

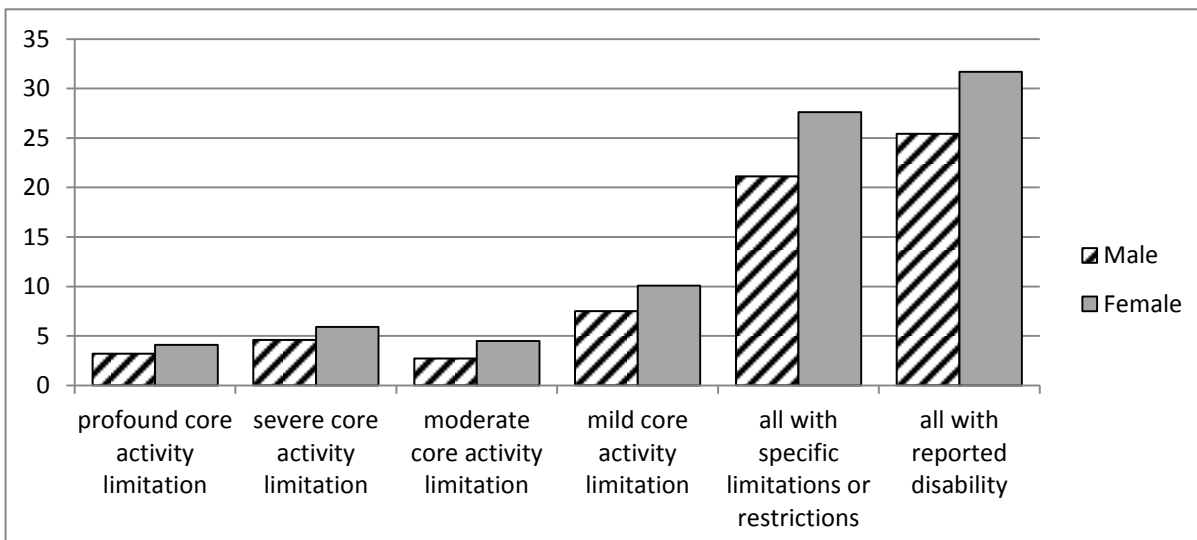


Overview

Article 6 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expressly calls on all Governments to take specific measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by women and girls with disabilities of all fundamental freedoms and human rights with men.

- The number of women and men in the world with a disability is increasing through population growth, medical advancesⁱ and the ageing process (World Health Organisation).ⁱⁱ
- In Australia, women can expect to live for 7.5 years of their life span with a severe or profound disability compared to 5.5 years for men.ⁱⁱⁱ In the ACT, no gendered data exists comparing the disability experiences of women and men.
- There are about 31,700 women with disabilities in the ACT^{iv}, making up the majority (55.5%) of people with disabilities and 17% of all women in the ACT. (Men with disabilities comprise 14% of the male population.)
- Women with disabilities are recognised to be multiply disadvantaged, experiencing discrimination and exclusion on account of the intersection of both their gender and their disability.^v
- In the ACT there are more women than men across all disability groups.

ACT population (1000s) with disabilities



*Source: Table 5
 SDAC
 44300DO001_2012
 Disability, Ageing
 and Carers,
 Australia: Summary
 of Findings, 2012

Education

Access to education is important in helping individuals to reach their full potential.

- The proportion of people with disabilities who graduate with a bachelor degree or higher is approximately half the graduation rate of the non-disabled population. The proportion who never attend school is 5 ½ times that of those without disabilities.^{vi}

LEVEL of HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT All people in the Australia: Proportions (%)*

	Bachelor degree or above	Advanced Diploma or Certificate	Year 12 High School or Equivalent	Year 10 High School or equivalent	Year 8 or Lower	Never attended school
With reported disability	12.7	8.4	27.3	27.6	19.0	1.1
No reported disability	25.0	10.2	56.1	21.1	4.3	0.2

*Source: Table 7 SDAC 44300D0001_2012 Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012

Work

Access to employment is essential in achieving greater economic independence and inclusion.

- Women with disabilities in the ACT had a significantly lower labour force participation rate, 65.1 per cent, than men with disabilities in the ACT, 80.1 per cent.^{vii, viii}
- Women with disabilities tend to be overrepresented in part-time jobs (56% - compared to just 22% of men with disabilities and 47% of non-disabled women).
- A lower proportion of women with disabilities in the ACT, 19.5 per cent, than men with disabilities in the ACT, 22 per cent, receive the Disability Support Pension.^{ix} Further research is needed to determine the reasons for this.
- Overall, 49% of ACT Disability Support Pension recipients are women, slightly higher than the national figure of 46%. It is likely that women with disabilities may be recipients of other welfare payments, such as single parent benefit or carer payment.

