

Brief Summary of the Medical, Social, and Independent Living Models of Disability
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Aspect	Medical Model	Social Model
Causes of disability, focus	Problem resides within individual (difficulty learning, understanding, remembering, reading, speaking, moving, walking) physical, mental, or sensory disease, disorder(s), impairment(s), deficit(s), diagnosis(s), condition(s)	Societal problems consist of environmental and attitudinal barriers
Solution, outcomes, goals	To fix, cure, or mitigate through diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation	Equal rights, access, and opportunities, removal of societal barriers (physical, equipment, programmatic communication, and attitudinal) resulting in inclusivity and participation
Role of the Individual	Passive, recipient of care and interventions, individual needs to adapt to fit into society, leads to a focus on limitations and dependency	Active, advocate for self and systemic and societal change
Responsibility	Healthcare providers, medical professionals	Society as a whole
View on Environment	Environment is secondary and not emphasized	Primary, environment is critical in contributing to barriers and disability
Key Stakeholders	Doctors, therapists, and caregivers	Individuals with disabilities, policymakers, and advocates

The Independent Living (IL) Model is a subset of and closely aligned with the social model. Both models focus on empowered individuals with disabilities. The IL model emphasizes:

- Accessibility, peer support, self, and systemic advocacy
- the right of individuals to have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else, to live independently, make their own choices, and participate fully in society
- Autonomy, control, self-determination, and dignity of risk
- Independent living does not mean doing everything without assistance; instead, it is being in control of how things are done, whether or not one employs the services of others. "Independence is not necessarily the quality of tasks one can perform without assistance but is the quality of life one can live with assistance - assistance not given in the context of duty and charity but in the framework of a service under the direct control of the person receiving the service." Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living