

Target Need Area:
Disabilities

Overview

According to the U.S. Census, as well as other government estimates, over 50 million Americans have some type of disability. This includes people with various physical impairments in mobility, dexterity, hearing, sight, and sensation, or the presence of adverse conditions or functions, such as chronic pain, spasms, and contractures. Disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities consist of caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, and working. For children, these activities affect attending school or engaging in play. The majority of disabled individuals are of working age and 11.9% of the population between the ages of 18 and 69 experience work limitation. More than 17% of individuals who are limited in at least one life activity live below the poverty line, compared to 11.2% of their able-bodied counterparts.

The Texas State Governor's Office reports the following statistics about Texas residents (<http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/disabilities/resources/statistics/texans>):

- Approximate number of Texans with disabilities: 4 million people
- Texans who have difficulty reading newspaper print: 734,438
- Texans unable to read newspaper print: 117,861
- Texans who have difficulty hearing what is said in a normal conversation: 670,925
- Texans who are unable to hear a normal conversation: 56,587
- Texans who use canes, crutches, or walkers for mobility: 216,899

Points to Remember:

- People with disabilities are the largest minority group in the country.
- Nearly one-third of all families (29.2%) include a member with a disability.
- Over two-thirds of people with disabilities are under age sixty-five.
- The majority of people with disabilities under the age of sixty-five report their health to be good to excellent. Many disabilities do not require constant medical monitoring.

Issues related to this group of people include:

- Poverty and Unemployment – The unemployment rate (72.2%) and poverty level (30%) for people with disabilities have remained fairly stable over the past fifteen years.
- Education – People with disabilities are less likely to complete high school, attend college or pursue graduate study. Many lack the education necessary to successfully compete in the job market. Many people with disabilities are unaware of various government programs to help them with career planning, job retraining, or vocational rehabilitation.
- Housing and Isolation – Poverty, chronic unemployment, negative societal attitudes, and rigid expectations result in substantial social isolation for individuals with disabilities, most notably in close friendships and intimate relationships.

- **Mental Disposition** – Anger and depression often accompany disabilities; as many as 30% of people with disabilities experience depression. Treatment can also be complicated by sleep difficulties, appetite change and fatigue. This group of people also experiences a higher rate of substance abuse than the population at large. Health insurance policies often provide very limited benefits for mental health services.
- **Medical and Social Service Delivery Systems** – People with disabilities often fall outside the medical mainstream. Symptoms can go ignored and untreated. HMO’s and insurance may not be sensitive enough to disabling conditions resulting in denials of necessary treatment or equipment. Choice of physicians may be restricted. Oral health/dental care is also often a problem for low-income persons of all ages.

Part I. Summary of the Results

Part I. Summary of the Results are presented in charts that show converging perspectives on key indicators used to explore the Target Need Area. Key indicators are presented in the chart along with a brief summary conclusion based on an analysis of patterns of convergence between different perspectives used in this study. Key indicators are pieces of information, facts, or statistics that provide insight into the condition of a Target Need Area in the community. The intent of this section is to summarize the analysis of the key indicators from all the different methods used in this project. Brief findings are found in the left column of the chart. More detailed findings are presented in **Part V. Findings and Conclusions**.

Specific indicators were selected based on previous research. A brief review of key indicators selected for inclusion in this chart follow:

- **Indicators of Prevalence People with Disabilities**
The strong relationship between aging and disability status requires a careful consideration of how best to assist individuals with services. It is important to have estimates of the numbers of people with disabilities in order to comprehend the scope of the problem and adjust the amount of resources needed. The indicators of prevalence are:
 - Number of individuals in different age groups
- **Indicators of Access to Health Care for People with Disabilities**
The lack of affordable and available health care presents major barriers to people with disabilities. The indicators of access to affordable healthcare for this report are:
 - Long-term Rehabilitation/Nursing home care
 - Home Health nurses
- **Indicators of Independent Living**
People with disabilities are often faced with challenges to living independent lives. The indicators of independent living are:
 - Financial/income sources
 - Employment rates

