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Americans Needing Help To Function at Home

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Introduction

Recently, the perspective in long-term care has broadened to include personal care needs of American adults who are able to live in the community despite chronic disability. Long-term care can now take place in different settings that provide varied services. Home health care, adult day care, and other ways of providing care for people with chronic disabilities are developing in some communities. The focus of this report is on the types of home care services adults with chronic health problems need to continue to live in the community.

This report presents selected data from the Home Care Supplement to the 1979 National Health Interview Survey. This survey is a cross-sectional nationwide survey by household interview of the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States. The population estimates for this report are based on the 1970 decennial census population projected to 1980, and therefore are slightly lower than if the population had been based on the 1980 Decennial Census. The Bureau of the Census documents¹ the percent error of closure between the 1980 Census and preliminary estimates of the population of the United States for April 1, 1980, by age, race, and sex.

Estimates of how many people in the community need help and what types of help they need are presented by age and sex for selected activities. The question of how many people need help because of a chronic health problem is crucial for estimating the size of the target population for home care, and the question of what types of help they need is essential for appropriate delivery of health care services. Examples of specific items presented include selected basic physical activities and home management activities. The number of adults who need and/or receive help in at least one of the selected activities

and the number of adults who need or receive help in each type of activity are discussed.

In addition, estimates of the number of people who usually stay in bed all or most of the time, the number who experience problems controlling bowel movements or urination, the number who need or receive the help of another person, and the number of people who need and/or receive selected nursing or medical treatment at home and the types of care received are also discussed. For each item, estimates of the number of adults and rate per 1,000 persons are presented in tables 1-11.

Data highlights

According to data on the civilian noninstitutionalized population from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), in 1979

- An estimated 3.4 million adults needed or received help from another person or by using special equipment in at least one of the following basic physical activities: walking, going outside, bathing, dressing, using the toilet, getting in or out of a bed or chair, or eating.
- An estimated 4.1 million adults needed or received the help of another person in at least one of the following selected home management activities: shopping, household chores, preparing meals, or handling money.
- Overall, about 4.9 million adults living in the community needed the help of another person in carrying out everyday activities.
- A substantial number (about 2 million) were under 65 years of age, with the majority (2.8 million) 65 years of age and over.
- The need for the help of another person increases sharply with age, especially among the elderly. Fewer than 1 in 10 who are 65-74 years of age needed help, compared with 4 in 10 who are 85 years of age or over (table 1).

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census: Preliminary estimates of the population of the United States, by age, sex, and race: 1970 to 1981. *Current Population Reports*. Series P-25, No. 917. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982.

Table 1. Rate per 1,000 adults who need assistance, by type of need and age: United States, 1979

Type of need	65-74	75-84	85 years
	years	years	and over
Rate per 1,000 persons			
Needs help in 1 or more basic physical activities	52.6	114.0	348.4
Needs help in 1 or more home management activities	57.3	141.8	399.0
Usually stays in bed	11.3	25.6	51.2
Has device to control bowel movements or urination	5.3	10.8	28.5
Needs help of another person in one or more of the above	69.9	160.3	436.5

Basic physical activities

In this report, basic physical activities include walking, going outside, bathing, dressing, using the toilet, getting in or out of a bed or a chair, or eating. The category "needing or receiving help" includes anyone who was reported, during the household interview, to use special equipment and/or to need

or receive the help of another person because of a chronic health problem, and anyone who needed help even though it was unknown whether a person or equipment was needed. Also included was anyone for whom it was reported that he or she "doesn't do" any one of the seven activities because of a chronic health problem.

In 1979, 3.4 million adults living in the community needed or received help in at least one of these activities, representing a rate of 22.5 per 1,000 adults for all ages combined (tables 2 and 3). This estimate is an unduplicated person count because it shows how many adults needed or received help in at least one of the seven activities.

The rate of needing help in at least one basic physical activity was substantially higher among persons in the older age categories. About 5.1 per 1,000 people 18-44 years of age needed help, compared with the rate of 20.6 per 1,000 people 45-64 years of age, 52.6 per 1,000 people 65-74 years of age, and 157.0 per 1,000 people 75 years of age and over (table 3). The rate for people 85 years of age and over (348.4 per 1,000) was markedly higher than that for people 75-84 years of age (114.0 per 1,000).

