

Prevalence of Disabilities and Healthcare Access by Disability Status and Type Among U.S. Adults, 2016

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Background

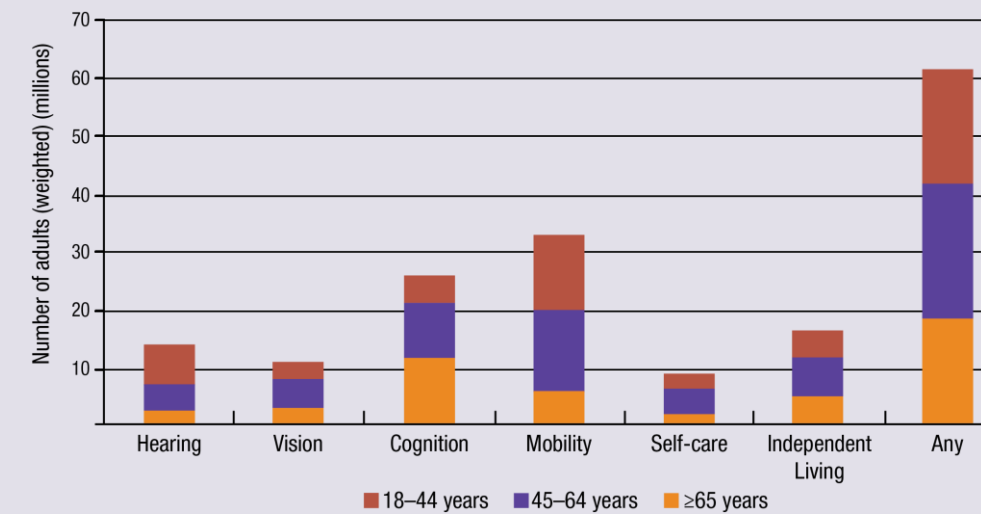
- Persons with disabilities experience a greater number of health disparities compared to persons without disabilities.
- Research shows that persons with disabilities face greater barriers to health care than persons without disabilities.

Objectives

- To measure disability prevalence using the 6-question set recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- To examine disparities in healthcare access by functional disability type and age group.

Results

Estimated number of adults with any disability, by type of disability and age group



Methods

Data Source

- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2016.
- Self-reported state-based telephone survey among noninstitutionalized U.S. adults aged 18 years or older.
- Data are weighted to reflect state populations in terms of age, sex, race/ethnicity, geographic region, marital status, education level, home ownership, and type of phone ownership.

Respondents were identified as having one of the six disability types if they answered “yes” to the relevant question. Persons who responded “yes” to at least one of the disability questions were identified as having any disability. Persons who responded “no” to all six questions were identified as having no disability.

Measures – Healthcare Access

Health insurance coverage:

“Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as health maintenance organizations, government plans such as Medicare, or Indian Health Service?”

Having a usual healthcare provider:

“Do you have one person [or more than one] you think of as your personal doctor or health care provider?”

Receipt of a routine check-up within the past year:

“About how long has it been since you last visited a doctor for a routine checkup?”

Having an unmet healthcare need because of cost:

“Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor but could not because of cost?”

Statistical Analysis

- Weighted prevalence estimates were calculated for any disability and disability type by sex, race/ethnicity, federal poverty level, and U.S. Census region, and for healthcare access measures, by disability status and type.
- All analyses were stratified by age group (18-44, 45-64, and ≥65 years).
- All analyses accounted for the complex survey design.

Measures – Disability and Disability Type

Introduction to disability questions

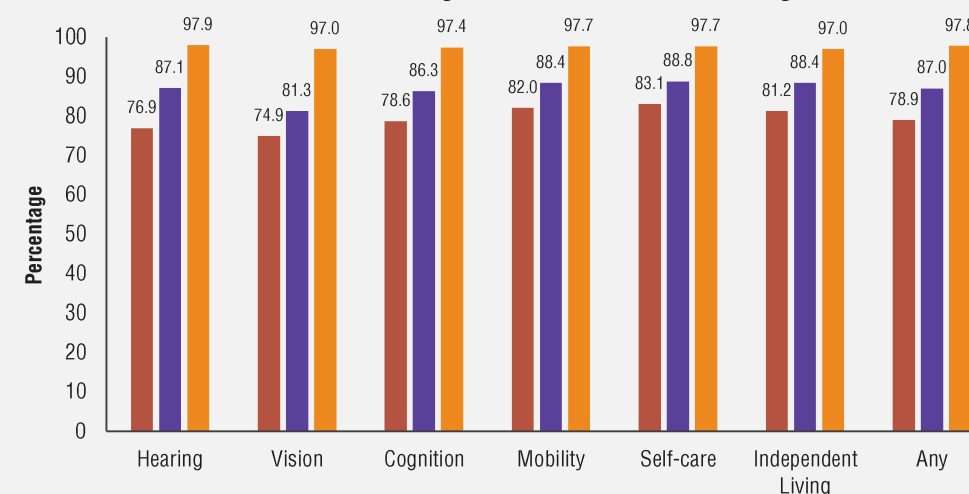
“The following questions are about health problems or impairments you may have. Some people who are deaf or have serious difficulty hearing may or may not use equipment to communicate by phone.”