Concern	Personal Perspectives		Archival Context	
	Citizens ⁴	Informants	Archival	State/national
<p>Disabilities</p> <p>Prevalence of disabilities <i>Overall, individuals in the 12CR are 1.2 times more like to be disabled than at the state average.</i></p>	<p>18% reported a household member with a physical or mental disability.</p> <p>Up to 12.8% of residents reported having a disabling injury in the past year.</p>	<p>29% of KI described their most frequent contact was with people with disabilities.</p>	<p>23.9% mean of all disabilities.</p> <p>7.8% disabled individuals 5-20 years;</p> <p>24.5% disabled individuals 21-64 years;</p> <p>48.1% disabled individuals 65+ years.</p>	<p>19.2% all disabilities.</p> <p>7.9% disabled individuals 5-20 years;</p> <p>19.9% disabled individuals 21-64 years;</p> <p>47.4% disabled individuals 65+ years.</p>
<p>Need help with daily activities. <i>Persons with disabilities are challenged to receive the help they need for daily routines.</i></p> <p>Request assistance unmet <i>Families often struggle to find help for family members with disabilities</i></p> <p>Barriers to receiving Help <i>Citizens described multiple barriers to receiving needed services</i></p>	<p>Up to 33.3% of the persons with disabilities feel like they need help with daily activities.</p> <p>Up to 42.6% say they never get help they need with basic daily activities; eating, toileting, etc.</p> <p>Up to 50.7% feel that they cannot afford the cost of help.</p> <p>Up to 37.5% claim that the help is just not available in their community.</p>	<p>27% of KI describe help for those with recent disabling injury are unavailable and Difficult to access.</p> <p>78% of KI describe that many citizens have a difficult time finding caregivers for seniors and people with disabilities is a major challenge.</p>	<p>There are 35 nursing homes in the 12 CR. These homes contain approximately 4,164 licensed beds 12 CR.</p> <p>The ratio of people with disabilities to available beds in care facilities in 12CR is 24.4/1</p>	<p>There are 1143 nursing homes in the state of Texas. These homes contain approximately 125,864 beds.</p> <p>The ratio of people with disabilities to available beds in care facilities in 12CR is 28.6/1 at the state level.</p>
<p>Employment of Persons with disabilities <i>Only about half of the disabled population is employed. Rates for unemployed persons with disabilities in the 12 CR are slightly less than rate for the state.</i></p>	<p>Up to 31.2% looked for a needed caregiver. Up to 43.6% were unsuccessful in finding appropriate home-based help.</p> <p>Up to 13.9% of households reported that they were unable to work because could not find caretaker for a household member.</p>	<p>KI estimate that 3% of individuals with disabilities are out of work because they became disabled.</p>	<p>The employment rate for persons with disabilities in the 12CR is 54.5%.</p> <p>The Texas Rehabilitation Commission spends approximately 3% of its budget of \$50,000,000 for services in the 12CR.</p>	<p>The employment rate for persons with disabilities in Texas is 58.3%.</p>

Part II. Archival Analysis

Part II. Archival Analysis is a synthesis and update of previous research concerning the Target Need Area. An extensive review has been conducted and pertinent findings are detailed in this section along with a brief narrative. The intent of this section is to provide a wider context for considering the issue. Primary data sources are provided here and also in the **Sources** section at the end of the report. Readers are encouraged to consult these primary sources for more details.

The following chart shows the rate of individuals with disabilities as compared to the entire population for various age groups and for the entire population. The median percentage of persons with disabilities for the 12 county area is 23.4%, above the percentage of 19.2% for the State of Texas. The median percentage for children and youth in the 12 county area almost mirrors the state percentage, although the individual rate for Aransas County is higher (11%). Significantly, the median percentage for disabled working age persons for the 12 county areas is 24.7%, well above the rate for the state of 19.9%. Also, the median percentage for the 12 county area of disabled persons age 65 and older is 48.2%, higher than the state percentage of 44.8%. In most of the counties, almost half of their population 65 and older have disabilities, with Kenedy County experiencing almost two-thirds of their older population with disabilities.