Although the number of women 75 years of age and over needing help was twice that of men the same age, the differ-

Table 2. Number of adults who need help in basic physical activities because of a chronic health problem by type of activity, sex, and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Sex and age	All adults	Needs help in 1 or more basic activities	Walking	Going outside	Bathing	Dressing	Using the toilet	Getting in or out of bed or chair	Eating
Both sexes									
Total	153,178	3,444	2,470	2,095	1,390	1,090	835	749	303
18-44 years	86,378	443	313	221	151	155	117	114	51
45-64 years	43,457	895	597	444	319	314	189	210	79
45-54 years	22,744	302	203	151	90	131	64	85	*22
55-64 years	20,713	593	394	293	230	183	125	125	57
65-74 years	14,929	785	585	510	305	215	173	135	58
75 years and over	8,414	1,321	975	920	615	406	356	290	116
75-84 years	6,869	783	574	505	348	226	195	177	58
85 years and over	1,544	538	401	415	267	180	162	112	58
Male									
Total	72,224	1,409	1,044	730	573	455	327	283	143
18-44 years	41,834	238	180	97	81	74	61	48	*24
45-64 years	20,773	424	319	193	145	146	91	98	48
45-54 years	10,991	150	118	75	42	61	*32	37	*9
55-64 years	9,782	274	201	119	103	85	59	60	39
65-74 years	6,494	321	245	182	148	93	78	52	*34
75 years and over	3,122	425	300	257	198	141	96	86	37
75-84 years	2,586	263	190	136	118	81	57	52	*19
85 years and over	537	162	110	121	80	60	39	*34	*18
Female									
Total	80,954	2,035	1,426	1,365	818	635	508	465	160
18-44 years	44,544	205	134	124	70	80	56	66	*26
45-64 years	22,684	471	277	250	174	168	98	113	*31
45-54 years	11,752	152	85	76	47	70	*32	48	*10
55-64 years	10,931	320	192	174	127	98	66	65	39
65-74 years	8,435	464	339	327	157	122	95	83	*24
75 years and over	5,291	895	676	663	417	265	260	204	79
75-84 years	4,283	520	384	369	230	146	137	125	39
85 years and over	1,008	375	292	295	187	119	123	79	40

Table 3. Rate per 1,000 adults who need help in basic physical activities because of a chronic health problem by type of activity, sex, and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Sex and age	Needs help in 1 or more basic activities	Rate per 1,000 persons						
		Walking	Going outside	Bathing	Dressing	Using the toilet	Getting in or out of bed or chair	Eating
Both sexes								
Total.....	22.5	16.1	13.7	9.1	7.1	5.5	4.9	2.0
18-44 years.....	5.1	3.6	2.6	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.3	0.6
45-64 years.....	20.6	13.7	10.2	7.3	7.2	4.3	4.8	1.8
45-54 years.....	13.3	8.9	6.6	4.0	5.8	2.8	3.7	*1.0
55-64 years.....	28.6	19.0	14.1	11.1	8.8	6.0	6.0	2.8
65-74 years.....	52.6	39.2	34.2	20.4	14.4	11.6	9.0	3.9
75 years and over.....	157.0	115.9	109.3	73.1	48.3	42.3	34.5	13.8
75-84 years.....	114.0	83.6	73.5	50.7	32.9	28.4	25.8	8.4
85 years and over.....	348.4	259.7	268.8	172.9	116.6	104.9	72.5	37.6
Male								
Total.....	19.5	14.5	10.1	7.9	6.3	4.5	3.9	2.0
18-44 years.....	5.7	4.3	2.3	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.1	*0.6
45-64 years.....	20.4	15.4	9.3	7.0	7.0	4.4	4.7	2.3
45-54 years.....	13.6	10.7	6.8	3.8	5.5	*2.9	3.4	*0.8
55-64 years.....	28.0	20.5	12.2	10.5	8.7	6.0	6.1	4.0
65-74 years.....	49.4	37.7	28.0	22.8	14.3	12.0	8.0	*5.2
75 years and over.....	136.1	96.1	82.3	63.4	45.2	30.7	27.5	11.9
75-84 years.....	101.7	73.5	52.6	45.6	31.3	22.0	20.1	*7.3
85 years and over.....	301.7	204.8	225.3	149.0	111.7	72.6	*63.3	*33.5
Female								
Total.....	25.1	17.6	16.9	10.1	7.8	6.3	5.7	2.0
18-44 years.....	4.6	3.0	2.8	1.6	1.8	1.3	1.5	*0.6
45-64 years.....	20.8	12.2	11.0	7.7	7.4	4.3	5.0	*1.4
45-54 years.....	12.9	7.2	6.5	4.0	6.0	*2.7	4.1	*1.1
55-64 years.....	29.3	17.6	15.9	11.6	9.0	6.0	5.9	*1.6
65-74 years.....	55.0	40.2	38.8	18.6	14.5	11.3	9.8	*2.8
75 years and over.....	169.2	127.8	125.3	78.8	50.1	49.1	38.6	14.9
75-84 years.....	121.4	89.7	86.2	53.7	34.1	32.0	29.2	9.1
85 years and over.....	372.0	289.7	292.7	185.5	118.1	122.0	78.4	39.7

ence in the rate per 1,000 was not statistically significant (169.2 and 136.1, respectively) (table 3).

