



**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION ON HEALTH AND DISABILITY (AAHD) RESEARCH BRIEF
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AAHD COVID-19 & DISABILITY SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS ON ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Introduction

People with disabilities experience unique risks during disasters, epidemics, and pandemics that can impact health and health care. *Yet, we do not know the full impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities.*

Research Approach

AAHD conducted the COVID-19 and Disability Survey between April 17 and May 1, 2020, and 2,469 adults with disabilities responded, including adults with cognition disabilities (58%), mobility disabilities (27%), vision disabilities (8%), and hearing disabilities (7%).

Main Findings- Access to Regular Health Care & Services

Use of Direct Care Workers & Impact of COVID-19

- 47% of respondents reported having a Direct Care Worker (DCW).
- Of these, 77% were still receiving DCW services during the pandemic.
- **54% of respondents still receiving DCW services were unable to maintain safe distances from their Direct Care Worker.**

Access to Regular Health Care Treatment

- 44% of respondents who needed regular health care (such as physical therapy, dialysis, etc.) were able to receive it during the pandemic.
- **56% of respondents needing regular health care reported their access had been disrupted during the pandemic.**

Access to Prescription Medications

- Among respondents taking prescriptions, 96% reported no access problems.
- **Only 4% of respondents reported access to prescription medication access had been disrupted during the pandemic, but any disruption of life-sustaining medication can be critical.**

New Challenges to Accessing Health Care

- 56% of respondents reported that they were not facing new challenges to accessing health care.
- **44% of respondents reported new challenges to accessing health care and prescriptions!**

Conclusion

- **Population-based research is critically needed to document these problems.**

Full results are available at: <https://www.aahd.us/initiatives/dissemination/covid-19-disability-survey/>.

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