Disabled Individuals	5 to 20 years	21 to 64 years	65 and older	All
<i>Aransas</i>	11.0%	23.4%	37.4%	23.3%
<i>Bee</i>	7.4%	25.5%	45.8%	23.4%
<i>Brooks</i>	8.0%	30.9%	48.8%	26.7%
<i>Duval</i>	7.0%	25.8%	54.8%	24.9%
<i>Jim Wells</i>	5.9%	25.4%	52.5%	24.9%
<i>Kenedy</i>	7.6%	35.1%	64.9%	28.3%
<i>Kleberg</i>	8.5%	19.7%	50.2%	19.9%
<i>Live Oak</i>	7.1%	25.8%	45.3%	24.3%
<i>McMullen</i>	5.2%	23.9%	53.1%	25.3%
<i>Nueces</i>	8.5%	21.8%	47.5%	21.1%
<i>Refugio</i>	8.0%	23.5%	47.4%	21.5%
<i>San Patricio</i>	8.2%	23.5%	47.4%	21.5%
<i>Texas</i>	7.9%	19.9%	44.8%	19.2%

Data Source: The [Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer](http://txsdc.utsa.edu/data/census/2000/sf3/desctab/county/tab-014.txt) (2000)
[http://txsdc.utsa.edu/data/census/2000/sf3/desctab/county/tab-014 .txt](http://txsdc.utsa.edu/data/census/2000/sf3/desctab/county/tab-014.txt)

According to the last census, over 100,000 individuals with disabilities live in the 12 county area. Over 60,000 individuals with disabilities live in Nueces County. San Patricio has over 12,000 individuals with disabilities while Jim Wells, Kleberg, Bee and Aransas Counties each have close to 5,000 individuals with disabilities.

Population of Persons with Disabilities	
County	Population
<i>Aransas</i>	4,898
<i>Bee</i>	5,403
<i>Brooks</i>	1,935
<i>Duval</i>	2,877
<i>Jim Wells</i>	8,179
<i>Kenedy</i>	107
<i>Kleberg</i>	5,644
<i>Live Oak</i>	2,506
<i>McMullen</i>	208
<i>Nueces</i>	60,072
<i>Refugio</i>	1,658
<i>San Patricio</i>	12,561
<i>Area</i>	106,048
<i>Texas</i>	3,605,542

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

Of the 100,000 persons with disabilities in the 12 county area, approximately 65,000 are between the ages of 21 and 64 years.

Disability Status	
County	21-64 years with Disabilities
<i>Aransas</i>	2,748
<i>Bee</i>	3,325
<i>Brooks</i>	1,203
<i>Duval</i>	1,652
<i>Jim Wells</i>	5,157
<i>Kenedy</i>	79
<i>Kleberg</i>	3,276
<i>Live Oak</i>	1,474
<i>McMullen</i>	112
<i>Nueces</i>	37,294
<i>Refugio</i>	973
<i>San Patricio</i>	7,893
<i>Area</i>	65,186
<i>Texas</i>	2,315,414

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

Many individuals with disabilities have difficulty maintaining employment. In three counties (Kenedy, McMullen and Refugio) individuals with disabilities between the ages of 21 and 64 are employed at a rate above the state average of 58.3%. The average employment rate for persons with disabilities in the 12CR is 54.5%.

21-64 years with Disabilities Employment	
County	Percent Employed
<i>Aransas</i>	49.9
<i>Bee</i>	58.0
<i>Brooks</i>	43.9
<i>Duval</i>	45.5
<i>Jim Wells</i>	47.8
<i>Kenedy</i>	67.1
<i>Kleberg</i>	54.4
<i>Live Oak</i>	57.1
<i>McMullen</i>	66.1
<i>Nueces</i>	51.7
<i>Refugio</i>	59.0
<i>San Patricio</i>	55.2
<i>Area</i>	54.6
<i>Texas</i>	58.3

Source: Mapstats (2000) <http://www.fedstats.gov/qf/states/48000.html>

Approximately 30,000 persons over the age of 65 have disabilities in the 12 county area. Nueces County has over 15,000 such persons. San Patricio and Jim Wells Counties have over 3,000 and 2,000 individuals with disabilities over the age of 65 respectively.

Disability Status	
County	65 and over with Disabilities
<i>Aransas</i>	1,608
<i>Bee</i>	1,573
<i>Brooks</i>	555
<i>Duval</i>	990
<i>Jim Wells</i>	2,374
<i>Kenedy</i>	20
<i>Kleberg</i>	1,651
<i>Live Oak</i>	850
<i>McMullen</i>	86
<i>Nueces</i>	15,968
<i>Refugio</i>	536
<i>San Patricio</i>	3,181
<i>Area</i>	29,392
<i>Texas</i>	879,978

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

The Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) funds several types of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. Vocational programs provide employment services. Medical rehabilitation is also provided as well as independent living services. In 1998, the TRC spend about 3% of its total budget in the 12 county area. The 12 county area has about 3% of the disabled population of the state.

