

**Cree Human Resources Development
Employment Initiative for Persons with Disabilities**

Indigenous Disability



KATENIES RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES
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Disability an Overview

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- According to the 2008 Regional Health Survey, more than one-quarter of First Nations adults (27.9%) reported activity limitations in their daily lives.
- Common challenges included problems related to vision, such as reading; lifting or carrying weight;
- Physical exertion, such as climbing a flight of stairs without resting.
- Vision, hearing, ambulation, dexterity, and pain tended to be worse with age.
- Speech, that is, being understood, was more of a challenge for young adults aged 18 to 39 years than for those aged 50 to 59 years..

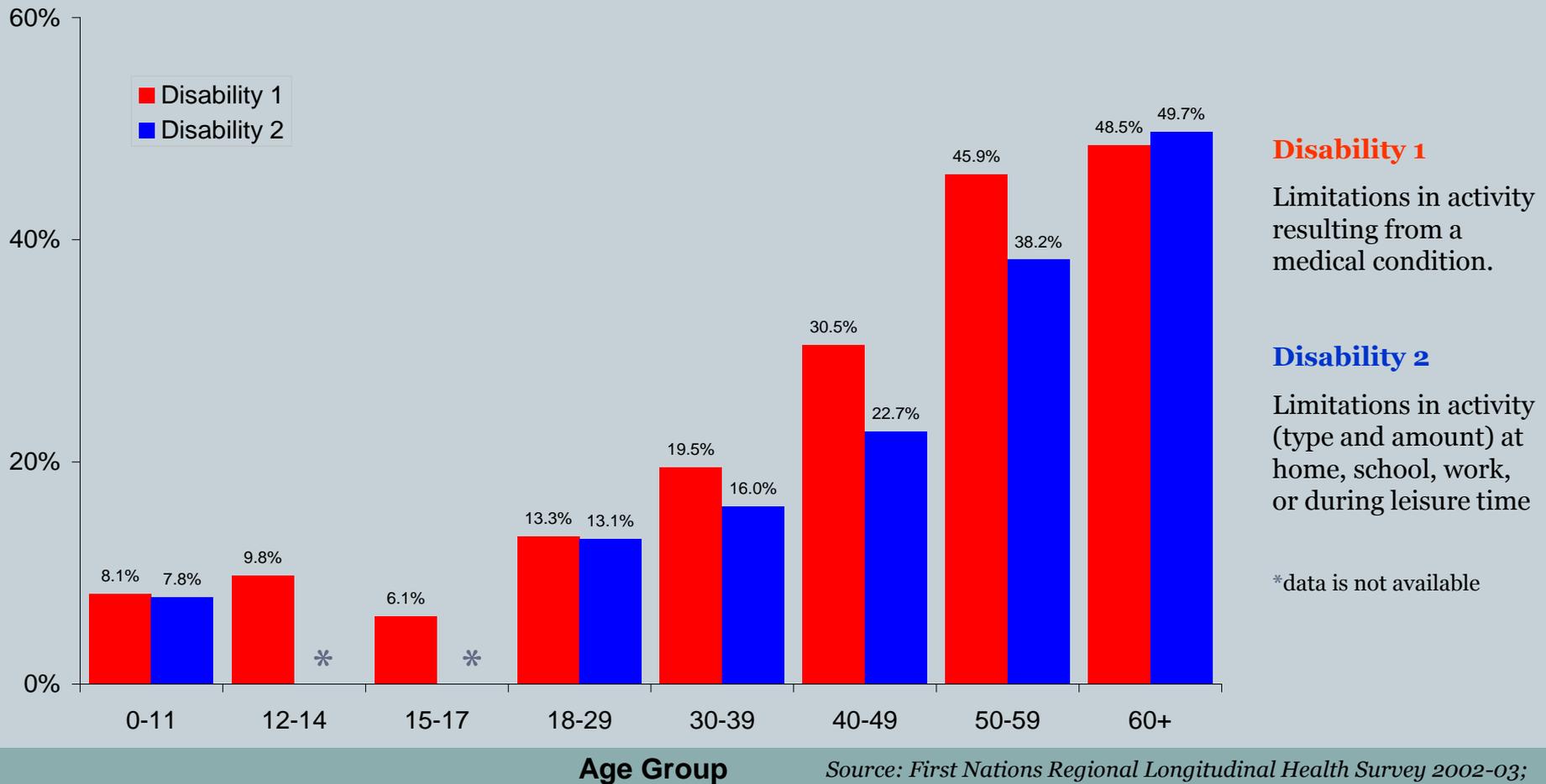
Disability Rates

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- One in six Canadians and one in three Aboriginal people in Canada have a disability.
- 31 per cent of Aboriginal adults have some form of disability – this is twice the national average of the general Canadian population.
- The disability rate among young adults is almost three times higher for Aboriginal people than for non-Aboriginal people.