Health planners and service providers also need estimates of how many people need help in each particular type of activity. Such counts are duplicative in that a person may need help in more than one activity. Each of the seven activities is shown in tables 2 and 3 in descending order of the size of the estimate. An estimated 2.5 million people needed help with walking; 2.1 million with going outside; 1.4 million with bathing; 1.1 million with dressing; 835,000 with using the toilet; 749,000 with getting in or out of a bed or a chair; and 303,000 with eating (table 2).

For each type of activity, the rates increased with increased age. For example, the rate per 1,000 people needing help to walk was 3.6 per 1,000 people 18-44 years of age compared with 13.7 for those 45-64 years of age, 39.2 for those 65-74 years of age, 83.6 for those 75-84 years of age, and 259.7 for those 85 years of age and over (table 3). The rates for people needing help to bathe ranged from 1.7 per 1,000 people 18-44 years of age to 172.9 per 1,000 for those 85 years of age and over. A large difference occurred in the rate for people 75 years of age and over who needed help to eat; 8.4 for people 75-84 years of age compared with 37.6 for those 85 years of age and over (table 3).

Although the number of women 75 years of age and over who needed help in each type of activity was larger than that of men, the differences between the rates per 1,000 people were generally not statistically significant by sex. In general, few statistically significant sex differences occurred in the rate per 1,000 adults who needed help in each type of activity.

Home management activities

Selected home management activities include shopping for personal items, doing routine household chores, preparing meals, or handling their own money. In tables 4 and 5, an unduplicated person count of all adults is shown; the summary by type of activity shows a duplicative count since a person is included in as many types of activities in which help is needed. The sum of the four types in the summary section is greater than the 4.1 million unduplicated count of adults who need help in one or more of the selected activities.

In 1979, 4.1 million noninstitutionalized adults needed or received help from another person in at least one of these selected home management activities (tables 4 and 5). The rate per 1,000 adults needing this help rose with age, 6.1 for people 18-

Table 4. Number of adults who need or receive help in home management activities because of a chronic health problem, by selected combinations of activities and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Selected combination of activities	All adults	Age							
		18-44 years	45-64 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65-74 years	75 years and over	75-84 years	85 years and over
Number in thousands									
Total adult population.....	153,178	86,378	43,457	22,744	20,713	14,929	8,414	6,869	1,544
All adults needing help ¹	4,052	525	1,080	419	661	856	1,591	974	616
Shopping only.....	615	42	122	38	84	166	286	176	110
Chores only.....	577	72	247	100	147	134	124	83	41
Handling money only.....	95	51	*23	*17	*6	*6	*16	*16	-
Meals only.....	73	*13	*24	*6	*18	*19	*17	*7	*9
Shopping and chores.....	525	41	141	57	84	114	229	162	67
Other combinations of 2 activities.....	297	67	78	37	40	47	106	72	*33
Meals, shopping, and chores.....	628	55	199	63	136	155	219	126	94
Other combinations of 3 activities.....	227	38	35	*15	*20	48	106	58	48
Meals and shopping and chores and handling money.....	908	117	182	71	111	154	455	247	208
Unknown type.....	106	*31	*29	*14	*15	*13	*33	*28	*6
No help reported needed.....	149,126	85,853	42,377	22,325	20,052	14,073	6,823	5,895	928
Summary by type of activity ²									
Any mention of shopping.....	3,054	333	709	261	448	651	1,361	814	548
Any mention of chores.....	2,888	312	832	318	514	615	1,128	675	453
Any mention of handling money.....	1,369	250	270	118	152	227	622	351	271
Any mention of meals.....	1,890	242	473	171	302	378	796	449	347

¹This is an unduplicated person count.

²This is a duplicative count in that a person is included in as many types of activities in which help is needed.

