

Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance: Characteristics of Beneficiaries Disabled Since Childhood, 1957-61

by PHOEBE H. GOFF*

Who are the adults, seriously disabled since their childhood, who receive benefits as dependents of insured workers? What are the disabling conditions most often found among these beneficiaries? Are most of them in institutions or in their own homes? Are they bedbound or can they get about without help? In what part of the country do they live? What are the reasons that keep some of the disabled from qualifying for benefits? Little was known about the disabled persons in this group before the amendments to the Social Security Act permitting payments of benefits to them. Some information on the group is found in the data on childhood disability allowances and denials in the first 5 years of the program, presented in the following pages.

SINCE the start of the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, benefits have been awarded to more than 5 million children under age 18—children of retired, deceased, or seriously disabled workers insured under the program. Not until 1956, however, did Congress act to make benefits payable to children who, though aged 18 or over, were suffering from a serious disability that had started before they reached age 18. Protection for this special group of the disabled through their relation to an insured worker was a significant new development in the field of social insurance; other countries had generally adopted different approaches to the problem.

To qualify for benefits the applicant with a childhood disability—like the child under age 18—must be the dependent, unmarried son or daughter of an old-age or disability insurance beneficiary, or of a fully insured parent who is dead. In addition, he must be “unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity” because of a severe mental or physical impairment that began before his eighteenth birthday, has been continuous since

that time, and is expected to be of long and indefinite duration. Because this group of beneficiaries is, of course, limited to those meeting the qualifications in the act, it represents only a part of the significant number of adults who since childhood have had mental and physical abnormalities of such duration and severity that for most or all of their lives they have been prevented from working or otherwise participating fully in the activities of their families and their communities.

During the 6 years ended December 31, 1962, about 194,000 applications for childhood disability benefits were processed by the Social Security Administration. Approximately 164,000 applicants met the disability requirements, and about 147,000 were still receiving benefits at the end of the period. The information in this article is based on data on the 162,805 individuals whose applications for benefits were adjudicated during the first 5 years of the childhood disability insurance program—1957-61. Detailed information on those whose applications were processed in 1962 is not yet available for study. It is probable, however, that in their general characteristics these more recent applicants differ only to a limited extent from the composite of the 1957-61 group.

BENEFICIARY FAMILIES

Of the persons whose applications for childhood disability benefits were processed in the first 5 years of the program, 137,843 or 85 percent met the requirements concerning the duration and severity of the disability. At the end of the period, 124,221 were still receiving benefits. Half were in families in which the insured parent had retired because of age, 4,272 had parents retired because of disability, and 57,854 were survivors of deceased workers. Of the third group, three-fifths were either sole survivors or were the only per-

* Division of Research and Statistics.

sons in their immediate families who qualified for dependent's benefits on the wage records of deceased workers and about 1 in every 5 was in a family where the other beneficiary was an aged widow.

Childhood disability benefits were being paid to more than one person in 4,645 families. The extent to which families had more than one childhood disability beneficiary varied according to family classification and the presence of children under age 18. The significance of these variations

cannot be determined from the present limited experience under the insurance program.

CHANGES IN BENEFIT STATUS

The beneficiary rolls experienced relatively little attrition during the first 5 years of the childhood disability program. Nine out of 10 of the persons who met the disability requirements were receiving benefits at the end of 1961. Benefits

TABLE 1.—Childhood disability allowances: Number and percentage distribution of children found disabled in 1957-61, by diagnostic group and primary diagnosis

