Each of us may experience a disability in our lifetime.

This fact sheet provides an overview of disability in Rhode Island (RI) compared to national estimates. You can use this information to learn more about the percentages and characteristics of adults with disabilities in Rhode Island.

A Snapshot of Disability in Rhode Island

Despite progress, adults with disabilities in Rhode Island and across the country continue to experience significant differences in health characteristics and behaviors compared to adults without disabilities.

Disability Costs in Healthcare Expenditures

$1.8 billion per year* in Rhode Island

Percentage of adults with select functional disability types:**

MOBILITY: Serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

COGNITION: Serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.

INDEPENDENT LIVING: Difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.

VISION: Blind or serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.

SELF-CARE: Difficulty dressing or bathing.

Types of Disabilities Comparing U.S. with RI

* Disability-associated healthcare expenditures are presented in 2006 dollars as reported in Anderson et al, 2010. This value represents approximately 28% of total healthcare expenditures for the state of Rhode Island.

** In 2013 and 2014, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) did not ask participants about deafness or serious difficulty hearing; however, BRFSS began collecting this information in 2016.