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Integrated School–Day Hospital Care Model for Students with Complex Neurodevelopmental Conditions: Implementation and Outcomes in A Specialized Setting

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Abstract

The educational support of children and adolescents with complex neurodevelopmental conditions, cerebral palsy, and multiple disabilities requires integrated care models capable of overcoming the traditional fragmentation between educational, healthcare, and social systems. The absence of shared frameworks often compromises continuity of care, coherence of interventions, and meaningful family involvement, with a negative impact on educational participation, functional development, and overall well-being.

To present the Integrated School–Day Hospital Care Model developed at Fundació Aspace Catalunya as a structured, person-centred experience of integrated care, understood as the structural and operational integration of educational, healthcare, and social interventions within a single service framework, aimed at enhancing educational participation, functional development, emotional regulation, and clinical stability in students with high levels of complexity.

The model is based on a holistic and coordinated intervention that operationally integrates educational, therapeutic, and healthcare dimensions through effective interdisciplinarity, individualized planning, and integrated educational and therapeutic environments designed to ensure access, participation, and learning for all students, in line with principles of inclusive education.

Each student follows an Individualized Therapeutic and Educational Care Plan (PAITE), periodically reviewed, aligning educational, functional, communicative, and emotional goals under shared pedagogical and clinical criteria.

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Evaluation is conducted using an integrated performance dashboard with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), enabling continuous monitoring of educational participation, health outcomes, functional development, emotional regulation, and interdisciplinary coordination.

Findings demonstrate significant and sustained improvements in educational participation, functional autonomy, intentional communication, emotional regulation, and clinical stability, alongside greater coherence between educational and clinical interventions, despite the high complexity of the students' profiles.

The Integrated School–Day Hospital Care Model provides evidence of the value of structurally integrated, person-centred approaches in responding to educational and clinical complexity and offers a transferable framework for other educational and care systems serving students with complex needs.

Keywords: Inclusive Education; Integrated Care; Special Education; Complex Neurodevelopmental Conditions; Family-Centred Care