Prevalence of Disability Among First Nations Living on Reserve (RHS 2002/03)

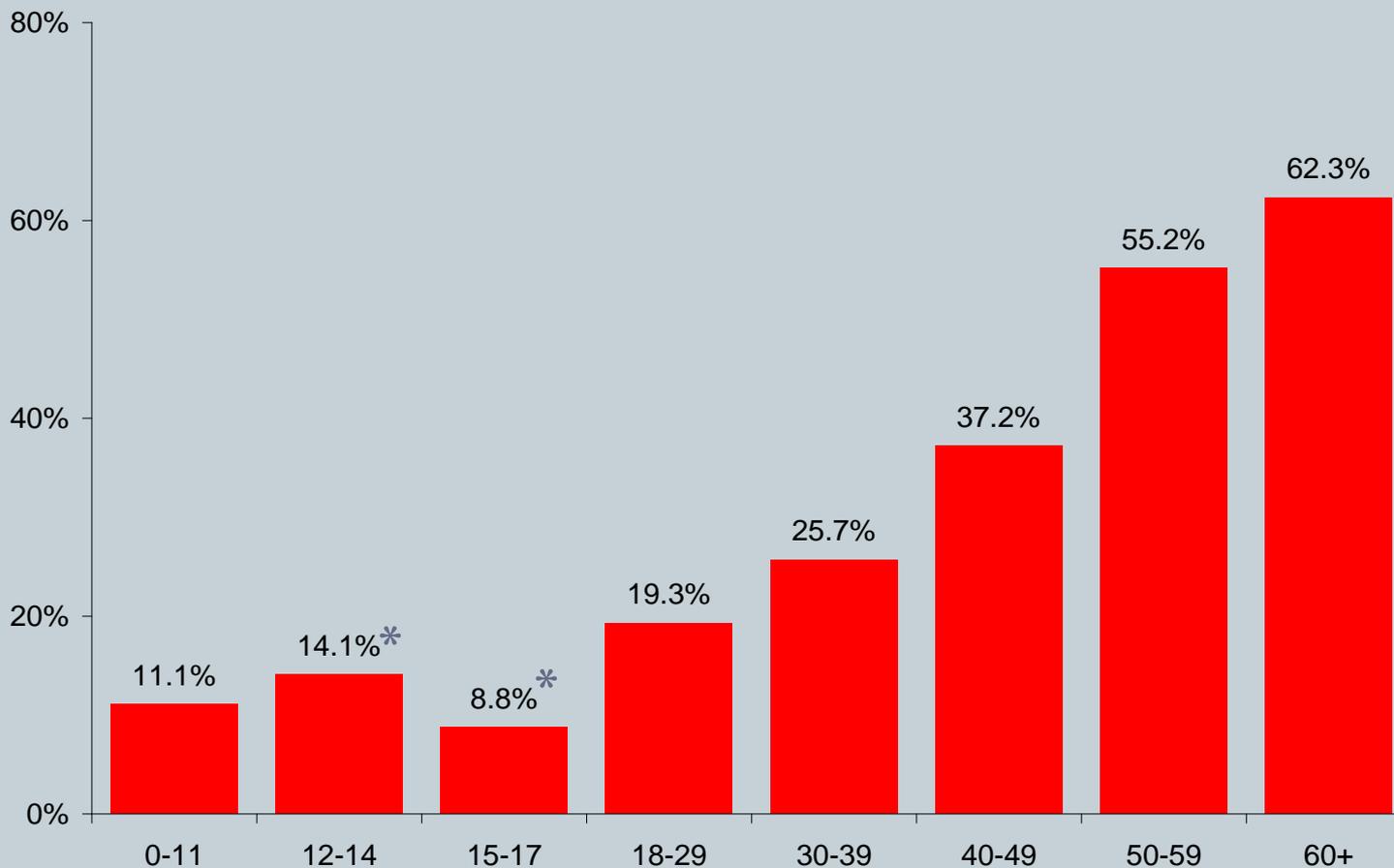
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Source: First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002-03; First Nations Information Governance Committee - Assembly of First Nations.

