

## 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 service delivery challenges to professionals, programs, and systems. Staff face challenges in providing appropriate services for individuals who experience mental illness and an Intellectual disability

### NADD Competency-Based Specialist Certification Program

NADD, an association for persons with developmental disabilities and mental health needs, developed the NADD Competency-Based Specialist 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.

A Specialist in the field of dual diagnosis is defined as an individual who delivers, manages, trains and/or supervises services for persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental health needs. Staff working in units of county, state or provincial government, QIDPs, program directors, program supervisors, case/care managers, program specialists, supports coordinators, peer specialists, trainers and others are examples of roles that can apply for the DDS.

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Specialist certification through the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program validates and provides assurance to people receiving services, professional colleagues, and employers, that a specialist has met the standards established by NADD for providing services to individuals with IDD/MI. Certification attests to the specialist's competency in providing these services. In addition to the prestige this Certification provides, it may benefit the specialist through greater employment opportunities, job security, and promotions. The certification is portable; staff 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.

## Competency Areas

The specialist seeking certification will be required to demonstrate mastery of the following seven competency areas:

1. Multimodal Bio-psycho-social Approach
2. Application of emerging best practices;
3. Knowledge of therapeutic constructs;
4. Respectful and effective communication;
5. Knowledge of dual role service delivery & fiduciary responsibilities;
6. Ability to apply administrative critical thinking.

## Pre-Requisites for Certification: Training, Experience, References

To be considered for certification, specialists must meet educational and experiential qualifications (or equivalent thereof.) Determination resides with the NADD Competency-Based Certification Program. It is preferred that the applicant have a combination of education and experience in the field of intellectual disabilities and/or mental health. A post secondary degree, however, is not necessary and the review committee may recognize other types of accreditation and certifications.

Experience can include volunteering, internships and externships in addition to employment. In addition to providing copies of the applicant's curriculum vitae the applicant must submit reference letters from three people able to provide a reference about the applicant's skills, knowledge and values and experience with persons who have a dual diagnosis.

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## 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 that demonstrates their work in the area of dual diagnosis.

## 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's work sample will be reviewed during the interview. Applicants should keep in mind the competency areas noted when organizing their response. The interview shall also include resolution of any questions raised during other parts of the application process.

**Credential**

Specialists who receive NADD certification will be entitled to use “NADD-DDS” as a credential.

**Cost**

The cost of the NADD Competency-Based Certification is \$275.00. This non-refundable application/exam fee of \$275.00 must accompany the application package. The NADD Competency-Based Certification is good for two years. The renewal cost is \$75.00. 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. If the agency is accredited through NADD the certification cost is \$200.00 and the renewal is \$50.00