Home

Unpaid caring work can encumber women's economic security, through limiting their workforce participation, limiting the accumulation of their retirement incomes and savings, and affecting productivity, economic growth and poverty reduction.^x

- Nationally, the majority of people with disabilities live in private dwellings (94%). The remainder of people with disabilities (6%) live in non-private dwellings, with nearly two-thirds of these (4%) living in cared accommodation.^{xi} However, there is no publicly available data that helps us understand the situations of women with disabilities in the ACT.
- There are 18,800 female carers in the ACT who make up 10 per cent of the total female population. The known proportion of female carers in the ACT who also have a disability is not currently available. The total work burden for women with disabilities has never been captured.^{xii}

Experience of Violence, Neglect or Abuse

Violence against women and girls directly affects individuals while harming our common humanity. It is the most significant threat to the lives of women aged between 15 and 44 in Australia.^{xiii}

- Women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Australian studies on this issue are few, but estimates of the rate of abuse range upwards from three times greater incidence than for non-disabled women.^{xiv}
- Women with disabilities are not only more vulnerable to violence, they often have difficulty accessing pathways to appropriate support, and have fewer options to escape violence.^{xv}

Community

Social connections comprise the people we know, the friends we confide in, the family we belong to and the community we live in. Each contributes to our physical and mental health in a variety of ways.

- Women with disabilities in Australia tend to access disability services less than men with disabilities: 19 per cent compared to 28 per cent.^{xvi} In the ACT in 2009, 20.8 per cent of women (1,260) compared to 40.5 per cent of men (2,402) accessed disability services.^{xvii}
- A lower proportion of women with disabilities receive screening for breast and cervical cancer compared with non-disabled women.^{xviii}
- Because of their disabilities, 15.3 per cent of women with disabilities in the ACT restrict their social activities, compared to only 7.7 per cent of men.^{xix}

Ageing

Australia is much closer to the time when the most significant effects of ageing are likely to be felt.^{xx}

- The incidence of disability increases with age. Because women, on average, live longer than men, women experience disability for a greater proportion of their lives.^{xxi}
- The proportion of women in the ACT with a profound disability increases tenfold after the age of 65 and with a severe disability it increases fivefold after the age of 65. This compares with fourfold and threefold increases respectively for men in the ACT after the age of 65.^{xxii}

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Explanatory note: “Medical advances” enable an increase in size of the population with age-related disability and chronic health condition.

ⁱⁱ *Global Health and Ageing* National Institute on Aging National Institutes of Health NIH Publication no. 11-7737 October 2011 http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/global_health.pdf at pages 12,13

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Changes in Life Expectancy and Disability in Australia 1999- 2009* at page 5

^{iv} Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013), *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2012*, Cat.No. 4430.0, Table 5.1

^v Article 6, United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

^{vi} Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013), *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2012*, Cat.No. 4430.0, Table 7.2

^{vii} a. Disability 2010–11: Comparing performance across Australia, Statistical supplement, Report to the Council of Australian Governments 30 April 2012 – based on Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009.

^{viii} This compares with and 64.8 per cent of women and 79.5 per cent of men in the general population: Australian Bureau of Statistics *Gender Indicators Australia* at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4125.0main+features1110Jan%202013>. This is because Australia has one of the most sex segregated labour market in the OECD: Rawstron, K. (2012). 'Diverging Paths: Occupational Sex Segregation, Australia, and the OECD', The Australian Sociological Association Annual Conference 2012: Emerging and Enduring Equalities (pp. 1-12). Australia: TASA.

^{ix} Productivity Commission, *National Disability Agreement Indicators*

^x Elizabeth Broderick, Australian Human Rights Commission, 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (19-12 March 2014) at page 1.

^{xi} Australian Bureau of Statistics, *4446.0 - Disability, Australia, 2009* 'Living Arrangements' <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4446.0main+features132009>

^{xii} (Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2012–2013 Outcome 3 – Employment DEEWR Question No. EW0091_13)

^{xiii} Katie O'Byrne *Violence against women: our hidden shame* <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/4332000.html>

^{xiv} For example, a study by the National Police Research Unit and Flinders University of 174 people with intellectual disability indicated a prevalence rate of assault as three times more likely to be physically assaulted and ten times more likely to be sexually assaulted than non-disabled people (Cattalini, 1993, 12) cited in **Violence Against Women With Disabilities - An Overview of the Literature** A paper written by Keran Howe (2000) < <http://www.wwda.org.au/keran.htm> >

^{xv} *Women with Disability and the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children* at http://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/info_sheet_disability.pdf

^{xvi} COAG Reform Council, *Disability 2010–11: Comparing performance across Australia*, Australian Government, Sydney, 2012, <<http://www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/reports/disability.cfm> >

^{xvii} Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 'National Agreement performance reporting: National Disability Agreement', *Register of National Minimum Data Sets*, Standing Council on Federal Financial Relations, Canberra, 2010, <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/national_minimum_data_sets.aspx#Disabilities>

^{xviii} C Frohmader, *Women With Disabilities and The Human Right to Health: A Policy Paper*, Women With Disabilities Australia, 2010, <<http://www.wwda.org.au/WWDAPolicyPaper2010.pdf>>

^{xix} Productivity Commission, *National Disability Agreement Indicators*, Australian Government, Melbourne, 2012, <<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/national-agreements/disability>>

^{xx} *An Ageing Australia: Preparing for the Future Productivity Commission Research Paper Overview* (November 2013) http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/129747/ageing-australia-overview.pdf at page 3

^{xxi} AIHW 2012. *Changes in life expectancy and disability in Australia 1998 to 2009*. AIHW bulletin no. 111. Cat. no. AUS 166. Canberra: AIHW

^{xxii} Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013), *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2012*, Cat.No. 4430.0, Table 5