Table 5. Rate per 1,000 persons who need or receive help in home management activities because of a chronic health problem, by selected combinations of activities and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Selected combination of activities	All adults	Age							
		18-44 years	45-64 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65-74 years	75 years and over	75-84 years	85 years and over
Rate per 1,000 persons									
All adults needing help ¹	26.5	6.1	24.9	18.4	31.9	57.3	189.1	141.8	399.0
Shopping only.....	4.0	0.5	2.8	1.7	4.1	11.1	34.0	25.6	71.2
Chores only.....	3.8	0.8	5.7	4.4	7.1	9.0	14.7	12.1	26.6
Handling money only.....	0.6	0.6	*0.5	*0.7	*0.3	*0.4	*1.9	*2.3	-
Meals only.....	0.5	*0.2	*0.6	*0.3	*0.9	*1.3	*2.0	*1.0	*5.8
Shopping and chores.....	3.4	0.5	3.2	2.5	4.1	7.6	27.2	23.6	43.4
Other combinations of 2 activities.....	1.9	0.8	1.8	1.6	1.9	3.1	12.6	10.5	*21.4
Meals and shopping and chores.....	4.1	0.6	4.6	2.8	6.6	10.4	26.0	18.3	60.9
Other combinations of 3 activities.....	1.5	0.4	0.8	*0.7	*1.0	3.2	12.6	8.4	31.1
Meals and shopping and chores and handling money.....	5.9	1.4	4.2	3.1	5.4	10.3	54.1	36.0	134.7
Unknown type.....	0.7	*0.4	*0.7	*0.6	*0.7	*0.9	*3.9	*4.1	*3.9
No help reported needed.....	973.5	993.9	975.1	981.6	968.1	942.7	810.9	858.2	601.0
Summary by type of activity ²									
Any mention of shopping.....	19.9	3.9	16.3	11.5	21.6	43.6	161.8	118.5	354.9
Any mention of chores.....	18.9	3.6	19.1	14.0	24.8	41.2	134.1	98.3	293.1
Any mention of handling money.....	8.9	2.9	6.2	5.2	7.3	15.2	73.9	51.1	175.1
Any mention of meals.....	12.3	2.8	10.9	7.5	14.6	25.3	94.6	65.4	224.7

¹These rates are based on an unduplicated person count.

²These rates are based on a duplicative count in that a person is included in as many types of activities in which help is needed.

44 years of age, 24.9 for those 45–64 years of age, 57.3 for those 65–74 years of age, and 189.1 for those 75 years of age and over (table 5). The rates for people 75–84 years of age and for those 85 years of age and over also differ significantly (141.8 and 399.0 per 1,000, respectively).

Unduplicated counts of people needing help in selected, frequently occurring, combinations of home management activities were also identified. With increased age, there was a substantial increase in the rates for people needing the help of another person in the following selected combinations of activities: shopping only; chores only; meals, shopping, and chores; and meals, shopping, chores, and handling money.

In tables 4 and 5, the “summary by type of activity” category shows duplicative counts in each of the four activities. A person is included in as many activities as he or she needs help in.

For each type of activity, the likelihood of needing help increases with age. A marked increase occurs between the two oldest age categories.

Some patterns emerge for the elderly when the “summary by type of activity” is examined (tables 4 and 5). For example, people 65–74 years of age are more likely to need help with shopping or chores (43.6 and 41.2 per 1,000, respectively) than with meals (25.3 per 1,000) or money (15.2 per 1,000) (table 5). Furthermore, the likelihood of their needing help with meals (25.3 per 1,000) exceeds that of needing help with handling money (15.2 per 1,000).

People 75 years of age and over are somewhat more likely to need help shopping (161.8 per 1,000) than to need help with chores (134.1 per 1,000). Also, the need for help with shopping or chores exceeds that for either meals or money (94.6 and 73.9 per 1,000, respectively) (table 5). This pattern also generally holds for people 75–84 years of age and 85 years of age and over.

Adults usually staying in bed

An estimated 848,000 people living outside of an institution were reported as usually staying in bed all or most of the time because of a chronic health problem (table 6). The rate is generally higher among older age categories, ranging from 1.4 per 1,000 people 18–44 years of age to 51.2 for those 85 years of age and over (table 6). A sharp increase occurred between 65–74 years of age (11.3 per 1,000) and 75 years of age and over (30.4 per 1,000). In general, no statistically significant difference was found between males and females in the rates per 1,000 adults who usually stay in bed all or most of the time.

Adults with bowel or urinary trouble

An estimated 1.5 million noninstitutionalized adults had a device to control bowel movements or urination or had other trouble controlling bowel movement or urination (table 7). First, a question was asked to ascertain whether a person had a de-

Table 6. Number of adults and rate per 1,000 who usually stay in bed all or most of the time because of a chronic health problem, by sex and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Sex and age	Total adults	Adults who usually stay in bed	Adults who usually stay in bed	Rate per 1,000 persons
Both sexes		Number in thousands		
Total	153,178	848		5.5
18–44 years	86,378	118		1.4
45–64 years	43,457	306		7.0
45–54 years	22,744	141		6.2
55–64 years	20,713	165		8.0
65–74 years	14,929	169		11.3
75 years and over	8,414	256		30.4
75–84 years	6,869	176		25.6
85 years and over	1,544	79		51.2
Male				
Total	72,224	399		5.5
18–44 years	41,834	66		1.6
45–64 years	20,773	165		7.9
45–54 years	10,991	76		6.9
55–64 years	9,782	88		9.0
65–74 years	6,494	77		11.9
75 years and over	3,122	91		29.1
75–84 years	2,586	58		22.4
85 years and over	537	*33		*61.5
Female				
Total	80,954	450		5.6
18–44 years	44,544	52		1.2
45–64 years	22,684	142		6.3
45–54 years	11,752	65		5.5
55–64 years	10,931	77		7.0
65–74 years	8,435	92		10.9
75 years and over	5,291	165		31.2
75–84 years	4,283	118		27.6
85 years and over	1,008	46		45.6

vice. People who did not have a device were asked whether they had any other trouble controlling bowel movements or urination. About 10.1 per 1,000 adults had such problems; 7.9 per 1,000 had other trouble, and 2.2 per 1,000 had a device to control bowel movement or urination (table 8).

