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## RANZCP Foundation Masterclass: Intellectual Disability and Psychiatry

Why It Matters: Understanding the Mental Health of People with Intellectual Disability and the Role of Psychiatrists

**Saturday 19 July 2025 | 9am – 12pm**

### **Masterclass overview**

This interactive Masterclass explores the vital role of psychiatrists in working with people with intellectual disability, highlighting the high prevalence of mental health conditions in this population.

Through expert presentations and a lived experience conversation, participants will gain practical insights into the assessment and management of mental illness and behaviours of concern experienced by people with intellectual disability.

The workshop will emphasise the importance of reasonable adjustments, as well as person-centered and collaborative care. A final panel discussion will bring together key themes, offering an opportunity for questions and discussion. This session is ideal for psychiatrists seeking to enhance their confidence in this important area of practice.

### **Learning outcome**

To develop knowledge, skills and confidence in working with people with intellectual disability and co-occurring mental illness and/or behaviours of concern.



## Agenda

9:00am - 9:10am	Welcome and Introductions
<b>SESSION 1</b> 9:10am - 9:35am  <b>Scientia Professor Julian Trollor AM</b> <i>Why it matters: about the mental health of people with intellectual disability, and the psychiatrist's role</i>	<b>Summary</b> People with intellectual disability represent approximately 2% of the population. People with intellectual disability experience significantly worse health and mental health outcomes than people without intellectual disability. The risk of psychiatric conditions in this population is related to a range of medical, social and psychological factors. Some genetic causes of intellectual disability also predispose this population. Despite disproportional mental health needs, access to effective mental health treatments and supports remains a problem for this population. This presentation will review what we know about mental health and wellbeing for this group, and what psychiatrists can do to help improve mental health outcomes.  <b>Learning outcome</b> Participants will be able to understand and apply knowledge related to the health and mental health experiences of people with intellectual disability
<b>SESSION 2</b> 9:35am - 9:55am  <b>Tahli Hind</b> <i>What I Wish You Knew: In conversation with a lived experience perspective</i>	<b>Summary</b> This will be an insight into what a person with lived experience wishes that psychiatrists knew about working with people with intellectual disability. This population often don't receive mental healthcare that suits their needs. Some people don't feel included in their mental



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	<p>health decisions or understand what they need to do to improve their mental health. If we address these issues, we can help to reduce the poor mental health outcomes seen for people with intellectual disability. In conversation, we will unpack how you can make mental healthcare more accessible through good communication techniques and making reasonable adjustments.</p> <p><b>Learning outcome</b> Participants will gain knowledge on how to work with and communicate effectively with people with intellectual disability</p>
9:55am - 10:05am	<b>BREAK</b>
<p><b>SESSION 3</b> 10:05am - 10:40am</p> <p><b>A/Prof Rebecca Koncz</b> <i>Making sense of mental illness and behaviours of concern: approach to the assessment</i></p>	<p><b>Summary</b> People with intellectual disability experience high rates of unmet mental health needs, which intersect with the disability and co-occurring physical health conditions. Behaviours of concern - that is, behaviours that pose risks to the individual's or others' safety or quality of life - are a common reason for psychiatric presentation. These behaviours may signal, mask or complicate underlying mental illness or physical health conditions, making assessment challenging. This session provides a structured framework to understand the interplay between behaviour, mental illness, physical health, and disability, and to equip psychiatrists to more effectively assess behaviour change in this population.</p> <p><b>Learning outcome</b></p>



	Participants will identify the diverse factors that can contribute to behaviour change in individuals with intellectual disability, including mental illness, and develop an effective assessment framework.
<b>SESSION 4</b> 10:40am - 11:15am  <b>Dr Catherine Franklin</b> <i>Approaches to managing mental illness and behaviours of concern</i>	<b>Summary</b> This Masterclass will provide an overview and approach to the management of mental illness and behaviours of concern in individuals with intellectual disability. Participants will learn about available evidence-based therapeutic interventions and how to access these. Emphasis is placed on person-centered approaches, collaboration with support teams, and understanding the complex interplay between intellectual disability and mental health.  <b>Learning outcome</b> Participants will gain skills for improving clinical outcomes while reducing challenging behaviours through compassionate, informed care and knowledge of available treatment options
11:15am - 11:25am	<b>BREAK</b>
11:25am - 11:55pm	Bringing it all together: Panel Q&A
11:55am - 12:00pm	<b>CLOSE</b>