Diagnostic group and primary diagnosis	Total		1957		1958		1959		1960		1961	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Total	137,843	100.0	36,267	100.0	21,273	100.0	34,718	100.0	22,352	100.0	23,233	100.0
Infective and parasitic diseases	4,871	3.5	1,542	4.3	772	3.6	1,127	3.2	771	3.4	659	2.8
Late effects of acute poliomyelitis	2,771	2.0	906	2.5	419	2.0	546	1.6	457	2.0	443	1.9
Late effects of acute infectious encephalitis	1,042	.8	359	1.0	192	.9	282	.8	136	.6	73	.3
Congenital syphilis	494	.4	108	.3	86	.4	177	.5	68	.3	55	.2
Other	564	.4	169	.4	75	.4	122	.4	110	.5	88	.4
Neoplasms	421	.3	85	.2	61	.3	99	.3	90	.4	86	.4
Allergic, endocrine system, metabolic, and nutritional diseases	2,469	1.8	974	2.7	442	2.1	567	1.6	291	1.3	195	.8
Myxedema and cretinism	1,738	1.3	748	2.1	342	1.6	354	1.0	179	.8	115	.5
Other	731	.5	226	.6	100	.5	213	.6	112	.5	80	.3
Diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs	173	.1	32	.1	19	.1	45	.1	33	.1	44	.2
Mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders	75,572	54.8	17,174	47.4	11,219	52.7	19,945	57.4	12,870	57.6	14,364	61.8
Mental deficiency	67,804	49.2	16,332	45.0	10,310	48.5	17,774	51.2	11,065	49.5	12,323	53.0
Schizophrenic disorders (dementia praecox)	5,109	3.7	562	1.5	556	2.6	1,430	4.1	1,388	6.2	1,173	5.0
Mental deterioration and certain other psychoses of unspecified etiology	1,453	1.1	(¹)	(¹)	227	1.1	396	1.1	206	.9	624	2.7
Other	1,206	.9	280	.8	126	.6	345	1.0	211	.9	244	1.1
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	46,680	33.9	14,072	38.8	7,550	35.5	11,215	32.3	7,105	31.8	6,738	29.0
Cerebral spastic infantile paralysis with mental deficiency	16,623	12.1	5,338	14.7	3,045	14.3	4,130	11.9	2,245	10.0	1,865	8.0
Cerebral spastic infantile paralysis	7,174	5.2	3,041	8.4	1,087	5.1	1,172	3.4	799	3.6	1,075	4.6
Epilepsy with mental deficiency	11,783	8.5	2,394	6.6	1,774	8.3	3,333	9.6	2,313	10.3	1,969	8.5
Late effects of intracranial abscess or pyogenic infection	3,040	2.2	1,087	3.0	487	2.3	787	2.3	383	1.7	296	1.3
Epilepsy	3,078	2.2	881	2.4	451	2.1	656	1.9	559	2.5	531	2.3
Other	4,982	3.6	1,331	3.7	706	3.3	1,137	3.3	806	3.6	1,002	4.3
Diseases of the circulatory system	507	.4	128	.4	94	.4	103	.3	92	.4	90	.4
Rheumatic heart disease of mitral valve	294	.2	64	.2	71	.3	68	.2	47	.2	44	.2
Other	213	.2	64	.2	23	.1	35	.1	45	.2	46	.2
Diseases of the respiratory system	189	.1	37	.1	29	.1	49	.1	44	.2	30	.1
Diseases of the digestive system	56	(²)	11	(²)	5	(²)	16	(²)	15	.1	9	(²)
Diseases of the genito-urinary system	47	(²)	12	(²)	5	(²)	14	(²)	6	(²)	10	(²)
Diseases of the skin and cellular tissue	53	(²)	12	(²)	11	.1	9	(²)	7	(²)	14	.1
Diseases of the bones and organs of movement	2,620	1.9	895	2.5	425	2.0	540	1.6	361	1.6	399	1.7
Muscular dystrophy and other diseases of muscle, tendon, and fascia	1,050	.8	358	1.0	170	.8	202	.6	157	.7	163	.7
Rheumatoid arthritis and allied conditions	842	.6	321	.9	149	.7	170	.5	90	.4	112	.5
Other	728	.5	216	.6	106	.5	168	.5	114	.5	124	.5
Congenital malformations	4,173	3.0	1,291	3.6	640	3.0	986	2.8	664	3.0	592	2.5
Congenital hydrocephalus	1,008	.7	384	1.1	129	.6	247	.7	133	.6	115	.5
Congenital cataract and other congenital malformations of nervous system and sense organs	1,245	.9	323	.9	191	.9	317	.9	212	.9	202	.9
Congenital malformations of bone and joint	572	.4	216	.6	98	.4	104	.3	89	.4	65	.3
Spina bifida and meningocele	245	.2	179	.5	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	66	.3
Congenital malformations of circulatory system	379	.3	(¹)	(¹)	86	.4	121	.3	88	.4	84	.4
Other	724	.5	189	.5	136	.7	197	.6	142	.7	60	.3
Other	12	(²)	2	(²)	1	(²)	3	(²)	3	(²)	3	(²)

¹ Number and percentage for diagnosis not specified in individual year are included in "other" category of the diagnostic group.

