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On behalf of the editors and team at Emerald Group Publishing I would like to welcome readers to this edition of *Advances in Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities*. This issue covers a number of innovative and novel approaches targeted at mental wellbeing. These include book clubs without words, simulation training, sport and ID and trauma focussed therapy.

The first paper from Hollins *et al.* examines book clubs for people with intellectual disabilities. The clubs use books from the excellent series Books without Words. These books have proved invaluable for a great number of people who can not read or find difficulty in reading. As well as these texts being informative and enlightening to the reader for many they also serve to improve the bond with those supporting them. The books allow people to tell their own story as they identify with the pictures and scenarios. This type of resource can be key to reducing barriers, not only in mental health, but also assist learning and problem solving across a range of situations. This paper offers the social and scientific rationale for book clubs and offers examples of their use in community settings. The paper also considers the underlying neuroscience of information and emotion processing between pictures and words and the differences of using these books in practice.

The second paper offers an insight into reducing inequalities through education and training. The use of simulation to train clinical and support staff is not a new phenomenon but its use to raise awareness and support those working with people with intellectual disabilities is still in its infancy. Billon *et al.* offer an insight into developing co-produced and co-facilitated simulation course and use of real-life scenarios to enhance practice. The authors demonstrate the huge potential of simulation and experiential training methods to support learning of those supporting people with intellectual disabilities which are becoming more popular with both educators and students.

The third paper from McConkey asks why sports are not used more to promote positive mental health and are made easier to access for people with intellectual disabilities as part of their support from services. This paper is timely given the recent Olympics and Paralympics, which people with intellectual disabilities were excluded. Currently sport plays only a small part of what is offered by health and social services for people with intellectual disabilities and is rarely promoted as beneficial to health and wellbeing. Where people do engage in sport it is often disconnected from the services that receive, in spite of evidence that sport is a protective factor against chronic disease and a range of mental health problems.

People with intellectual disabilities suffer higher rates of mental health problems than the general population and often mental health issues can be missed or the persons change in behaviour is attributed to a person's intellectual disabilities. This can be the case for those affected by PTSD, which is often missed or not considered in clinical settings. The final paper by Stenfert *et al.* systematically evaluates the use of a manualised trauma focussed CBT for people with mild intellectual disabilities. The treatment was adapted from a course originally designed for people with intellectual disabilities using conventional techniques. This study shows the promise of such treatments and reports not only a reduction in symptoms but more importantly at this stage offers an insight to the views of those who received the therapy.

*Advances in Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities* provides a focus on all aspects of mental health and welcomes a range of contributions including:

- research-based articles;
- developments in evidence-based practice;
- advances in service development;
- practice developments and innovation;
- people's experience including inclusion and quality of life;

- advances in the assessment, treatment and understanding of mental health problems;
- population and epidemiological studies; and
- evidence-based reviews of key practice and policy issues.

The journal aims to become a key tool in building and disseminating evidence to change the way that professionals work with people with intellectual disabilities who have mental health problems and seeks to challenge traditional assumptions and ways of working. We would therefore like to extend an invitation to subscribers and readers to submit articles to *Advances in Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities* which can be done at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/amhid>