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28th Annual Research Day

May 2nd, 12:00 AM

Health Disparities among Adults with Disabilities

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Carlberg, Kirsten; Plone, Madison; Castro, Chrismely; and Lopez, Nayarith, "Health Disparities among Adults with Disabilities" (2024). *Rowan-Virtua Research Day*. 177.
https://rdw.rowan.edu/stratford_research_day/2024/may2/177

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Health Disparities among Adults with Disability

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Background

Disabilities impact millions of people's mental and physical health in the United States (US). In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), up to 27% of adults live with some sort of disability which can affect their personal and professional lives.¹ Living with a disability often accompanied by poorer health outcomes with disabled adults reporting higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. This review aims to characterize rates of disability among young adults in Camden Country, New Jersey.

Objectives

- Identify health disparities (mental, physical) experienced by adults with disabilities living in NJ
- Review existing literature on interventions aimed at improving health outcomes for adults with disabilities
- Develop a community-based intervention strategy based on current research and community-identified needs

Methods

Articles were selected based on the relevant region and/or target population. Keywords used: *adults disabilities + physical fitness, adults with disabilities, ways to help adults with disabilities, and census*. Data from the 2022 United States Census was collected and analyzed using Microsoft Excel 365 to characterize and compare disability rates in Camden County and the entire United States.

Results

In 2022, 9.7% of Camden County residents aged 18-34 years old reported some sort of disability, which is consistent with the national rate of 8.3%, $z = 16.8$, $p = 2.0$.²

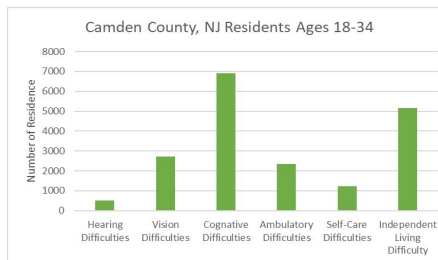


Figure 1. Types of disabilities reported in US Census data and the number of Camden County residents with those disabilities².

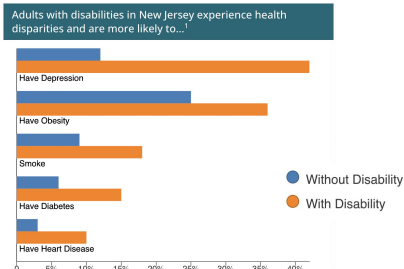


Figure 2. CDC Disability & Health U.S. State Profile Data for New Jersey³

Individuals with disabilities are more susceptible to health issues not directly related to their disability³. Social, economic, and environmental barriers contribute to people with disabilities being significantly less likely to receive preventative care and receiving less than adequate care, perpetuating health disparities⁴.

Conclusion

People with disabilities face challenges to health and wellness at a rate that is disproportionate to the general population^{4,5}. Studies have shown that even a small amount of exercise can have positive effects on their health outcomes^{5,6}. Through partnership with local organizations, people with disabilities in Camden County can have more opportunities to improve their wellness.

Proposed Intervention

Partner with local organization that provide care and support to adults with disabilities to implement recurrent group fitness activities with the goals of:

- Increasing opportunities for improving physical fitness in an inclusive setting
- Improving psychosocial wellbeing through community-building and socialization

References

