

Longitudinal Study of People Aging with Long-Term Physical Disabilities: Baseline Demographics, Health & Participation

We surveyed 474 people aged 45-65 with physical disabilities about their health and participation over three years to learn how community organizations can best meet their needs.

Most common health problem contributing to disability:

Musculoskeletal:

- Degenerative arthritis
- Osteoarthritis
- Spinal stenosis
- Amputation

Neurological:

- Cerebral palsy
- Multiple sclerosis
- Spinal cord disorders
- Traumatic brain injury

Immunological:

- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Connective tissue disorders

56.8

Average age

19

Average no. years with disability

Gender

66.2%

Women

33.8%

Men

Race & Ethnicity

61.4%

White

26.4%

Black

12.2%

Other

Employment and Finances

Personal Annual Income

65%

\$10,009 or more

35%

Less than \$10,009

Employment Status

Disability leave

60.6%

Seeking work

18.0%

Retired/not seeking work/other

3%

Paid employment

22.6%

71.9%

Primary Sources of Income

SSDI

Paid employment

SSI

Retirement savings

Work-related disability

Help from family/friends

Veteran benefits

Unemployment Benefits

22.6%

13.5%

12.2%

10.6%

8.2%

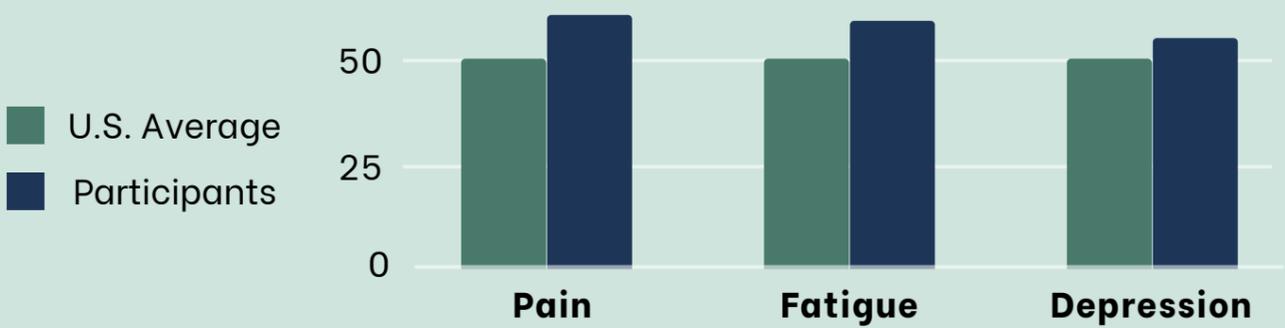
3%

1.3%

Note: participants could choose multiple responses.

Symptoms

Pain, fatigue and depression were all higher in our participants than in the US general population average score of 50.



Health & Participation

Over the past 12 months...

46% reported that their ability to do what they want in their daily lives decreased

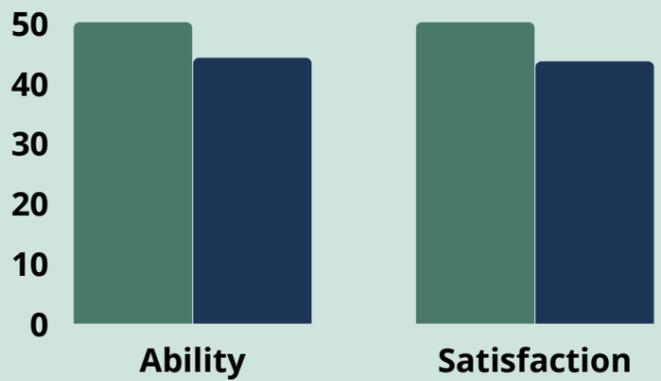
54% reported that their health status had declined

Social Participation

We used two questionnaires to learn about social participation in this cohort.

One measures a person's perceived **ability** to participate in their social roles and activities. The other measures their **satisfaction** with their participation in social roles and activities.

Our participants had both lower ability and lower satisfaction with their participation than the U.S. population average score of 50.



How Do Our Participants Compare to Those of Other Studies?

This cohort has some distinctions but, overall, is similar to participants in other studies of people aging with disability (AwD).

- Our sample has a higher percentage of non-White participants than other AwD studies. The diversity of our participants will help broaden the relevancy of this cohort study's findings.
- The primary health conditions and symptoms our participants described were similar to those seen in other AwD studies.
- While lower than general population averages, our participants' social participation scores were similar to those in other AwD studies.

We are confident that our cohort reflects the general population of people aging with disabilities.