Prevalence of Disability Among First Nations Living on Reserve (RHS 2002/03) ...continued

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Disability

Limitations in activity resulting from a medical condition.

OR

Limitations in activity (type and amount) at home, school, work, or during leisure time

*estimated

Age Group

Source: First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002-03; First Nations Information Governance Committee - Assembly of First Nations.

Prevalence of Disability Among First Nations Adults Living on Reserve (RHS 2002/03) and the General Canadian Population

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	First Nations (RHS 02/03*)	Canada (CCHS)	Canada (NPHS)
Male	25.7%	23.2%	18.3%
Female	31.3%	28.2%	20.3%
Total	28.5%	25.8%	19.3%

First Nations rates have been age adjusted to match the Canadian population

Disability for First Nations adults is defined as being limited in the type of amount of activity they can do at home, school, work, or during leisure time.

**Source: First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002-03; First Nations Information Governance Committee - Assembly of First Nations.*

Prevalence of Selected Chronic Medical Conditions Among First Nations Adults (RHS 2002/03)

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Respiratory

Asthma	9.7%
Chronic bronchitis	3.2%
Emphysema	0.7%

Vision

Cataracts	4.3%
Blindness	3.3%
Glaucoma	1.7%

Cognitive

Psych. or nervous disorder	2.7%
Learning disability	2.2%
Cognitive or mental disability	1.1%