² Less than 0.05 percent.

were being withheld for 1,932 persons pending investigation of continuing eligibility or for other administrative reasons. The benefits of 5,450 persons were terminated—most of them because of death (4,338) or marriage (887). The benefits of 225 persons were terminated for various other reasons, including failure to continue to meet medical standards or engaging in substantial gainful activity.

DIAGNOSES

Mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders and diseases of the nervous system appeared most frequently as primary disabling conditions among those who qualified for a childhood disability benefit. There was some variation during the 5 years in the proportion for whom the specific diagnoses were made (table 1). Because of the brief administrative experience under the disability program and changes in eligibility requirements relating to both the disabled child and his parent, assumptions on the significance of these year-to-year variations would be premature. Some differences, no doubt, arise from the 1958 amendments to the Social Security Act, which liberalized dependency requirements and thus permitted additional persons who were in institutions or who were receiving public assistance to qualify. Other differences grow out of the fact that a younger group of adults with childhood disabilities became eligible for benefits as a result of the 1959 amendments. Under this legislation, beginning November 1960, disability insurance benefits can be paid to workers under age 50 and to their dependents.

TABLE 2.—Childhood disability allowances: Number and percentage distribution of children found disabled in 1957-61, by age and sex

Age ¹	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	137,843	100.0	67,926	100.0	69,917	100.0
18-24.....	33,607	24.4	18,330	27.0	15,277	21.8
25-29.....	19,484	14.1	10,104	14.9	9,380	13.4
30-34.....	22,536	16.3	11,104	16.3	11,432	16.4
35-39.....	23,863	17.3	11,249	16.6	12,614	18.0
40-44.....	19,525	14.2	8,977	13.2	10,548	15.1
45-49.....	10,971	8.0	4,833	7.1	6,138	8.8
50 and over.....	7,857	5.7	3,329	4.9	4,528	6.5
Median age.....	33.5	-----	32.5	-----	34.5	-----

¹ For 1957, 1958, and 1959 allowances, age on birthday in year of application; for 1960 and 1961 allowances, age in year of allowance.

In more than 70 percent of the childhood disability cases the problem of mental deficiency was a major factor. It was the primary diagnosis in 49 percent of the cases, with the proportion rising from 45 percent of those who qualified in 1957 to 53 percent in 1961. Twelve percent had cerebral palsy with mental deficiency; the proportions decreased from 15 percent in 1957 to 8 percent in 1961. During the entire period, the proportion that had epilepsy with mental deficiency was 8.5 percent; the range was from 6.6 percent in 1957 to 10.3 percent in 1961. In addition, mental deficiency is often associated with conditions afflicting 4.8 percent of the group and classified as congenital malformations (such as congenital hydrocephalus) or as allergic, endocrine system, metabolic, and nutritional diseases (such as myxoedema and cretinism).

TABLE 3.—Childhood disability benefits: Percentage distribution of benefits in current-payment status at end of year, 1957-61, by age of beneficiary

Age ¹	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
Total number.....	28,869	47,025	82,453	104,054	124,221
Total percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
18-19.....	6.6	5.4	4.6	4.5	4.4
20-24.....	13.8	13.7	12.9	12.5	12.8
25-29.....	14.5	13.7	13.7	13.2	13.2
30-34.....	16.4	16.3	16.3	16.2	15.8
35-39.....	18.6	17.9	18.1	17.5	17.0
40-44.....	15.5	16.3	16.2	16.4	16.3
45-49.....	9.0	10.0	10.5	11.1	11.1
50-54.....	3.8	4.6	5.1	5.5	5.8
55-59.....	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.2	2.5
60-64.....	.3	.4	.5	.7	.8
65 and over.....	.1	.1	.1	.2	.2
Median age.....	34.5	35.3	35.7	36.0	36.1

¹ Age on birthday in specified year.

