

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

In 1991 the disabled population was defined as persons who had a physical, mental or other health condition or limitation which had lasted for *more than* six months and which limited or prevented their participation in the activities of daily life for example work, recreation, school or mobility. The collection of this data is a milestone for Bermuda and the local Census Office because it is the first time such detailed information has been collected. The 1950 and 1960 censuses collected disability information on persons who were blind, deaf, mute, mentally deficient and/or physically handicapped. At that time the analysis of the disabled population was restricted to five-year age groupings and parish of residence.

The 1991 Census captured information about the physically and mentally handicapped and, in addition, information on persons with other limiting health conditions. The addition of other limiting health conditions has enabled greater coverage of persons with disabilities. It is important to emphasize, however, that the purpose of the statistics in this section is not to present a complete count of persons with various physical limitations or health conditions, but rather to show the number of persons whose condition had adversely affected their daily life for more than six months. It should also be noted that the information collected was based on self-reporting which may or may not have had the benefit of a medical diagnosis by a physician.

The objective of the following section is to highlight some of the basic demographic characteristics of the non-institutional population with chronic and disabling health conditions.

Prevalence of Disability

The 1991 Census revealed that 2,984 persons or 5% of the civilian non-institutional population reported that they were affected by a chronic health condition which impacted on their daily life. This population group consisted of 1,361 (46%) males and 1,623 (54%) females. Blacks comprised 65% of this group while their white counterparts made up 34%.

Table 1
Disabled Population by Race and Sex 1991

Sex	Total	Black	White & Other	Not Stated
Total	2,984	1,949	1,029	6
Male	1,361	886	472	3
Female	1,623	1,063	557	3

Age Distribution - Children

There were 198 children (15 years and under) categorized with a disability and they comprised 7% of the disabled population. The prevalence of disabilities among children was evenly distributed by age and sex.

Table 2
Disabled Population by Age and Sex 1991

Age	Number			Percentage Distribution		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	2,984	1,361	1,623	100	100	100
0 - 4	58	29	29	2	2	2
5 - 9	54	27	27	2	2	2
10 - 15	86	45	41	3	3	3
16 - 19	78	39	39	3	3	2
20 - 24	104	63	41	3	5	3
25 - 29	122	61	61	4	5	4
30 - 34	146	81	65	5	6	4
35 - 39	139	73	66	5	5	4
40 - 44	157	86	71	5	6	4
45 - 49	151	71	80	5	5	5
50 - 54	167	74	93	6	5	5
55 - 59	218	101	117	7	7	7
60 - 64	288	134	154	10	10	10
65 - 69	302	135	167	10	10	10
70 - 74	258	106	152	9	8	9
75 - 79	292	105	187	10	8	12
80 - 84	207	74	133	7	5	8
85 - 89	107	40	67	3	3	4
90 - 94	50	17	33	2	1	2

Age Distribution - Adults

The disabled adult population was on average older than the non-disabled population. Forty-one per cent of the disabled population was 65 years or older, whilst senior citizens comprised 8% of the non-disabled population. In every age group over 64 there were more females than males.; disabled women aged 65 and over comprised 25% of the total disabled population, whereas, the males made up 16%. This pattern is expected at this end of the age spectrum because life expectancy at age 65 is greater for females than for males.

Effect of Disabilities

Disabled persons were most restrained in the kind or amount of work they could do either at work, home or school. In 1991, 75% of the disabled population reported that they were restricted in the type of job they could do; 64% reported that they were limited in the kind or amount of activity that they could do at home or at school; and, nearly half of the disabled population stated that their condition prevented them from working at a job.

Table 3
Impact of Disability by Sex 1991

Impact of Disability	Number		
	Total	Male	Female
Limited kind or amount of work	2,242	1,048	1,194
Prevented from working at a job	1,445	617	828
Limited the kind or amount of activity at home or school	1,917	840	1,077
Prevented from going outside the home alone	635	226	409
Prevented from taking care of own personal needs	393	148	245
Confined to a wheelchair	151	53	98

Impact of Disability	Percentage Distribution		
	Total	Male	Female
Limited kind or amount of work	75%	77%	74%
Prevented from working at a job	48%	45%	51%
Limited the kind or amount of activity at home or school	64%	62%	66%
Prevented from going outside the home alone	21%	17%	25%
Prevented from taking care of own personal needs	13%	11%	15%
Confined to a wheelchair	5%	4%	6%

Disabling Condition

The five most common disabling conditions for Bermuda's residents were arthritis or rheumatism, heart condition, high blood pressure/hypertension, diabetes and no/limited use or absence of legs. The frequency of the five major conditions ranged from twenty per cent for arthritis to eleven per cent for no/limited use or absence of legs. Generally, the prevalence of these conditions increased with age. A significant number (416) of the disabled population reported that they were affected by other conditions. The 'other conditions' most frequently identified were epilepsy, stroke and sickle cell anaemia. Amongst the children, lung or respiratory problems were most common.

Table 4
Frequency Distribution of Disabling Conditions 1991

Disabling Conditions	Number of Persons with Disabling Conditions			Persons with Disabling Condition Expressed as a Percentage of Total Disabled Population		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	2,984 ¹	1,361 ¹	1,623 ¹	100	100	100
Arthritis or Rheumatism	590	197	393	20	7	13
Heart Condition	473	238	235	16	8	8
High Blood Pressure/Hypertension	398	140	258	13	5	9
Diabetes	360	155	205	12	5	7
No/Limited Use or Absence of Legs	324	164	160	11	2	2
Poor Vision or Blindness	295	116	179	10	4	6
Serious Problem with Back or Spine	276	120	156	9	4	5
Respiratory or Lung Problem	253	118	135	8	4	5
Hard of Hearing or Deafness	206	89	117	7	3	4
Mental or Emotional Disorder	156	94	62	5	3	2
No/Limited Use or Absence of Arms	112	62	50	4	2	2
Cancer	106	40	66	4	1	2
Serious Stomach, Kidney or Liver Condition	98	45	53	3	2	2
Senility or Alzheimer's Disease	85	33	52	3	1	2
Muscular Disease or Impairment	82	41	41	3	1	1
Mental Retardation	69	29	40	2	1	1
Serious Speech Impediment	64	48	16	2	2	1
Other Condition	436	204	232	15	7	8
Not Stated	36	16	20	1	1	1

¹The number of disabling conditions reported does not equal the total number of disabled persons because respondents were invited to report multiple responses.

Overall, women reported a higher incidence in the five major disabling conditions than men, with the exception of heart conditions and no/limited use or absence of legs where the incidences were the same. Explanation of these differences requires further research.