Musculoskeletal

Arthritis	18.4%
Chronic back pain	14.1%
Rheumatism	3.2%
Osteoporosis	2.9%

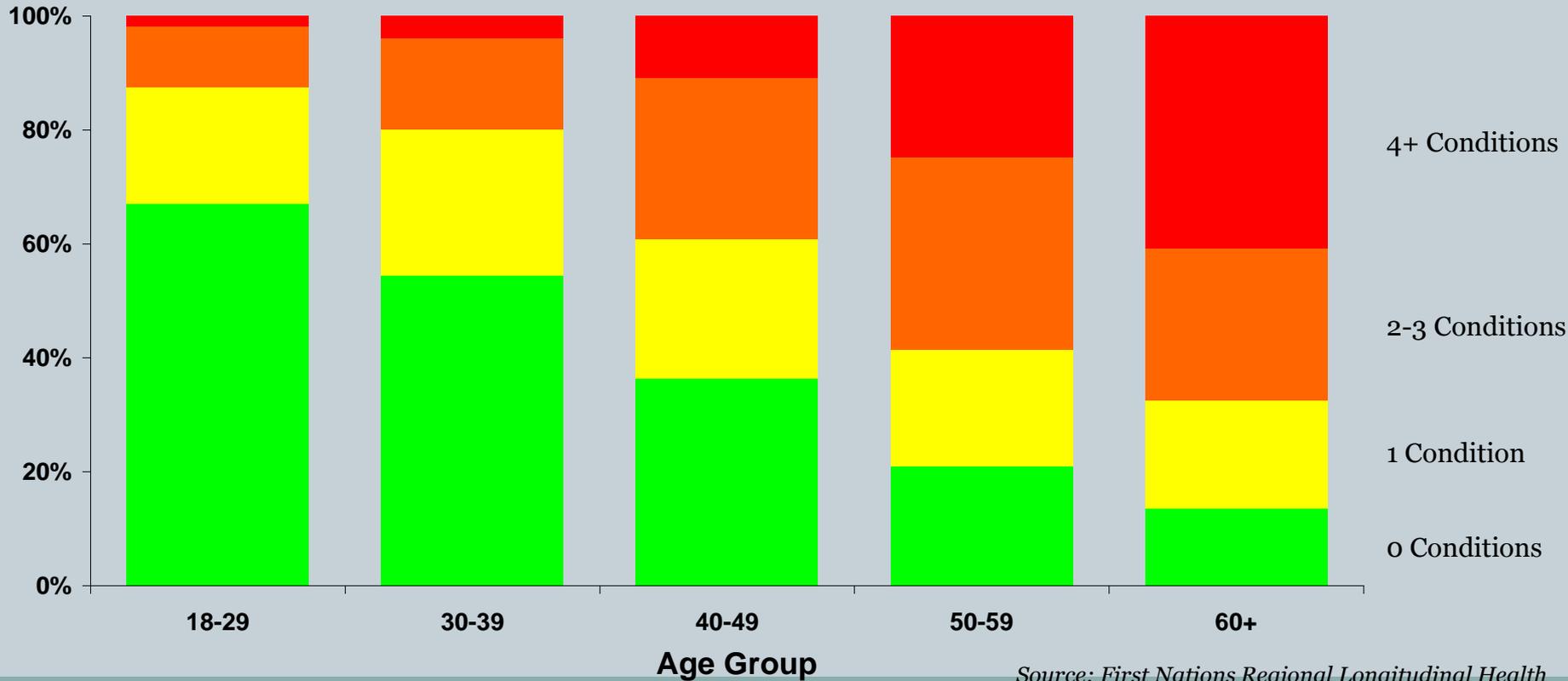
Cardiovascular

High blood pressure	14.9%
Diabetes	14.5%
Heart disease	4.9%
Effects of stroke	1.4%

Source: First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002-03;
First Nations Information Governance Committee - Assembly of First Nations.

Prevalence of Multiple Chronic Medical Conditions Among First Nations Adults (RHS 2002/03)

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Source: First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002-03; First Nations Information Governance Committee - Assembly of First Nations.

Affects of Disabilities

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- Disabilities affecting mobility and agility are most common, but hearing and visual disabilities affecting a large portion of the Aboriginal population is also prevalent.
- Sixty-six per cent of Aboriginal adults with disabilities are affected by a mild disability, 22 per cent by a moderate disability and 12 per cent by a severe disability.

Causes of Disabilities

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According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples this disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal rates of disability corresponds to the disparity in rates of:

- ✦ injury,
- ✦ accident,
- ✦ violence,
- ✦ self-destructive or suicidal behavior, and
- ✦ illnesses, such as diabetes, all of which can result in permanent impairments.

Reasons for High Disability Rates

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- Poor health conditions in Aboriginal communities are caused by harsh and inferior living environments.
- Health and social services in many Aboriginal communities are not adequately resourced or staffed.
- Culturally appropriate programming is yet another problem when Aboriginal people attempt to receive services.
- Medical treatment is inadequate and early detection of a disability is unlikely.

Impacts of Living Conditions

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- Although Canada has made several attempts to improve accessibility and programming for people with disabilities inequity still plagues the existence of Aboriginal people across the country.
- In a *Special Parliamentary Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped* report, the committee concluded that Aboriginal people live in poverty and suffer from living conditions that greatly increase the probability of being disabled at some point in their lifetime

Higher Incidence of Disability in the North

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- Infectious diseases, inadequate housing conditions, overcrowding and lack of sanitation facilities are also a major risk factor for persons with disabilities, or those at risk of having a disability.
- Those Aboriginal persons with disabilities who live in northern, rural and remote communities face additional challenges that are different from what residents of urban southern Canada experience.
- These include lack of supports, high unemployment, transportation challenges and difficulty in getting access to a wide range of services in areas where the population is smaller and more dispersed.

HOUSING CONDITIONS	HEALTH PROBLEMS
Crowded Conditions	Infections (e.g. Respiratory, skin and eyes, tuberculosis, meningitis, measles) Injuries, Mental Health, Homicides and Domestic/Non-Domestic Violence
Inadequate Housing Stock (E.g. house in disrepair)	Injuries
Water Sewage Systems	Gastroenteritis, Skin infections
Indoor Air Quality (e.g. wood stoves, high humidity levels and mold, cigarette smoke)	Respiratory symptoms e.g. Asthma
Cleanliness (Dust)	Respiratory e.g. Asthma
Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Steps and handrails, Cupboard and closets, Washrooms ➤ Exterior doors, Interior doors 	Barrier to people with mobility, agility, sensory or physical disability
Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No electricity or appliance resulting in candle, kerosene lamp or camp stove use in the home, Faulty wiring ➤ Faulty installation of wood stoves ➤ No inspection or cleaning of chimneys in houses with wood stoves 	Fires

Lack of Accessibility in Remote Settings

- As a result Aboriginal children and adults with disabilities who live on a reserve or in rural or remote settings face numerous access problems.
- These include inaccessible buildings (such as schools, churches, homes, band offices) and inaccessible places of community activity (such as arenas, community centres, meeting halls) and lack of appropriate recreation opportunities.
- To compound this problem many Aboriginal children and adults with disabilities are forced to make the difficult choice of staying in their communities with limited resources or leaving home to seek services in urban centres where family, friends and relatives are far away and the surroundings are unfamiliar.