Texas Rehabilitation Commission Health Care Spending Fiscal 1998	Hospital Services	Medical Services	Total
<i>Aransas</i>	\$7,970	\$8,301	\$2,1240
<i>Bee</i>	\$36,694	\$17,337	\$54,030
<i>Brooks</i>	Na	Na	Na
<i>Duval</i>	Na	Na	Na
<i>Jim Wells</i>	\$52,998	\$33,551	\$86,549
<i>Kenedy</i>	Na	Na	Na
<i>Kleberg</i>	0	\$18,482	\$18,482
<i>Live Oak</i>	0	\$196	\$196
<i>McMullen</i>	Na	Na	Na
<i>Nueces</i>	\$29,2674	\$942,788	\$1,235,462
<i>Refugio</i>	\$2,111	\$513	\$2,624
<i>San Patricio</i>	0	\$37,552	\$37,552
<i>Area</i>	\$392,447	\$1,058,720	\$1,456,167
<i>Texas</i>	\$17,712,514	\$32,449,844	\$50,212,357

Data Source: Texas Rehabilitation Commission and Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
<http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/hcs/table17.html>

Part III. Citizens' Perspectives

Part III. Citizens' Perspectives contains some of the results of the 1000+ random telephone surveys, the 18 Community Listening sessions, and the 18 Community Response sessions. The highlights of these components of the study are detailed in the next session. For more detailed information about the survey results or the community sessions, the reader should consult the appendices of this report

Ten percent of the participants in the survey reported that they had experienced a chronic physical disability or a disabling injury. When asked about the kind of help that they, or someone in their household most often needs in coping with a issues surrounding disabilities, the respondents said that doing housework and laundry (49%), running errands and having transportation to appointments (46%) and walking (45%) were significant problems either all the time, or some of the time. More than a third of the participants said that shopping (41%), preparing meals (38%), and getting out of a chair (37%) or a bed (38%) were also identified as issues either all the time or some of the time. Taking medication was always a problem for 17% and sometimes a problem for 10%. Toileting, bathing and dressing is a problem for 29% of the participants always or sometimes. Day to day issues like using the restroom and eating were identified as a problem always or some of the time 22% and 20%, respectively. Managing money was identified as a problem by 21% of the participants.

Randomly selected citizens commented about a chronic physical disability or disabling injury: 10% experienced a chronic physical disability or disabling injury. They described how often they needed help with daily activities

Has a member of your household always, sometimes, or never need assistance with any one the following activities:	Always	Sometimes	Never	DK / NR
Preparing meals	17%	21%	61%	1%
Shopping	22%	19%	58%	1%
Doing homework and laundry	26%	23%	51%	0
Using the telephone	13%	6%	80%	0
Taking medication	17%	10%	73%	0
Managing money	13%	9%	78%	0
Toileting, Bathing and dressing	14%	15%	71%	0
Walking	21%	24%	55%	0
Eating	10%	10%	81%	0
Restroom	13%	9%	78%	0
Getting out of a chair	16%	21%	63%	0
Getting our of a bed	15%	20%	65%	0
Running errands, transportation to appointments	28%	18%	52%	2%

The participants were asked about how often they use resources to help with assistance for their needs when dealing with the issues surrounding disabilities. Twenty-nine percent said that they always seek help, 20% said that they sometimes get assistance and 13% said that they usually get help.

When asked how often they get assistance with these needs:

Never	38%
Sometimes	20%
Usually	13%
Always	29%

Those with disabilities often experience obstacles to receiving assistance. Almost half of the participants reported that the expense of assistance was a barrier for getting needed help. A third of the participants reported that general availability of help was a problem, while 17% reported that a past negative experience in seeking help presented a problem to getting help in general.

