

The Health and Wellness Needs of New Hampshire Adults with Mobility Disabilities 2022

New Hampshire Disability and Health Program



Institute on Disability/UCED



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Introduction

This needs assessment looks at a variety of health indicators of adults with mobility disabilities in New Hampshire (NH). Findings from this assessment will be used to inform the strategies of the NH Disability and Health Program (DHP) to fill gaps and address barriers to preventive health care, health promotion opportunities, and engagement in healthy behaviors.

DHP improves the health of adults with disabilities in New Hampshire by using evidence-based strategies to:

- identify and address community needs
- link adults with IDD to preventive health care and health programs;
- train healthcare providers;
- promote policy, system, and environmental changes; and
- share key findings and lessons learned.

The findings in this document come from the authors' analyses of the NH Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (pooled data from year 2017-2019). NH BRFSS data were shared as part of a data use agreement with the NH Division of Public Health Services. Based on the BRFSS mobility disability question, adults are considered to have a mobility disability if they indicated that they have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

Qualitative data appear throughout this report. We are grateful to the individuals who have shared their stories with us and given us permission to use quotes that bring the statistics to life and illustrate impact. Other sources of qualitative data used here include blog posts, articles, and legislative testimony written and shared by self-advocates.

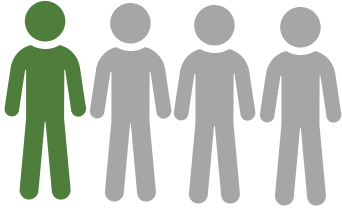
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Disability Demographics

How many adults in New Hampshire (NH) have mobility disabilities?

1 in 4

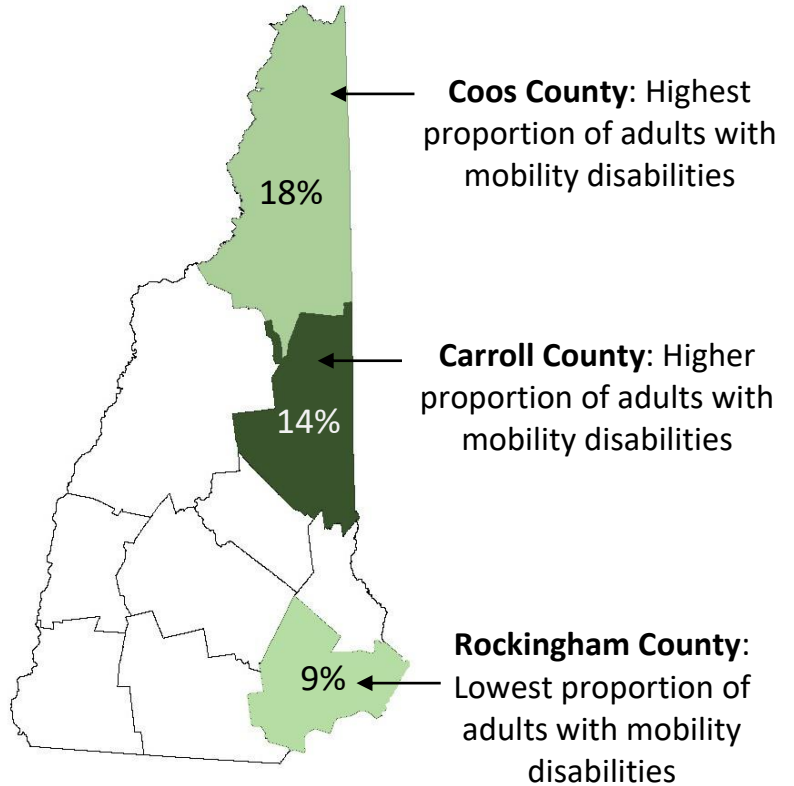


NH adults has any disability

1 in 10

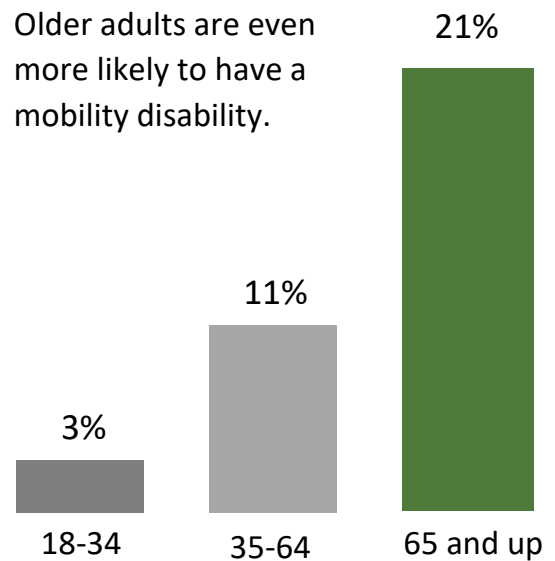


has a mobility disability



- 1 in 4 NH adults has any kind of disability, and 1 in 10 has a mobility disability.
- Mobility disabilities are more common among older adults. 2 in 10 NH adults (21%) ages 65 and up have a mobility disability.
- In NH, Coos County has the highest proportion of adults with mobility disabilities, at 18%. In Carroll County, 14% of adults have mobility disabilities. Rockingham County has the lowest proportion of adults with mobility disabilities, at 9%.