Transportation and Access are Limited

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- According to the *National Aboriginal Network on Disability*, people with disabilities face severe problems when living in an Aboriginal community.
- Roads are rough and usually unpaved, there are no wheelchair ramps to facilitate access to community or commercial buildings, and there are no transportation services.
- This is especially true in northern communities where transportation may only consist of all terrain vehicles or snowmobiles.

Limitations of Services

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- Northern communities also have few home care programs. Physiotherapist visits are infrequent and there is no equipment in these communities for therapeutic treatments for Aboriginal people with disabilities.
- Even more frustrating is the inevitability of overcoming so many obstacles. Many Aboriginal people end up being institutionalized because their families have no option.
- Without adequate housing, home support, assistive devices, or therapeutic and rehabilitative services this situation will only worsen.

Risk Factors for Disabilities

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- High rates of injury and accident
- High rates of smoking
- High rates of teen suicide
- Mental health issues – confinement to small land areas or communities, the loss of traditional ways to transmit culture from one generation to another, alcoholism, lack of access to gainful employment, etc.
- Diabetes
- HIV/AIDS
- Poor health of infants, young children and their mothers
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effects (FAS/FAE)
- Lack of home support and nursing services to meet the needs of Elders
- Substandard housing, poor water quality, absence of recreation facilities and unemployment

Programs that Can Assist Persons with Disabilities

- immunization clinics
- reducing unintentional injuries
- improving mental health services
- dealing with issues of family violence
- suicide prevention
- nutrition and health promotion
- diabetes clinics
- asthma checks
- disability and mental health services
- home support services
- spiritual healing and counseling
- child care and early childhood development

What is a Disability?

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- A disability may be considered a specific medical condition or a disadvantage in certain situations.
- Disabilities are considered on a continuum beginning with an underlying cause, which typically may be a disease or trauma.
- An *impairment* is an abnormality of body structure or organic function. Disabilities can be function limitations, therefore, due to impairments.

There are seven disability types

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- Hearing disabilities
- Seeing disabilities
- Speaking disabilities
- Agility disabilities
- Mobility disabilities
- Mental/learning disabilities
- Physical disabilities not classified elsewhere (unknown

Significant Impacts

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- The impact on disability is significant. Aboriginal people with disabilities have many needs similar to those in Canadian society.
- The problem is they must seek solutions within the framework of jurisdictional forces that have lead to fragmented policies and a patchwork of supports and services.
- The net result is Aboriginal people with disabilities are forced to make two choices:
 - to stay in their community and not have access to the basic types of services and supports that would allow them to exercise some control of their own destiny, or
 - to leave their homes and communities to search for the basic necessities of life.

Barriers to Services

Attitudes and Perceptions	Ignorance, oppressive and racist attitudes. People are uncomfortable with people with a disability and this results in emotional trauma, double discrimination and lack of respect from the public for Aboriginal people with a disability
The Forgotten People	The marginalization of a people. Service agencies consistently fail to recognize the need for consultation with persons with disabilities
Hidden Services	Lack of information. There is a lack of knowledge of Aboriginal persons regarding available services.
Mistrust and Fear	Consumers' Fear and Mistrust of Non-Aboriginal Service Providers. They also fear subtle and overt racism, rejection and the loss of their tribal identity.

Barriers to Services

Cultural Sensitivity	There is a lack of cultural sensitivity and there is a need for culturally relevant and sensitive services to meet the special needs of Aboriginal people.
Poverty and Independent Living	The lack of income and supports for independent living is a major barrier. The major source of income – social assistance – barely covers the simplest costs of living and does not cover the extra costs associated with living with a disability.
Education and Employment	Education is the best way to assist Aboriginal people with disabilities to achieve independent living and self-sufficiency.
Physical and transportation problems	Physical and transportation problems still remain a major obstacle on reserve where there are poor roads, lack of paved sidewalks, poor snow removal and inaccessible public and private buildings.