Conditions other than mental deficiency, but also classified as mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders, accounted for 5.7 percent of the primary diagnoses. The proportion increased from 2.3 percent in 1957 to 8.8 percent in 1961.

Conditions involving the nervous system and sense organs were second in prevalence to mental abnormalities among primary diagnoses. In addition to the 12 percent who had cerebral palsy with an accompanying diagnosis of mental deficiency, 5.2 percent had cerebral palsy with no mention of mental abnormality; the proportion was 8.4 percent in 1957 and 3.4 percent in 1959. Among other conditions represented among these disabled persons were muscular dystrophy, the residual effects of poliomyelitis and encephalitis,

malformations of bones and joints, and spina bifida.

SEX AND AGE

Men and women were about equally represented among the group of disabled child applicants for benefits, with slightly more women than men in 1957 and 1958 and more men than women in 1959, 1960, and 1961. As shown in table 2, the median age of applicants was 33.5 (32.5 for men and 34.5 for women).

At the end of 1961 the median age for those receiving childhood disability benefits was 36.1 years, compared with a median age of 34.5 for the group with benefits in current-payment status at the end of 1957 (table 3). The increasing average age of the childhood disability beneficiary group is further indicated by the fact that among those whose benefits were in current-payment status at the end of 1960, 183 were aged 65 or over; 283 persons in this age group were receiving childhood disability benefits at the end of 1961. For the mentally retarded, who represent such a large proportion of the disabled-child beneficiary

TABLE 4.—Childhood disability allowances: Number and percentage distribution of children found disabled in 1957-61, by age and mobility status

Mobility status when application was filed	Age ¹									
	Total		18-24		25-34		35-44		45 and over	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All years, total	137,843	100.0	33,607	100.0	42,020	100.0	43,388	100.0	18,828	100.0
Institutionalized ²	35,096	25.5	8,778	26.1	10,545	25.1	10,920	25.2	4,853	25.8
Hospitalized ³	283	.2	135	.4	57	.1	57	.1	34	.2
Housebound	16,121	11.7	3,255	9.7	4,902	11.7	5,525	12.7	2,439	13.0
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	37,557	27.2	8,629	25.7	11,654	27.7	12,020	27.7	5,254	27.9
By self	48,786	35.4	12,810	38.1	14,862	35.4	14,866	34.3	6,248	33.2
1957, total	36,267	100.0	7,748	100.0	11,414	100.0	12,205	100.0	4,900	100.0
Institutionalized ²	3,667	10.1	1,484	19.2	1,063	9.3	843	6.9	277	5.7
Hospitalized ³	52	.1	28	.4	10	.1	10	.1	4	.1
Housebound	6,518	18.0	1,139	14.7	1,903	16.7	2,408	19.7	1,068	21.8
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	12,231	33.7	2,263	29.2	3,924	34.4	4,267	35.0	1,777	36.3
By self	13,799	38.0	2,834	36.6	4,514	39.5	4,677	38.3	1,774	36.2
1958, total	21,273	100.0	5,056	100.0	6,486	100.0	6,828	100.0	2,903	100.0
Institutionalized ³	3,616	17.0	1,287	25.5	1,101	17.0	912	13.4	316	10.9
Hospitalized ³	38	.2	16	.3	11	.2	8	.1	3	.1
Housebound	2,593	12.2	503	9.9	765	11.8	921	13.5	404	13.9
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	6,788	31.9	1,403	27.7	2,082	32.1	2,306	33.8	997	34.3
By self	8,238	38.7	1,847	36.5	2,527	39.0	2,681	39.3	1,183	40.8
1959, total	34,718	100.0	7,046	100.0	10,748	100.0	11,488	100.0	5,436	100.0
Institutionalized ²	14,182	40.8	2,376	33.7	4,456	41.5	5,075	44.2	2,275	41.9
Hospitalized ³	43	.1	24	.3	10	.1	8	.1	6	.1
Housebound	3,013	8.7	544	7.7	986	9.2	999	8.7	484	8.9
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	7,191	20.7	1,587	22.5	2,182	20.3	2,257	19.6	1,165	21.4
By self	10,284	29.6	2,515	35.7	3,114	29.0	3,149	27.4	1,506	27.7
1960, total	22,352	100.0	6,231	100.0	6,528	100.0	6,525	100.0	3,068	100.0
Institutionalized ²	7,111	31.8	1,781	28.6	2,021	31.0	2,191	33.6	1,118	36.4
Hospitalized ³	64	.3	30	.5	10	.2	16	.2	8	.3
Housebound	1,828	8.2	479	7.7	536	8.2	568	8.7	245	8.0
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	5,388	24.1	1,496	24.0	1,619	24.8	1,560	23.9	713	23.2
By self	7,961	35.6	2,445	39.2	2,342	35.9	2,190	33.6	984	32.1
1961, total	23,233	100.0	7,526	100.0	6,844	100.0	6,342	100.0	2,521	100.0
Institutionalized ²	6,520	28.1	1,850	24.6	1,904	27.8	1,899	29.9	867	34.4
Hospitalized ³	81	.3	37	.5	16	.2	15	.2	13	.5
Housebound	2,169	9.3	590	7.8	712	10.4	629	9.9	238	9.4
Ambulatory outside the home:										
With help	5,959	25.6	1,880	25.0	1,847	27.0	1,630	25.7	602	23.9
By self	8,504	36.6	3,169	42.1	2,365	34.6	2,169	34.2	801	31.8

