

Including People with Disabilities: Public Health Workforce Competencies



Module 3

Competency 2: Discuss methods used to assess health issues for people with disabilities



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Welcome to **Module 3** of the Including People with Disabilities: Public Health Workforce Competencies

This module will provide an overview of:

Competency 2: Discuss methods used to assess health issues for people with disabilities

This module includes:

- Learning Objectives
- Information to support the learning objectives

Competency 2: Discuss methods used to assess health issues for people with disabilities

- Having knowledge of methods for public health programs is needed for public health professionals
- This knowledge will help public health professionals with planning programs, examining the operations of a program, and conducting activities that improve health outcomes for people with disabilities

Learning Objectives

1. Identify surveillance systems used to capture data that includes people with disabilities.
2. Recognize that disability can be used as a demographic variable.

Learning Objective 1

Identify surveillance systems used to capture data that includes people with disabilities

- Defining disability is a significant challenge for public health
- Surveillance systems must have some way of identifying people with disabilities
- There are surveillance systems that monitor the health and behaviors of people with disabilities and a useful source of disability related data
- Having data will help public health programs create and achieve health goals, determine the prevalence of disease, and how to target resources for better health outcomes
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS): States can use the BRFSS to monitor public health trends and needs, identify risks, and assess health care access

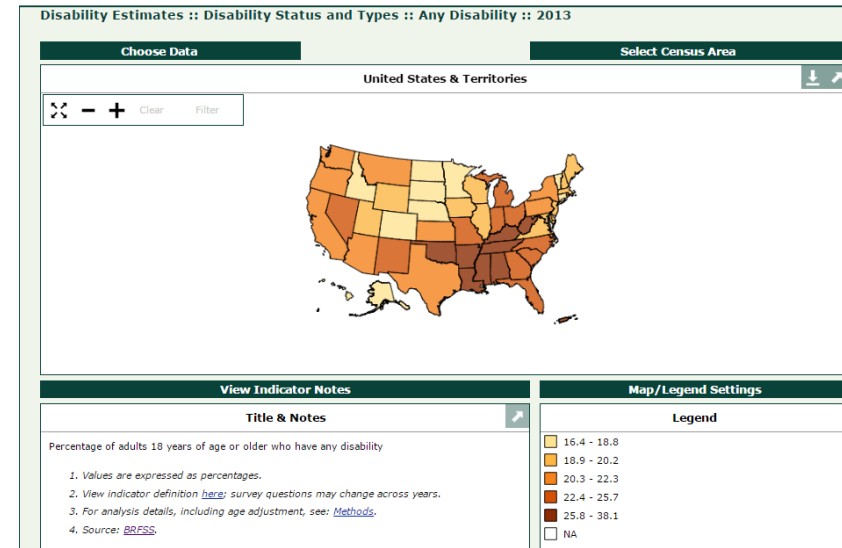
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- Disability and Health Data System (DHDS) is an online source of state-level data on adults with disabilities
- Users can access information on five functional disability types: cognitive, mobility, vision, self-care, and independent living
- Information on limitation status is also available.
- Data on more than 30 health topics among adults with or without disabilities can be explored in DHDS

Disability Status and Types
Interactive Map (Standard Contrast)



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Example

- The State Disability and Health Grantees are charged with presenting states with data on the health of people with and without disabilities in their states, using data captured by the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)
- BRFSS is an annual random digit dial telephone survey administered in every state to adults living in the community
- The survey also collects information about behaviors that affect health (such as smoking and exercise), health care practices (such as getting a flu shot), and access to health care (such as having health insurance)
- BRFSS is one of many surveillance systems commonly used to present data on people with disabilities and provide support for funding and sustainability of public health programs

Learning Objective 2

Recognize that disability can be used as a demographic variable.

- Recognizing disability as a demographic variable can help public health professionals to specifically target this population for health interventions with the goal of helping people with disabilities achieve health equity
- For example, many health reports that capture information on health disparities typically do not include disability status as a demographic indicator
- Of the 42 topic areas in [Healthy People 2020](#), only 10 included objectives for disability
- A standardized definition or indicator of disability would demonstrate need for tailored public health programs and policy development

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Example

- In 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services was charged with implementing [Data Collection Standards](#), through the [Affordable Care Act \(ACA\)](#)
- The standards for collection and reporting of data on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language and disability status in population health surveys are intended to help federal agencies refine their population health surveys in ways that will help researchers better understand health disparities and identify effective strategies for eliminating them