LABOUR FORCE STATUS OF ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES (15-64) COMPARED TO ADULTS WITHOUT DISABILITY

(Source: In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues)

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	With Disabilities	Without Disability
Employed	48%	73%
Unemployed	8%	8%
Not in labour force	44%	19%

The reasons for not joining the labour force most often cited by persons with disabilities are:

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- ✦ **losing their current income (21%);**
- ✦ **problems with training (16%);**
- ✦ **no jobs available (15%);**
- ✦ **fear they would lose additional supports (13%);**
- ✦ **family responsibilities (10%);**
- ✦ **discrimination (7%); and**
- ✦ **lack of accessible transportation (7%).**

The accessibility of the workplace largely determines whether or not people with disabilities can work.

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The three accommodations most often identified by people with disabilities not in the labour force as required for them to work are:

- modified/ reduced hours (33%);
- job redesign (27%); and
- accessible transportation (14%).

LABOUR FORCE STATUS OF MEN AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

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	Men With Disabilities	Women With Disabilities
Employed	55.8%	40.7%
Unemployed	8.4%	7.8%
Not in labour force	35.8%	51.5%

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME OF MEN AND WOMEN, WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

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- **men without a disability: \$30,000**
- men with disabilities: \$22,129
- **women without a disability: \$18,008**
- women with disabilities: \$13,425

Education level of adults with disabilities (15-64) compared to adults without disability.

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	With Disabilities	Without Disability
High School or Less	65%	50%
University Degree	6%	14%

SELECTED INCOME SOURCES OF PERSONS OF WORKING AGE (15-64), WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

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	With Disabilities	Without Disability
Employment Earnings	50%	73%
Social Assistance	19%	4%
Pension Income	17%	4%
Workers Compensation	8%	2%

The New Approach to Disability

(Source: In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues)

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Old Concepts	New Approaches
Recipients	Participants
Passive income support	Active measures to promote employment
Dependence	Independence
Government responsibility	Shared responsibility
Label as “unemployable”	Identification of Work skills
Disincentives to leave income support	Incentives to seek employment
Inadequate employment supports	Opportunities to develop skills and experience
Program centered approach	Person centered approach
Insufficient portability of benefits and services that are not portable	Portable benefits and services
Multiple access requirements	Integrated access requirements

How to Change Things:

Source: World Report on Disability , World Health Organization , World Bank 2011

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Some ideas to help make the lives of people with disabilities better include:

- **Getting good health care**
- **Providing good, clear information**
- **Communicating in the way that works best for persons with disabilities**
- **Buildings and services they can get into and use**
- **Health care in places near where they live**
- **More choice and control over their health care**
- **Money to help pay for health care**
- **The chance to be involved in training people who give health care so they understand about disability**

People Need to be able to do things for Themselves

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- Services and support at home or close to where they live
- Technology like wheelchairs & electrical gadgets that can help them be more independent
- More well trained workers who understand about supporting people to do things for themselves
- Services and organizations that work together to make sure there is enough money for the support they need

Getting Help and Support Means:

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- More support to live in one's own community
- More services in the community
- Better support for families or other people who are not paid to care for persons with disabilities
- Support that is planned around the individual needs of a person with disabilities

Getting Out and About and Involved

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- To be able to use public buildings and transport
- Good information and communication
- New technology like phones and computers to help them be more independent
- To be involved in planning services that everyone uses
- This will only happen if everyone looks for ways to include people with disabilities

To Get Jobs Persons with Disabilities Need:

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- People to think about changes that help someone with a disability to do a job
- Training and support to do the job
- Support to keep their job if they become disabled when they are working
- Money to help them set up their own business
- Benefits or other payments to make sure they have more money if they have a job than if they stay at home

What Needs to Happen with People Who Run Services

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- Find out what stops persons with disabilities getting involved and having information
- Involve people with disabilities in training staff. Make sure staff understand disabilities
- Work with people and their families to write plans for services and supports for persons with disabilities
- Work with other services to keep and share information to give persons with disabilities the support they need
- Make sure persons with disabilities know about their rights and how to complain

Local Communities Can:

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- Think about how they treat persons with disabilities
- Find ways to include people in the community
- Make sure persons with disabilities can use local schools and all the other things that other people use
- Stand up against bullying of people with disabilities
- Help persons with disabilities support each other and their families to get support, information and advice
- Get involved in groups and meetings that can change things for persons with disabilities

Discussion:

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- What does disability mean to you in your community?
- How has disability affected you, your family, or someone close to you?
- What problems have you faced as a result of a disability yourself or with someone close to you?
- What do you see as the needs for persons with disabilities in your community?

Any Questions?

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Niawan:kowa for your time.

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