The rates per 1,000 people who had a device to control bowel movement or urination or other trouble controlling bowel movement or urination increased with age. For example, 1.9 per 1,000 people 45–64 years of age, 5.3 per 1,000 people 65–74 years of age, and 13.9 per 1,000 people 75 years of age and over had a device to control bowel movements or urination (table 8). In addition, the rates for those who had other trouble controlling bowel movement or urination were 7.5 per 1,000 people 45–64 years of age, 17.3 per 1,000 people 65–74 years of age, and 46.7 per 1,000 people 75 years of age and over.

Generally, for most age categories under 75 years of age, females reported higher rates of other trouble controlling bowel movements or urination than males did.

Table 7. Number of adults who have device to control bowel movement or urination, and number who have other trouble controlling bowel movement or urination, by sex and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>All adults</i>	<i>Has device or other trouble controlling bowel or bladder</i>	<i>Has device to control bowel or bladder</i>	<i>Has other trouble controlling bowel or bladder</i>
Both sexes				
Number in thousands				
Total	153,178	1,543	335	1,208
18-44 years	86,378	284	55	229
45-64 years	43,457	412	84	328
45-54 years	22,744	149	*33	116
55-64 years	20,713	263	50	212
65-74 years	14,929	338	79	258
75 years and over	8,414	510	117	393
75-84 years	6,869	337	74	264
85 years and over	1,544	172	44	129
Male				
Total	72,224	534	176	357
18-44 years	41,834	89	*24	65
45-64 years	20,773	158	62	97
45-54 years	10,991	73	*30	44
55-64 years	9,782	85	*32	53
65-74 years	6,494	95	38	57
75 years and over	3,122	191	52	139
75-84 years	2,586	127	35	92
85 years and over	537	63	*17	47
Female				
Total	80,954	1,009	159	850
18-44 years	44,544	194	*31	164
45-64 years	22,684	253	*22	231
45-54 years	11,752	76	*4	72
55-64 years	10,931	178	*18	159
65-74 years	8,435	243	41	202
75 years and over	5,291	319	65	254
75-84 years	4,283	210	38	172
85 years and over	1,008	109	*27	82

Adults needing the help of another person

The following items were used in the Home Care Supplement to define people who needed the help of another person² in selected essential activities due to a chronic health problem:

- Need or receive the help of another person³ in one or more of the following seven activities: walking, going outside, bathing, dressing, using the toilet, getting in or out of a bed or a chair, or eating;
- "Doesn't do" one or more of the seven activities listed above (these people were assumed to need the help of another person);
- Need or receive the help of another person in one or more of the following four activities: shopping for personal items,

doing routine household chores, preparing their own meals, or handling their own money;

- Usually stays in bed all or most of the time (these people were assumed to need the help of another person);
- Need or receive the help of another person with a device to control bowel movement or urination.

An estimated 4.9 million adults 18 years of age and over living in the community needed the help of another person in these selected activities in 1979 (table 9). The rate per 1,000 people was substantially higher among older adults than among young ones. The rates of adults who needed the help of another person were 7.8 per 1,000 people 18-44 years of age, 31.2 for those 45-64 years of age, 69.9 for those 65-74 years of age, and 211.0 for those 75 years of age and over (table 9). The rates for people 75-84 years of age and those 85 years of age and over also differ significantly (160.3 per 1,000 and 436.5 per 1,000, respectively).

In general the rates for women 45 years of age and over were significantly higher than those for men. For example, 237.2 per 1,000 women 75 years of age and over needed help, compared with 166.6 per 1,000 men 75 years of age and over (table 9).

²These criteria also define the Individual Home Care population for whom additional information was obtained on who provided the help and how often the help was provided.

³People reported to have functional disability who use special equipment only or people for whom it is unknown whether they use special equipment or need the help of another person are not included. They are included in tables 2 and 3.