¹ For 1957, 1958, and 1959 allowances, age on birthday in year of application; for 1960 and 1961 allowances, age in year of allowance.

² Confined to an institution (mental, tuberculosis, or chronic disease

hospital, soldiers' home, etc.).

³ Disabled person was in a general hospital.

group, the death rate is dropping and the life span is lengthening.¹

MOBILITY

Some indication of the impact of disabling childhood disorders on the family and community

¹ See Children's Bureau, *Health Services for Mentally Retarded Children*, 1961.

can be inferred from the restricted mobility of so many of the applicants whose disability was allowed in 1957-61. Two out of every 3 were so limited in their ability to take care of themselves that they were in institutions, were housebound, or were unable to leave the house without the help of another person or a device of some kind (table 4). In about 54,000 homes throughout the United States, the time and attention of at least one other person were directed to the care of or attendance

TABLE 5.—Childhood disability allowances: Number and percentage distribution¹ of children found disabled in 1957-61, by mobility status² and State

State	Total		Insti- tution- alized ³	Hospi- talized	Confined to home				Ambulatory outside home		
	Number	Percent			Total	Bed- bound	Chair- bound	House- bound	Total	With help	By self
Total number.....	137,843		35,096	283	16,121	5,089	6,577	4,455	86,343	37,557	48,786
Total percent.....		100.0	25.5	.2	11.7	3.7	4.8	3.2	62.6	27.2	35.4
Alabama.....	3,080	100.0	16.3	.2	11.3	4.3	4.5	2.4	72.2	31.1	41.1
Alaska.....	41	100.0	55.9		5.9		2.9	2.9	36.2		38.2
Arizona.....	493	100.0	22.0	.3	11.8	4.7	4.7	2.5	65.9	28.3	37.6
Arkansas.....	1,592	100.0	11.3	.1	11.0	3.3	4.1	3.5	77.7	31.2	46.5
California.....	6,426	100.0	37.2	.2	6.8	2.2	3.0	1.6	55.8	23.4	32.5
Colorado.....	784	100.0	35.6		9.4	3.3	3.7	2.4	55.0	18.3	36.7
Connecticut.....	2,241	100.0	51.4	.1	6.9	1.6	3.0	2.3	41.6	20.8	20.8
Delaware.....	342	100.0	42.5	1.1	6.8	2.3	2.6	1.9	49.6	21.8	27.8
District of Columbia.....	258	100.0	36.8	.5	13.0	5.4	7.0	.5	49.7	22.2	27.6
Florida.....	2,413	100.0	20.4	.4	10.4	3.2	4.5	2.7	68.8	32.7	36.2
Georgia.....	2,904	100.0	12.2	.2	13.5	4.2	5.4	3.9	74.0	34.0	40.0
Hawaii.....	439	100.0	39.0		3.9	1.2	1.2	1.5	57.1	27.3	29.7
Idaho.....	504	100.0	37.4	1.4	7.6	4.5	2.0	1.1	53.7	16.0	37.6
Illinois.....	7,534	100.0	37.3	.2	8.2	2.2	3.5	2.5	54.3	23.5	30.8
Indiana.....	4,150	100.0	31.8	.2	8.0	2.4	3.5	2.0	60.0	22.4	37.6
Iowa.....	2,311	100.0	31.9	.1	10.4	4.0	3.7	2.7	57.7	17.8	39.9
