

Target group

Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities: PIMD

Key Characteristics of people with PIMD

- Severe or profound intellectual disability, with an estimated IQ below 25 points, or where it is impossible to obtain a valid estimate of IQ using existing instruments.
- Severe or profound motor disability, which severely limits the person's ability to move around and use their arms, hands and legs independently.

Additional characteristics

- Non-verbal communication behaviours which can be very subtle and/or often difficult to interpret and with little or no apparent understanding of verbal language
- Sensory impairments frequently occur, such as visual and auditory impairments and problems processing tactile and olfactory (smell and taste) stimuli
- Health problems occur frequently, such as epilepsy, chronic pulmonary infections, obstipation, gastroesophageal reflux disease and problems regarding eating and drinking.
- Due to the complexity of the problems, use of medication is often high, and (chronic) pain, behavioural problems (self-injurious, stereotype and withdrawn behaviour), sleeping problems and problems with alertness occur often.

It is important to note that the individual impairments and abilities observed within this group of persons with PIMD are very diverse. However, what these persons all have in common is dependence on others for nearly all aspects of daily living, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Photo: Max Alvares Vega

References

- Nakken, H. & Vlaskamp, C. (2007). A need for taxonomy for profound intellectual and multiple disabilities. *Journal of policy and practice in intellectual disabilities*, 4(2), 83-87.
- Van der Putten, A., Vlaskamp, C., Luijkx, J. & Poppes, P. (2017). Kinderen en volwassenen met zeer ernstige verstandelijke en meervoudige beperkingen: tijd voor een nieuw perspectief [Children and adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities: time for a new perspective]. Research Centre EMB: Groningen.