

Disability & Health Disparities in Washington State

OVERVIEW OF HEALTH

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Describing Health

People with disabilities were more likely than those without disability to report fair or poor health, regardless of differences in age, education, income, gender, race, and body mass index.

Definition of Disability

A person with a disability was defined in BRFSS as someone who reported:

- Being limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems, or
- Having health problems that require them to use special equipment.

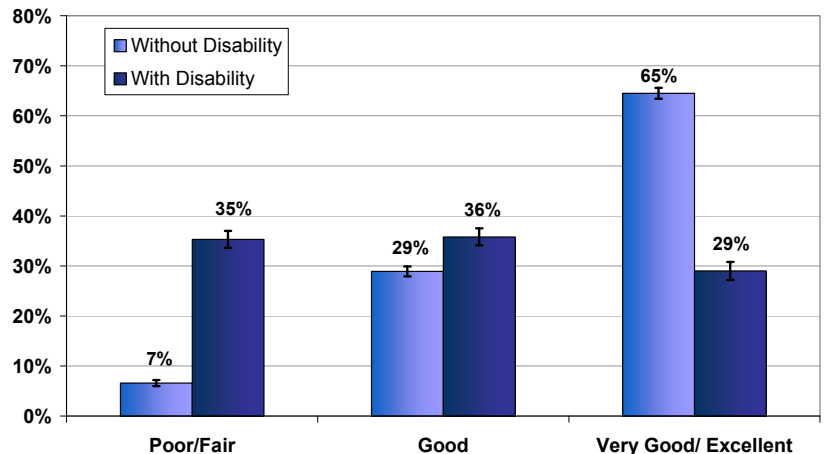
All statistical comparisons discussed herein were significantly different at $p < .05$. Figures show the 95% confidence intervals around sample estimates.

Quality of Life

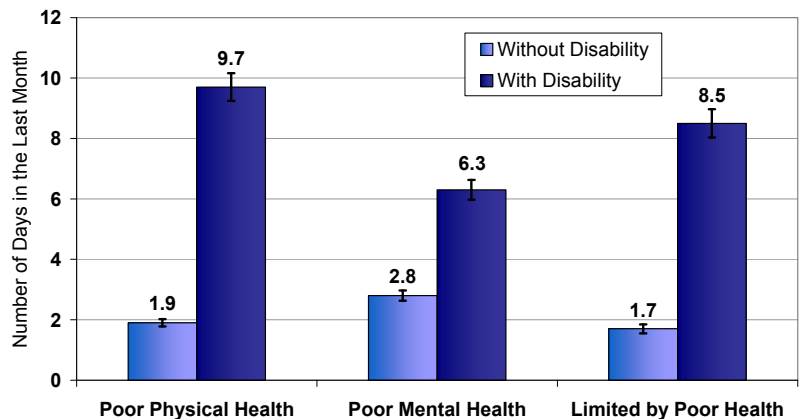
BRFSS measured health-related quality of life with questions about the number of days in the last month when physical or mental health were "not good." People who said that their health was not good were asked the number of days poor health kept them from doing their usual activities.

People with disabilities reported more days of poor physical and mental health, and more days during which their health limited what they did.

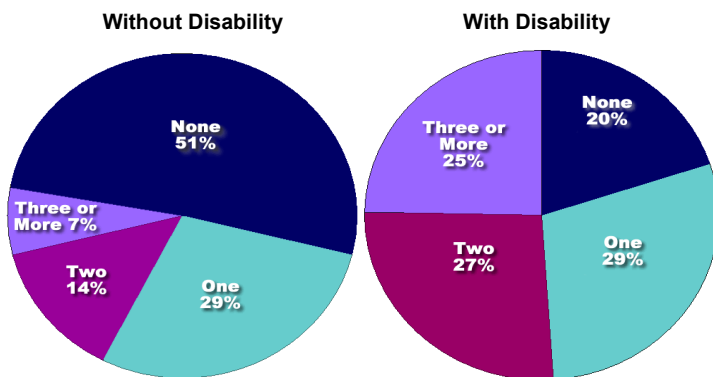
Health Status by Disability, 2004



Health Related Quality of Life by Disability, 2004



Number of Chronic Conditions by Disability, 2003



Chronic Health Problems

High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, asthma, joint pain, and depression were more common among people with disabilities than those without. Also, having two or more conditions was more common among people with disabilities.

You might expect that people with disabilities had more of these conditions because, on average, they were older. However, this was true even among people of the same age group.