Kansas.....	1,701	100.0	31.5	.2	8.4	4.2	2.7	1.4	59.9	17.1	42.8
Kentucky.....	3,607	100.0	15.0	.2	12.1	3.3	4.8	3.9	72.7	33.0	39.7
Louisiana.....	2,145	100.0	12.4	.2	12.1	5.4	4.4	2.4	75.3	32.8	42.5
Maine.....	1,008	100.0	38.7	.3	8.6	3.5	2.7	2.3	52.4	23.8	28.6
Maryland.....	1,641	100.0	30.0	.1	9.8	3.2	3.5	3.0	60.1	26.3	33.9
Massachusetts.....	4,546	100.0	48.0	.1	7.6	2.3	3.0	2.3	44.2	20.5	23.7
Michigan.....	5,816	100.0	41.7	.3	7.9	2.4	3.4	2.0	50.1	20.4	29.7
Minnesota.....	2,385	100.0	31.5	.1	8.8	2.9	3.3	2.6	59.6	17.0	42.6
Mississippi.....	1,879	100.0	9.2	.3	11.1	3.2	4.0	4.1	79.4	34.6	44.8
Missouri.....	3,384	100.0	27.4	.1	10.5	4.6	4.2	1.7	62.1	25.3	36.7
Montana.....	486	100.0	39.0	.6	4.2	1.7	1.7	.8	56.2	15.8	40.4
Nebraska.....	1,117	100.0	32.7	.1	8.1	3.1	3.6	1.4	59.1	17.0	42.1
Nevada.....	75	100.0	34.6		15.4	9.6	3.8	1.9	50.0	19.2	30.8
New Hampshire.....	473	100.0	32.3		11.3	3.7	5.5	2.1	56.4	20.4	36.0
New Jersey.....	4,337	100.0	38.4	.2	8.7	2.9	3.2	2.6	52.8	25.0	27.8
New Mexico.....	381	100.0	16.8		10.3	3.9	3.9	2.6	72.9	26.8	46.1
New York.....	13,682	100.0	47.5	.3	7.4	2.1	3.2	2.0	44.8	19.0	25.8
North Carolina.....	4,867	100.0	15.5	.3	11.0	2.9	4.7	3.3	73.2	31.0	42.3
North Dakota.....	587	100.0	22.0	1.1	9.1	3.0	4.5	1.6	67.7	13.2	54.5
Ohio.....	6,961	100.0	26.9	.3	10.2	3.5	4.3	2.4	62.6	26.8	35.8
Oklahoma.....	1,772	100.0	22.1	.1	9.1	3.9	2.5	2.6	68.8	22.3	46.4
Oregon.....	1,035	100.0	31.8	.4	10.0	4.1	3.7	2.2	57.8	20.9	36.9
Pennsylvania.....	11,890	100.0	38.4	.2	8.2	2.0	3.6	2.6	53.2	23.1	30.0
Puerto Rico.....	1,796	100.0	3.3		23.3	4.0	9.3	10.0	73.4	51.0	22.5
Rhode Island.....	718	100.0	26.4	.2	13.7	5.9	3.3	4.6	59.7	26.8	32.9
South Carolina.....	2,057	100.0	20.1	.1	11.2	3.5	4.9	2.7	68.6	28.4	40.1
South Dakota.....	591	100.0	22.8	.2	8.1	3.5	4.2	.4	68.9	18.9	50.0
Tennessee.....	3,147	100.0	12.3	.3	13.0	3.3	5.5	4.1	74.4	33.6	40.8
Texas.....	5,435	100.0	20.9	.2	11.1	3.9	3.8	3.4	67.9	26.9	41.1
Utah.....	532	100.0	39.6		7.3	2.0	4.3	1.0	53.1	13.0	40.1
Vermont.....	403	100.0	32.6		9.4	1.0	7.3	1.0	58.0	19.1	38.9
Virgin Islands.....	4	100.0	33.3		33.3		33.3		33.3		33.3
Virginia.....	3,476	100.0	21.6	.5	8.9	2.6	3.6	2.6	69.0	26.0	43.0
Washington.....	1,641	100.0	42.8	.2	8.4	3.0	4.0	1.4	48.6	17.1	31.6
West Virginia.....	2,716	100.0	8.3	.2	11.7	4.1	4.4	3.2	79.9	39.5	40.4
Wisconsin.....	3,554	100.0	33.7	.4	9.0	2.8	3.8	2.4	56.9	21.5	35.4
Wyoming.....	159	100.0	51.2		9.4	3.9	3.1	2.4	39.4	9.4	29.9
U.S. possessions and foreign countries.....	327	100.0	5.2		24.4	8.6	9.6	6.2	70.4	46.0	24.4

