

OPENING THE DOOR FOR PEOPLE WITH HIDDEN DISABILITIES & DIFFERENCES

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Manchester Local Care Organisation

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ABSTRACT

- Aims:** To raise awareness of hidden disabilities and differences reflective of executive functioning. To highlight the necessity to include executive functioning in Care Act assessments. Assessing and understanding needs to ensure strength-based scaffolding to support people to have the 'capacity/ability to act out their wishes and decisions.'
- Methods:** Literature review
- Results:** A wide range of conditions can affect executive functioning.
- Conclusion:** When executive function is disorganised or underdeveloped, it can inhibit appropriate decision-making and reduce a person's problem-solving abilities.



INTRODUCTION

The capacity to act ... Opening the door for people with hidden disabilities and differences.

What does research and expert practice tell us about the relevance of executive functioning assessments to work with people who are homeless or rough sleeping and who have complex needs.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In 2019, the COVID 19 pandemic hit Britain.

This was the first time in our history where political will, financial investment and legal frameworks resulted in the Government drive to get 'everybody in' off the streets.

In Manchester, what emerged during this time, was a group of people that either refused to come indoors or presented with behaviours that resulted in them not being able to stay indoors.

The pandemic provided a unique opportunity to reveal a hypothesis of 'why'.

Professional curiosity and safeguarding frameworks supported longitudinal observations of behaviours that reflected hidden disabilities and differences.



METHOD & MATERIALS

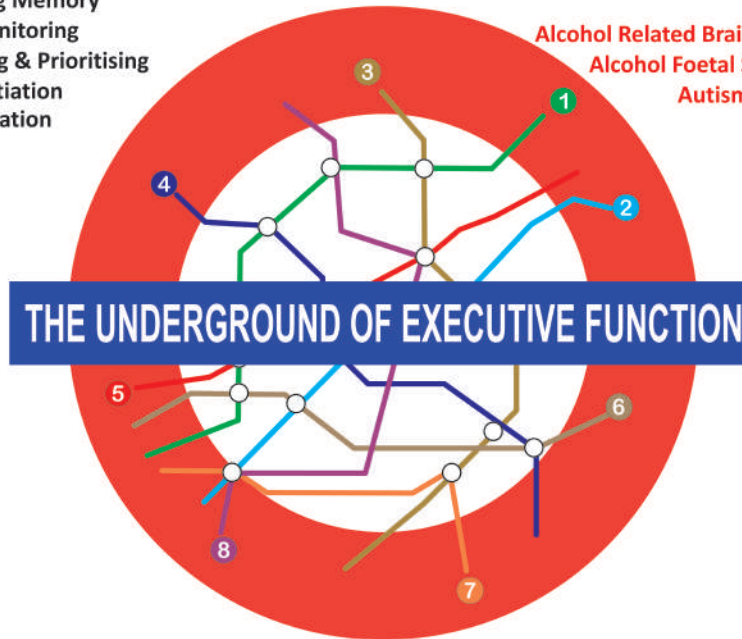
- Boolean search strings
- Thematic reviews
- Grey literature

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS

- Emotional Control
- Impulse Control
- Flexible Thinking
- Working Memory
- Self-monitoring
- Planning & Prioritising
- Task Initiation
- Organisation

HIDDEN DISABILITIES AND DIFFERENCES

- Acquired Brain Injury
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Developmental Trauma
- PTSD
- Alcohol Related Brain Damage
- Alcohol Foetal Syndrome
- Autism & ADHD
- Epilepsy



CONCLUSION

We need to include the executive functioning wheel as part of Care Act assessments to capture hidden disabilities and differences.

We need to design, commission and deliver contexts that optimise peoples executive function needs to meet unmet care and support needs.

We need to implement executive functioning in Mental Capacity Assessments.

We need to consider further research into areas of executive functioning that are risk markers for people that repeatedly neglect self.



RESULTS

'All kind of minds' can experience executive dysfunction, on a continuum, affected by emotional and environmental factors.

Brain injury, ADHD and Autism are robustly evidenced to impact on executive function requiring executive function scaffolding.

PTSD is driven by remarkable dysfunction in brain areas vital to fear processing and response, which impacts on executive functioning.

Voices of lived experience share significant life narratives of repeated traumas and share that using substances helps them feel 'different to function'. Homelessness is recognised as a significant trauma.



RECOMMENDATIONS



'Opening the doors for people with hidden disabilities and differences' by Including executive functioning assessment wheels in Care Act assessments, including greater use of 'No refusals' (section 11 2b) and think family to gather longitudinal information.

'Levelling up the equity gap' requires assessment of executive functioning needs. This is vital to understanding the needs and co-produced care and executive function support plans.

Capturing and understanding needs are vital to inform the design and deliver of provisions and ways of working that are truly strength based in the 'real world'.

'Back to basics approach', care and support that promotes the Care acts well-being principle first and foremost, by providing a framework reflecting Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

'Early intervention and prevention' models of interdependence and co-regulation that support the emotional and environmental factors that affect executive function.