Table 8. Rate per 1,000 persons who have device to control bowel movement or urination and number who have other trouble controlling bowel movement or urination, by sex and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Sex and age	Has device or other trouble controlling bowel or bladder	Has device to control bowel or bladder	Has other trouble controlling bowel or bladder
Rate per 1,000 persons			
Both sexes			
Total.....	10.1	2.2	7.9
18-44 years.....	3.3	0.6	2.7
45-64 years.....	9.5	1.9	7.5
45-54 years.....	6.6	*1.5	5.1
55-64 years.....	12.7	2.4	10.2
65-74 years.....	22.6	5.3	17.3
75 years and over.....	60.6	13.9	46.7
75-84 years.....	49.1	10.8	38.4
85 years and over.....	111.4	28.5	83.5
Male			
Total.....	7.4	2.4	4.9
18-44 years.....	2.1	*0.6	1.6
45-64 years.....	7.6	3.0	4.7
45-54 years.....	6.6	*2.7	4.0
55-64 years.....	8.7	*3.3	5.4
65-74 years.....	14.6	5.9	8.8
75 years and over.....	61.2	16.7	44.5
75-84 years.....	49.1	13.5	35.6
85 years and over.....	117.3	*31.7	87.5
Female			
Total.....	12.5	2.0	10.5
18-44 years.....	4.4	*0.7	3.7
45-64 years.....	11.2	*1.0	10.2
45-54 years.....	6.5	*0.3	6.1
55-64 years.....	16.3	*1.6	14.5
65-74 years.....	28.8	4.9	23.9
75 years and over.....	60.3	12.3	48.0
75-84 years.....	49.0	8.9	40.2
85 years and over.....	108.1	*26.8	81.3

Adults receiving nursing or medical care

Each person was also asked about the following four types of nursing or medical treatment received at home: injections, physical therapy, changing bandages, and "other." Approximately 1.3 million people received at least one of these specified types of medical or nursing treatments at home (table 10). The rate per 1,000 people ranged from 3.3 for people 18-44 years of age to 88.7 for those 85 years of age and over (table 11). The difference in rates was not significant by sex, although for each sex the rates rose with age for most of the categories.

Injection was the type of treatment received by most of the

Table 9. Number of adults and rate per 1,000 who need the help of another person in one or more selected activities, by sex and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

Sex and age	All adults	Needs help of another	
	Number in thousands	Rate per 1,000 persons	
Both sexes			
Total.....	153,178	4,851	31.7
18-44 years.....	86,378	676	7.8
45-64 years.....	43,457	1,357	31.2
45-54 years.....	22,744	526	23.1
55-64 years.....	20,713	832	40.2
65-74 years.....	14,929	1,043	69.9
75 years and over.....	8,414	1,775	211.0
75-84 years.....	6,869	1,101	160.3
85 years and over.....	1,544	674	436.5
Male			
Total.....	72,224	1,741	24.1
18-44 years.....	41,834	303	7.2
45-64 years.....	20,773	559	26.9
45-54 years.....	10,991	223	20.3
55-64 years.....	9,782	336	34.3
65-74 years.....	6,494	359	55.3
75 years and over.....	3,122	520	166.6
75-84 years.....	2,586	330	127.6
85 years and over.....	537	190	353.8
Female			
Total.....	80,954	3,110	38.4
18-44 years.....	44,544	373	8.4
45-64 years.....	22,684	798	35.2
45-54 years.....	11,752	303	25.8
55-64 years.....	10,931	495	45.3
65-74 years.....	8,435	684	81.1
75 years and over.....	5,291	1,255	237.2
75-84 years.....	4,283	771	180.0
85 years and over.....	1,008	483	479.2

¹A person is considered as needing the help of another person if at least one of the following items was reported as applicable because of a chronic health problem: (A) Needs or receives the help of another person in performing one or more of the following 7 activities—walking, going outside, bathing, dressing, eating, using the toilet, or getting in or out of bed or chair; (people who need special equipment only and people for whom it was *unknown* whether they needed special equipment or the help of another person were *not* included); (B) "Doesn't do" one or more of the 7 activities listed above; (C) Needs or receives the help of another person in one or more of these 4 activities—preparing own meals, shopping for personal items, doing routine chores, or handling own money; (D) Usually stays in bed all or most of the time; (E) Needs the help of another person in taking care of a device to control bowel movement or urination.

people. The rate for people receiving injections ranged from 2.1 per 1,000 people 18-44 years of age to 33.7 per 1,000 people 85 years of age and over (table 11). Marked increases occurred between 65-74 years of age, 75-84 years of age, and 85 years of age and over. In general, rates for males receiving injections at home were not significantly different from those for females.