¹ Partly estimated; for 1957, estimated on basis of distribution for the other years.

² Status when application was filed.

³ Confined to an institution (mental, tuberculosis, or chronic disease hospital, soldiers' home, etc.).

on an adult handicapped person who, at the time of the application, was confined to the home or was ambulatory only with help and who had been disabled for most or all of his life. It is probable that, in many instances, this dependency had kept another member of the family from employment or from participation in normal community activities.

One-fourth of the applicants were in institutions when their application was filed, including 283 who were in general hospitals. The increase in the proportion who were institutionalized—from 10 percent in 1957 to a high of 41 percent in 1959—reflected primarily the impact of the 1958 amendments to the Social Security Act. By liberalizing dependency requirements, these amendments permitted additional persons with a childhood disability who were then in institutions to qualify.

The fact that the disabled person was in an institution or at home should not in itself be considered as a measure of the severity of his condition. Many factors other than severity may operate to prevent, deter, or ensure institutionalization. It is known that many persons who were living at home when they applied for benefits had at some earlier date been in an institution or hospital, and many in institutions had previously had long periods of care at home.

Among the factors that can determine whether

the disabled are to live in an institution or at home are (1) the availability and quality of institutions or of special schools and workshops for the handicapped and of community clinics for outpatients; (2) the costs of such facilities and the types of services provided in them, as well as their suitability in terms of the patient's condition; (3) the willingness or reluctance of parents or relatives to remove a disabled person from the home or to care for him in the home; and (4) to some extent, the age of the disabled person, since older children are less likely to have living parents or parents who are themselves physically or mentally able to provide personal care.

Although the relative weight of these and other factors cannot be estimated, some combinations of them no doubt account for the wide differences between the proportions of persons in the individual States who were in institutions or at home when they applied (table 5). Fewer than one-tenth, for example, of the applicants in Mississippi and West Virginia whose disability met the definition in the law were in institutions, in contrast to about one-half of those in Alaska, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York. Similarly, those confined to the home accounted for 13 percent or more of the total number in the District of Columbia, Georgia, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Tennessee but for only about 4 percent in Hawaii and Montana.