Older adults are even more likely to have a mobility disability.



Other disabilities among NH adults with mobility disabilities

1 in 5



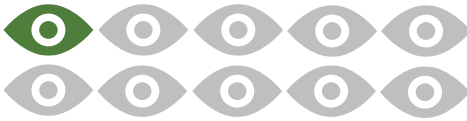
is deaf or has a hearing difficulty

3 in 10



have an independent living difficulty

1 in 10



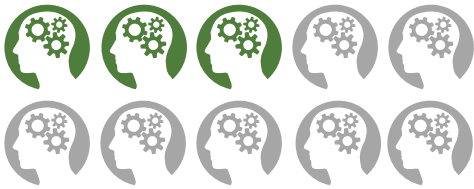
is blind or has a vision difficulty

1 in 4



has a selfcare difficulty

3 in 10



have a cognitive difficulty

“As a person who experiences a disability and needs assistance to access the community, I feel it is really important to [have] ...some measure of independence.”

- Kathy

- 3 in 10 NH adults with a mobility disability have an independent living difficulty.
- 1 in 4 NH adults with a mobility disability has a selfcare difficulty.
- 1 in 5 NH adults with a mobility disability is deaf or has a hearing difficulty.
- 1 in 10 NH adults with a mobility disability is blind or has a vision difficulty.
- 3 in 10 NH adults with a mobility disability have a cognitive difficulty.



Social Determinants of Health

Inequities in social determinants of health lead to disparities in access to health care and create barriers to healthy behaviors. **Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...**

2 x 

more likely **not** to have completed high school or equivalent

3 x 

more likely **not** to be employed

“I’m nervous about interviews and the steps to getting a job, and I’m afraid to ask for accommodations.”

- Doug

3 x 

more likely to have an annual household income **less** than \$25,000

1.5 x 

more likely to rent rather than own their home

4 x 

more likely **not** to have used internet in the last 30 days

Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...

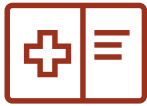
- 3 times more likely to be unemployed
- Twice as likely not to have completed high school
- 3 times more likely to have an annual household income less than \$25,000
- 1.5 times more likely to rent rather than own their home
- 4 times more likely not to have used the internet in the last 30 days



Access to Healthcare

Despite that most NH adults with disabilities have some form of health insurance and identify a primary care provider, they often face challenges getting accessible and affordable care. **Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...**

More likely to



have health insurance

More likely to



identify a primary care provider

2 x

more likely to delay needed care due to cost

“[S]ome people with disabilities need more frequent dental care because they can experience challenges caring for their teeth independently. For example, I have a great deal of difficulty angling my toothbrush... Flossing is also very difficult for me since I only have the use of my right hand. These issues can make me a trickier dental patient and make it harder for me to care for my teeth.”

- Kathy

1.5 x



more likely **not** to have seen a dentist in the last 12 months

Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...

- Slightly more likely to have health insurance
- Slightly more likely to identify a primary care provider
- Twice as likely to delay needed medical care due to cost
- 1.5 times more likely **not** to have seen a dentist in the last 12 months



Health Behaviors

Easy access to nutritious food and inclusive health promotion programs can improve opportunities for NH adults with disabilities to engage in healthy behaviors. **Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...**

3 x 

more likely **not** to have exercised in the last 30 days

2 x 

more likely to smoke

1.5 x 

more likely **not** to eat vegetables at least once a day

1.5 x 

more likely **not** to eat fruit at least once a day

“No transportation and lack of motivation are the main reasons I’m not as active as I could be. If I were to go to a healthy lifestyle program, then I would need transportation and a support person to go with me just in case I need their help.”

- Shelley


Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...

- 3 times more likely not to have exercised in the last 30 days
- Twice as likely to smoke
- 1.5 times more likely not to eat vegetables at least once a day
- 1.5 times more likely not to eat fruit at least once a day




Health Outcomes


Addressing the social determinants of health, unequal access to health care, and disparities in achieving healthy behaviors can improve health outcomes among adults with disabilities. **Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...**

6 x 

more likely to report
fair or poor health

2 x 


more likely to have
high blood pressure

4 x 


more likely to
have heart disease

5 x 

more likely to
have had a stroke

6 x 

more likely to
have COPD


2 x 


more likely to
have had cancer


Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...

- 6 times more likely to report “fair” or “poor” health
- Twice as likely to have high or borderline high blood pressure
- 4 times more likely to have heart disease
- 5 times more likely than adults to have had a stroke
- 6 times more likely to have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Twice as likely to have cancer, currently or in the past


**Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities,
NH adults with mobility disabilities are also...**

2 x 
more likely to be
obese

2 x 
more likely to
have pre-diabetes

2 x 
more likely to
have diabetes

3 x 
more likely to
have arthritis

2 x 
more likely to
have depression

“I have type 2 diabetes, I do one shot every day. I’m trying to eat very low carbs. The food I need is very expensive... I have to spend a lot of other money on medical supplies that Medicaid won’t pay for.”

- Christol

Compared to NH adults without mobility disabilities, NH adults with mobility disabilities are...

- Twice as likely to be obese
- Twice as likely to have pre-diabetes
- Twice as likely to have diabetes
- 3 times more likely to have arthritis
- Twice as likely to have depression



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