Disability questions

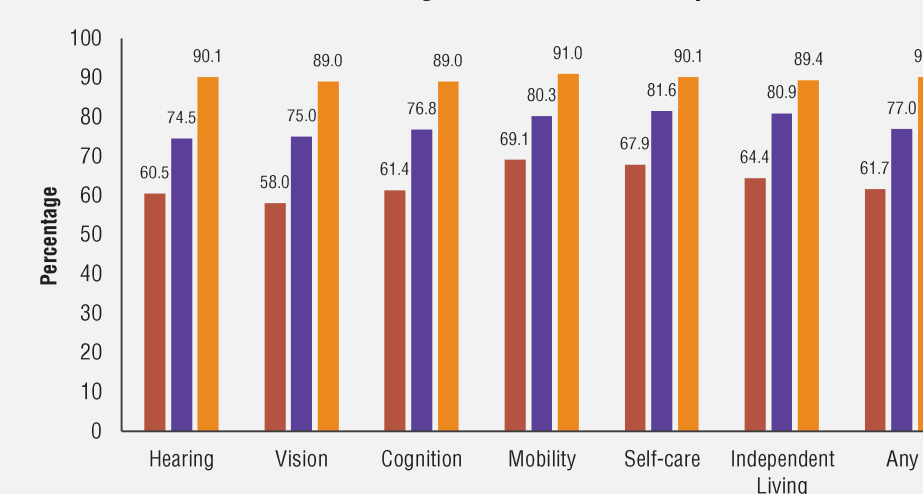
- Are you deaf or do you have serious difficulty hearing? (hearing)
- Are you blind or do you have serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses? (vision)
- Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions? (cognition)
- Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs? (mobility)
- Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing? (self-care)
- Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping? (independent living)

Prevalence of Four Healthcare Access Measures Among Adults with Disability, by Age Group and Disability Type

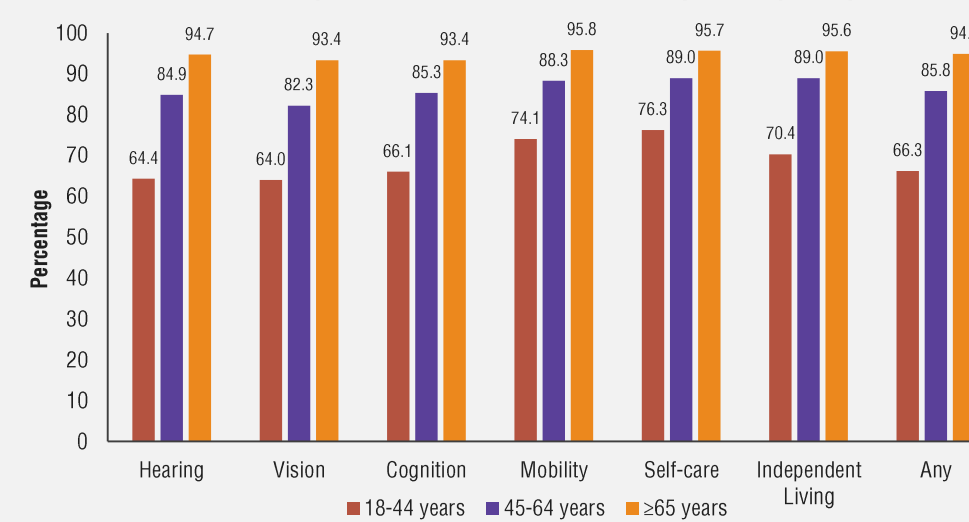
Prevalence of having health insurance coverage



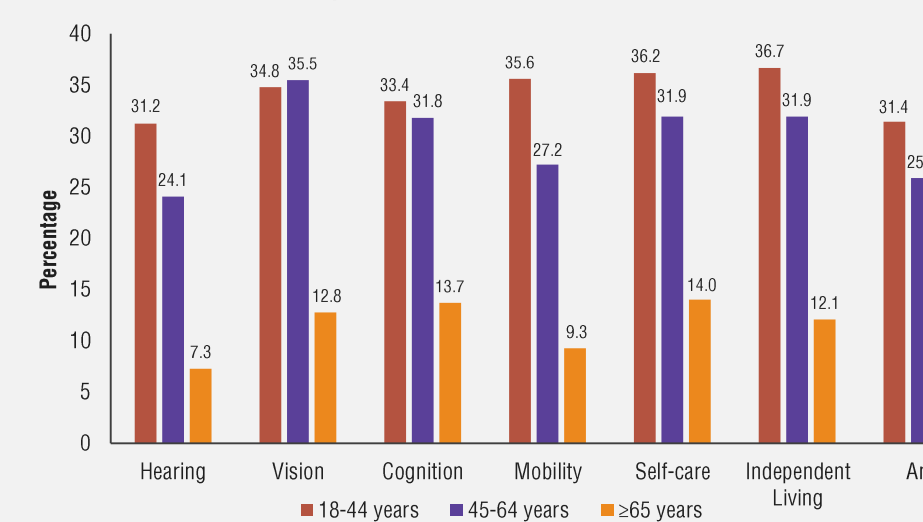
Prevalence of having a usual healthcare provider



Prevalence of having received a routine check-up during the past 12 months



Prevalence of having a healthcare need that was unmet because of cost



Limitations

- Data are cross-sectional and causality among sociodemographic characteristics, healthcare access, and disability cannot be inferred.
- Disability estimates are likely underestimates because the survey is only administered to noninstitutionalized adults.
- Unable to determine the severity or duration of disability.
- All measures are self-reported, including healthcare access, and are subject to recall and social desirability biases.

Strengths

Analyses are based on a large, population-based sample allowing us to examine variation in measures of healthcare access among adults with different functional disability and across the adult life course.

Conclusions & Implications

- Findings indicate 1 in 4 U.S. adults have a disability.
- Prevalence of disability varied by age group and sociodemographic characteristics.
- Healthcare access varied by age group and specific disability type.
- Identifying disparities in access to health care highlights disability types and selected demographic groups that might benefit most from interventions that improve healthcare access, receipt of needed health services, and coordinated care.

Contact Info & Reference

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