Table 10. Number of adults who receive selected services, by type of services, sex, and age: United States, 1979

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population]

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>All adults</i>	<i>Type of nursing or medical care received</i>				
		<i>1 or more treatments</i>	<i>Injections</i>	<i>Physical therapy</i>	<i>Changing bandages</i>	<i>Other</i>
Both sexes		Number in thousands				
Total	153,178	1,309	791	200	128	347
18-44 years.....	86,378	283	184	52	*26	38
45-64 years.....	43,457	407	286	51	38	59
45-54 years.....	22,744	198	155	*13	*23	*18
55-64 years.....	20,713	210	131	37	*15	41
65-74 years.....	14,929	221	130	*33	*14	79
75 years and over	8,414	398	192	64	50	171
75-84 years.....	6,869	261	140	42	35	100
85 years and over	1,544	137	52	*22	*15	72
Male						
Total	72,224	544	337	74	57	121
18-44 years.....	41,834	121	76	*28	*11	*13
45-64 years.....	20,773	201	137	*16	*26	*29
45-54 years.....	10,991	91	70	*2	*15	*8
55-64 years.....	9,782	110	68	*13	*11	*21
65-74 years.....	6,494	90	61	*8	*11	*27
75 years and over	3,122	132	63	*22	*8	52
75-84 years.....	2,586	80	38	*15	*3	*33
85 years and over	537	52	*25	*7	*6	*19
Female						
Total	80,954	765	454	127	71	226
18-44 years.....	44,544	162	107	*24	*14	*25
45-64 years.....	22,684	207	148	35	*11	*30
45-54 years.....	11,752	107	85	*11	*8	*10
55-64 years.....	10,931	100	63	*24	*3	*20
65-74 years.....	8,435	131	70	*25	*3	52
75 years and over	5,291	266	129	42	42	119
75-84 years.....	4,283	181	101	*27	*32	66
85 years and over	1,008	85	*27	*15	*10	53

Table 11. Rate per 1,000 persons who receive selected services, by type of services, sex, and age: United States, 1979

(Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population)

Sex and age	Type of nursing or medical care received				
	1 or more treatments	Injections	Physical therapy	Changing bandages	Other
Both sexes					
Rate per 1,000 persons					
Total	8.5	5.2	1.3	0.8	2.3
18-44 years	3.3	2.1	0.6	*0.3	0.4
45-64 years	9.4	6.6	1.2	0.9	1.4
45-54 years	8.7	6.8	*0.6	*1.0	*0.8
55-64 years	10.1	6.3	1.8	*0.7	2.0
65-74 years	14.8	8.7	*2.2	*0.9	5.3
75 years and over	47.3	22.8	7.6	5.9	20.3
75-84 years	38.0	20.4	6.1	5.1	14.6
85 years and over	88.7	33.7	*14.2	*9.7	46.6
Male					
Total	7.5	4.7	1.0	0.8	1.7
18-44 years	2.9	1.8	*0.7	*0.3	*0.3
45-64 years	9.7	6.6	*0.8	*1.3	*1.4
45-54 years	8.3	6.4	*0.2	*1.4	*0.7
55-64 years	11.2	7.0	*1.3	*1.1	*2.1
65-74 years	13.9	9.4	*1.2	*1.7	*4.2
75 years and over	42.3	20.2	*7.0	*2.6	16.7
75-84 years	30.9	14.7	*5.8	*1.2	*12.8
85 years and over	96.8	*46.6	*13.0	*11.2	*35.4
Female					
Total	9.4	5.6	1.6	0.9	2.8
18-44 years	3.6	2.4	*0.5	*0.3	*0.6
45-64 years	9.1	6.5	1.5	*0.5	*1.3
45-54 years	9.1	7.2	*0.9	*0.7	*0.9
55-64 years	9.1	5.8	*2.2	*0.3	*1.8
65-74 years	15.5	8.3	*3.0	*0.4	6.2
75 years and over	50.3	24.4	7.9	7.9	22.5
75-84 years	42.3	23.6	*6.3	*7.5	15.4
85 years and over	84.3	*26.8	*14.9	*9.9	52.6

Technical notes

Source and limitations of data

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a cross-sectional, nationwide survey conducted by household interview. A probability sample of households is interviewed each week by trained personnel of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to obtain information on the health and other characteristics of each member of the household in the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

During the 52 weeks in 1979, the sample consisted of approximately 42,000 households including about 111,000 people living at the time of the interview. The total noninterview rate was about 3.9 percent—2.2 percent of which was due to respondent refusal and the remainder primarily due to an inability to locate an eligible respondent at home after repeated calls. A description of the survey design, methods used in estimation, and general qualifications of the NHIS data is provided in *Current Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey: United States, 1979*.⁴

The estimates shown in this report are based on a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population rather than on the entire population. Therefore, they are subject to sampling error. Some tables in this report contain cells in which the estimate is small for a given characteristic. When an estimate or the numerator or denominator of a rate is small, the sampling error may be relatively high. Approximate relative sampling errors for estimates in this report are shown in tables I and II. Detailed information on reliability of estimates is available in the appendix of another publication.⁴

For comparative statements in this report, terms such as “similar” and “the same” mean that no statistically significant difference exists between the statistics being compared. Terms relating to differences, such as “greater,” and “less,” indicate that the differences are statistically significant. A critical value

