.

Dr. Jacoba (Kotie) Viljoen is the lead on this project. If you are interested in supporting nursing programs in your community or want more information about helping student nurses learn about IDD, please contact Dr. Viljoen at [Jacoba.viljoen@state.nm.us](mailto:Jacoba.viljoen@state.nm.us) or 1-954-726-7420. Dr. Viljoen will notify the local Nursing Schools of your Agency's interest.

We are excited about these valuable partnerships, increasing new nurse's knowledge about individuals with IDD and supporting ongoing nursing recruitment for your Agency.