



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH PREEXISTING CONDITIONS
MAY PREVENT DISABILITY**

A forum was held for advocates of health care with respect to people in low income families. A report was presented that quantified the number of Americans with pre-existing conditions. The study included 60 conditions which is not all of the preexisting conditions. Ethnic and racial minorities may have been disproportionately left out of the report.

Summary

There are different estimates of the prevalence of preexisting conditions associated with access to health care. One estimate is there are 57.2 million non elderly people with pre-existing conditions that lead to denial of health coverage (i.e.22.2% of the population). However, there are reports there are as many of 129 million people with preexisting condition. Other estimates are that fifteen percent of people ages 18 to 24 have preexisting conditions, 35.3% ages 45-54, and 45.5% ages 55 to 64. The most common pre existing conditions are psychotic disorders 8.5%, obesity 7.5%, diabetes 5%, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease 4.1%, and coronary artery disease 2.5%

Disability Prevention Issues

There are vulnerable populations who fail access health care. Failure to access health care is a social determinant of health that can contribute to disability. People in the lowest income group are most likely to have preexisting conditions which forces them to go without health insurance and puts them at risk of disability. Uninsured people are 6 times as likely to go without needed care as privately insured people and seven times more likely without preventive care. In addition, 32% of uninsured adults with chronic health conditions went without medical care one-third of the time, 59% delayed care 60% of the time, and 60% did not fill prescriptions because of costs. Furthermore, uninsured patients are charged 2.5 times more than insured patients. Thus, when preexisting conditions result in limited access to health care, these patients health may diminish and contribute to disability.

Activity

There is ongoing study of the implications of pre-existing conditions associated with diminished health that contributes to disability.

Principle

All people should have access to effective affordable health care all of the time, especially people with preexisting conditions.