TABLE 6.—Childhood disability denials: Number and percentage distribution of children found not disabled in 1957-61, by diagnostic group and by age ¹

Diagnostic group	Age ¹							
	Total		18-24		25-44		45 and over	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	24,962	100.0	8,758	100.0	12,285	100.0	3,919	100.0
Infective and parasitic diseases.....	1,775	7.1	717	8.2	688	5.6	370	9.4
Neoplasms.....	150	.6	75	.9	63	.5	12	.3
Allergic, endocrine system, metabolic, and nutritional diseases.....	894	3.6	364	4.2	400	3.3	130	3.3
Diseases of the blood and bloodforming organs.....	131	.5	65	.6	64	.5	12	.3
Mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders.....	9,303	37.3	2,707	30.9	5,127	41.7	1,469	37.5
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs.....	5,653	22.6	1,745	19.9	3,055	24.9	853	21.8
Diseases of the circulatory system.....	1,031	4.1	610	7.0	315	2.6	106	2.7
Diseases of the respiratory system.....	475	1.9	279	3.2	131	1.1	65	1.7
Diseases of the digestive system.....	192	.8	79	.9	71	.6	42	1.1
Diseases of the genito-urinary system.....	156	.6	83	.9	40	.3	33	.8
Diseases of the skin and cellular tissue.....	106	.4	55	.6	42	.3	9	.2
Diseases of the bones and organs of movement.....	1,523	6.1	590	6.7	599	4.9	334	8.5
Congenital malformations.....	1,158	4.6	502	5.7	502	4.1	154	3.9
Symptoms, sentility, and ill-defined conditions.....	113	.5	60	.7	44	.4	9	.2
Diagnosis not established ²	2,302	9.2	837	9.6	1,144	9.3	321	8.2

¹ For 1957, 1958, and 1959 denials, age on birthday in year of application; for 1960 and 1961 denials, age in year of denials.

² Insufficient medical evidence submitted.

CHILDHOOD DISABILITY DENIALS

Most applicants for childhood disability benefits were found to meet the disability requirements, but 24,962 persons did not qualify. The criteria are such, however, that failure to qualify does not rule out the presence of serious, long-lasting physical or mental disorders. In fact, in

TABLE 7.—Childhood disability denials: Number and percentage distribution of children found not disabled in 1957-61, by reason for denial and by age

Reason for denial	Age ¹				
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45 and over
	Number				
Total.....	24,962	8,758	5,816	6,469	3,919
Failed to meet medical standards for disability.....	15,022	7,055	3,482	3,291	1,794
Met medical standards for disability but able to engage in substantial gainful activity.....	244	45	61	110	28
Failed to furnish sufficient evidence.....	3,179	1,129	746	804	500
Not disabled before age 18.....	5,751	492	1,488	2,213	1,558
Other.....	166	37	39	51	39
	Percentage distribution				
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Failed to meet medical standards for disability.....	62.6	80.6	59.9	50.9	45.8
Met medical standards for disability but able to engage in substantial gainful activity.....	1.0	.5	1.0	1.7	.7
Failed to furnish sufficient evidence.....	12.7	12.9	12.8	12.4	12.8
Not disabled before age 18.....	23.0	5.6	25.6	34.2	39.8
Other.....	.7	.4	.7	.8	1.0

¹ For 1957, 1958, and 1959 denials, age on birthday in year of application; for 1960 and 1961 denials, age in year of denials.

nine-tenths of the cases some abnormal physical or mental condition was present, though not necessarily disabling, according to the medical and psychological evidence obtained in the course of determining disability.

In general, applicants who met the requirements and those who did not meet them fell in the same diagnostic groups, in relatively the same proportions. Mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders and diseases of the nervous system and sense organs accounted for the great majority of the disabilities (table 6).

Three persons out of every 5 whose applications were denied during the 5-year period were judged insufficiently disabled to meet the requirements of the law (table 7). Relatively more (81 percent) of the applicants aged 18-24 were disqualified for this reason than of the applicants aged 35-44 (51 percent) and those aged 45 or over (46 percent).

For persons disqualified because they were not disabled before they reached age 18 (about one-fourth of all applicants whose disability was not allowed), the situation is the exact opposite. Six percent of the applications made by persons in the age group 18-24 were denied for this reason, in contrast to 34 percent made by applicants aged 35-44 and 40 percent of those aged 45 or over. About 13 percent of all whose applications were not allowed did not furnish sufficient medical evidence to permit a determination of the level of disability.