Barriers for citizens experiencing chronic physical disability or disabling injury to receive needed assistance include:

General availability	33%
Cost of assistance	46%
Do not know how to find needed help	4%
Have asked for help before but not been satisfied	17%

Citizens were asked about seeking and getting help in their homes for those who had limited ability to care for themselves. Twenty seven percent reported that over the last 12 months, they had sought help from a nurse or personal caretaker to care for someone in their household. Eleven percent reported that needing this help prevented someone in the household from working outside the home. Of those that sought help, 39% were unable to locate assistance. Over one third (37%), reported that the process of finding homecare was a problem for them.

When asked, in the last 12 months, whether there has been any attempt to get a nurse or personal caretaker to take care of anyone in the household during the day to make sure they are okay; the following were reported:

Yes	27%
No	68%
DK / NR	6%

Respondents commented about whether this kept anyone in the household from working:

Yes	11%
No	75%
NR / DK	14%

Of those that sought help:

44% found help

39% reported to not receiving help

Those who sought and received help, commented about the process of finding homecare:

Not a problem	49%
A minor problem	23%
A major problem	14%
NR / DK	15%

Citizens' Perspectives: Qualitative Data

Citizens in the Community Listening Sessions felt that more activities for people with disabilities were needed. Additionally, childcare for children with disabilities was also seen as a need.

Part IV. Key Informant Perspectives

Part IV. Key Informant Perspectives contains some of the findings from the survey of Key Informants and also the nine Focus Groups with some of these people. Key Informants are community leaders who can draw on their experiences in the community. For more detailed information about the responses from Key Informants, the reader should consult survey results and qualitative data contained in the appendices of this report.

Key Informants were asked to rate the availability of services for members of their communities. Key Informants reported that help with financial matters, keeping up with monthly bills (36%) and managing money (31%) was unavailable and inaccessible. Assistance with day to day chores, such as running errands and transportation to and from appointments (34%), shopping (26%) and doing housework and laundry (23%) were also unavailable and difficult to access. Similarly, help with taking medication (20%) along with help with toileting, bathing and dressing (18%), and walking (16%) and eating (13%) were reported as unavailable. With all of these issues, most of the respondents reported that assistance was somewhat available and accessible (60-41%).

Key Informants rate the adequacy of available services for assistance with the following activities in your community.

Some people need assistance with activities in their daily lives. Key Informants rate the adequacy of available services for assistance with the following activities in your community.

<u>Some community members need help with:</u>	Assistance is			
	Highly Available & Accessible	Somewhat Available & Somewhat Accessible	Unavailable & Difficult to access	Don't Know or No Opinion
Preparing meals	7%	66%	10%	17%
Shopping	6%	50%	26%	19%
Doing housework and laundry	4%	54%	23%	19%
Using a telephone	9%	52%	15%	23%
Taking medication	6%	56%	20%	19%
Managing money	7%	42%	31%	20%
Toileting, bathing and dressing	6%	59%	18%	17%
Walking	7%	59%	16%	19%
Eating	7%	60%	13%	20%
Keeping up with monthly bills (e.g., rent, utilities, and groceries)	4%	41%	36%	19%
Running errands, transportation to appointments	5%	47%	34%	15%

Key Informant Perspectives: Qualitative Data

Key Informants provided no data in this category

Part V. Findings and Conclusions

- **Indicators of Prevalence People with Disabilities**
 - Number of individuals in different age groups
Overall, individuals in the 12CR are 1.2 times more like to be disabled than at the state average.
- **Indicators of Access to Health Care for People with Disabilities**
 - Long-term Rehabilitation and Home Health nurses
Citizens reported that over the last 12 months, 27% had sought help from a nurse or personal caretaker to care for a disabled person in the household. Of those that sought help, 39% reported not being able to find assistance.
- **Indicators of Housing and Shelter for People with Disabilities**
 - The number of assisted living facilities
There is an insufficient number of care facilities to accommodate the population of citizens with special needs especially when they are complicated by aging issues.
- **Indicators of Independent Living**
 - Financial/income sources
Thirty four percent of Key Informants reported that help with keeping up with monthly bills (e.g. rent, utilities and groceries) for persons with disabilities is unavailable or difficult to access.
 - Employment rates
Only about half of the disabled population is employed. Rates for unemployed persons with disabilities in the 12 CR are slightly less than rate for the state.
 - Transportation
Forty-six percent of the citizens surveyed reported that running errands and transportation to and from appointments is always or sometimes a problem for those disabilities.