⁴National Center for Health Statistics, S. Jack and P. Ries: *Current Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, United States, 1979. Vital and Health Statistics. Series 10-No. 136. DHHS Pub. No. (PHS) 81-1564. Public Health Service. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office. Apr. 1981.*

Table I. Standard errors of estimates of aggregates

Size of estimate in thousands	Standard error in thousands
35	11
100	18
300	31
500	40
1,000	57
5,000	125
10,000	174
20,000	237
30,000	278
150,000	393

Table II. Standard errors, expressed in percentage points of rates per 1,000 persons

Base of rates per 1,000 in thousands	Estimated rates per 1,000				
	20 or 980	50 or 950	100 or 900	200 or 800	500
100	25	39	54	72	90
300	15	23	31	42	52
500	11	18	24	32	40
1,000	8	12	17	23	29
5,000	4	6	8	10	13
10,000	3	4	5	7	9
20,000	2	3	4	5	6
30,000	1	2	3	4	5
150,000	1	1	1	2	2

of 1.96 (0.05 level of significance) was used to test all comparisons that are discussed. Lack of comment regarding the differences between any two statistics does not mean that the difference was tested and found to be not significant.

Definitions of terms

The Home Care Supplement to the 1979 NHIS obtained information on the need for assistance in selected functional activities, condition causing the need for assistance, and bowel and urinary trouble. In addition, for people needing the help of another person, information was obtained on who provided the help and how often the help was provided. A copy of the complete supplement is provided in Series 10-No. 136.⁴

Although specific definitions were not given to the respondents for the Home Care Supplement, interviewers were provided with the following guidelines⁵ regarding some terminology.

Doing household chores refers to routine chores such as washing dishes, doing laundry, dusting, or sweeping. Heavier or more difficult jobs, such as washing windows or walls or making repairs to the house, are not included.

Shopping does not include persons who need help getting to the store, but once there can shop without assistance.

Handling money includes paying bills, cashing checks, managing accounts, and related activities.

Receiving or needing help requires physical assistance to perform one or more of seven selected activities. This includes such help as support from another person, someone to wash the back or turn on the shower, or being fed. It also includes people who are able to perform the activity without help but must be supervised; for example, someone must be present in case the person falls while bathing.

⁵U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Acting as a collecting agent for U.S. Public Health Service: *Health Interview Survey Interviewer's Manual. HIS-100 (1979).*

Using special equipment includes use of equipment or devices used specifically to aid in a particular activity such as a cane, a walker, or a special spoon or fork. Includes devices installed to aid in the activity, such as rails along the bathtub or toilet, ramps, or elevators.

Using the toilet in the bathroom includes adjusting clothes and cleaning oneself after using the toilet.

Bathing includes getting or turning on the water for a bath, shower, or sponge bath; getting to, in, and out of a tub or a shower, and if used, washing and drying oneself.

Dressing includes putting on braces, getting clothes from closets and drawers, putting them on, fastening buttons, zippers, snaps, or other closures. However, it does not include the occasional need to have someone help with a zipper or other closures that a normally healthy person would have difficulty doing.

Eating includes getting the food from the plate into the mouth, but does not include cutting or otherwise preparing the food.

Getting in and out of bed or chairs includes wheelchairs.

Accidents or trouble controlling bowel or urination includes accidentally wetting or soiling one's self, but does not include occasional slight "leaking." Also, people are considered as having "accidents or trouble controlling" if they must always have enemas because they are unable to empty their bowels.

Colostomy and urinary catheter are surgical openings and/or devices used to aid in urination or bowel movements when the person has lost natural control of these functions through illness, disability, surgery, or other causes.

Receives or needs help from another person in taking care of the device includes personal assistance or supervision in operating or cleaning the device, or in emptying the bags.

Chronic conditions, disability, or health problem includes a condition that is described by the respondent as having first been noticed more than 3 months before the week of the interview, or one of the conditions always classified in the NHIS as chronic regardless of onset. A list of these conditions is provided in another publication.⁴ Only people with a chronic condition, disability, or health problem were included. Those with acute conditions were excluded from the data base. However, for anyone found to have an unknown type of condition causing the need for help, the NHIS concept of major limitation of activity due to a chronic condition or impairment was used to indirectly determine chronic limitation. Major activity limitation is defined in another report.⁶

⁶National Center for Health Statistics, B. A. Feller: Health characteristics of persons with chronic activity limitation, United States, 1979. *Vital and Health Statistics*. Series 10-No. 137. DHHS Pub. No. 82-1565. Public Health Service. Dec. 1981.

Symbols

---	Data not available
...	Category not applicable
-	Quantity zero
0.0	Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
Z	Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
*	Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision
#	Figure suppressed to comply with confidentiality requirements

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