

Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled: Characteristics of Men and Women Recipients

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Thirty States had in operation programs of aid to the permanently and totally disabled in mid-1951, when the Bureau of Public Assistance, in cooperation with the State public assistance agencies, made a survey of the recipients under this newest of the assistance programs. While about the same numbers of disabled men and women were receiving assistance, there were significant differences in the characteristics of the two groups. These differences are reported in the article that follows—the final one in a series of three based on the survey findings.

MEN who received public assistance as permanently and totally disabled persons in mid-1951 tended to be somewhat younger but were more severely handicapped in activities of daily living than the women receiving aid. These and other differences in the characteristics of the men and women receiving aid were found in a study made by the Bureau of Public Assistance and the 30 State assistance agencies that had programs of aid to the permanently and totally disabled in operation by June 1951.¹

The concept of permanent and total disability, while varying considerably from State to State, may under Federal interpretations include needy persons² with major impairments that are permanent in nature and that result in disabilities that substantially preclude the individuals

from engaging in useful occupations within their competence—that is, holding a job or homemaking—that exist in the community. Under this interpretation an individual does not have to be completely helpless in the sense of being bedfast or confined to his home. The useful occupations in which men and women customarily engage do, of course, differ. Homemaking, for example, is the occupation of many women but of few men.

Age and Race

The differences in the characteristics of the men and women receiving aid were more marked in some instances when data on the white and nonwhite recipients were examined

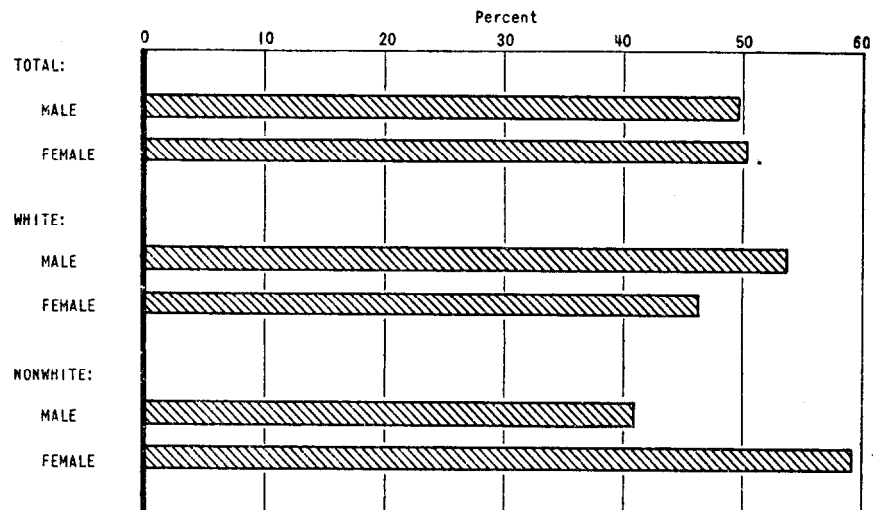
separately than when data on all recipients were examined together. A fairly detailed analysis of differences by race is accordingly necessary in conjunction with the analysis of other characteristics.

The sexes were about equally divided in the 93,359 disabled recipients in 30 States in mid-1951 (chart 1). Men comprised 49.8 percent of the total, and women 50.2 percent. Among the white recipients (69 percent of the total) men outnumbered women at the rate of 7 to 6. On the other hand, among nonwhite recipients the women receiving assistance outnumbered the men 3 to 2.

The women receiving aid were older than the men, and the white recipients were older than the nonwhite. The proportions of each race-sex group who were aged 55 or over were 60.2 percent for white women, 52.8 percent for white men, 44.9 percent for nonwhite women, and 44.9 percent for nonwhite men.

How does the distribution of the recipients by age, race, and sex differ from the distribution of the general population aged 18-64? This age

Chart 1.—APTD recipients, by race and sex, mid-1951



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¹ See Charles E. Hawkins, "Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled: Recipients with Heart Disease," *Social Security Bulletin*, July 1953; Garnett A. Lester, "Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled: The Young Recipients," *Social Security Bulletin*, October 1953; and *Characteristics of Recipients of Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled, Mid-1951* (Public Assistance Report No. 22), April 1953.

² Federal participation may not be claimed in payments to patients in institutions for tuberculosis or mental disease or in other medical institutions as a result of one of these diseases, or inmates of public institutions, and persons under age 18.

group is chosen for comparison for two reasons—individuals under age 18 are not eligible under the program, and, because old-age assistance is available for persons aged 65 and over, relatively few individuals receive aid to the permanently and totally disabled after attaining age 65. At the time of the study only 3.3 percent of the disabled recipients were past age 65. In almost half the States currently providing aid to the disabled, an upper age limit of 65 is set for beneficiaries of the program. The disabled recipients are accordingly more nearly comparable with the general population aged 18–64 than with the total population aged 18 and over.

The average age of the disabled recipients is considerably higher than that of the general population aged 18–64. Of the recipients, 53.7 percent were aged 55 or older, compared with only 14.5 percent of the general population. The incidence of disability is, of course, much greater in late middle age than at earlier ages.

The race-sex distribution of the disabled recipients is compared with the similar distribution of the 1950 population aged 18–64 in the following tabulation, which is based on data for 29 of the States participating in the study. Hawaii is excluded because published data on age, by sex and race, are not available.

Sex and race	Percent	
	APTD recipients, mid-1951	Total population, aged 18–64, 1950 ¹
Total.....	100.0	100.0
Men.....	49.8	49.3
White.....	37.3	44.2
Nonwhite.....	12.4	5.1
Women.....	50.2	50.7
White.....	32.0	45.2
Nonwhite.....	18.3	5.5

¹ Based on data from the Bureau of the Census, *U. S. Census of Population: 1950*, vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, chapter B, table 15.

The distribution of men and women among the recipients does not differ significantly from their distribution in the general population. There are, however, relatively fewer white women and more nonwhite women than in the general population. The racial distribution of the recipient group, which is considerably different from that of the general population, makes

the recipient rate for nonwhite persons much higher than for white persons. The recipient rate expresses the number of individuals receiving assistance per 1,000 individuals of the same race in the general population in the age bracket 18–64. For the separate race-sex groups, the recipient rates are shown in the following tabulation.

Sex	Recipients per 1,000 population aged 18–64		
	Total	White	Nonwhite
Total....	1.8	1.4	5.0
Men.....	1.8	1.5	4.3
Women.....	1.8	1.3	5.9

The fact that nonwhite individuals comprise a greater proportion of these assistance recipients than of the general population is consistent with the higher rate of disablement among the nonwhite population as well as their generally lower economic level. It is also consistent with data in other assistance programs. The nonwhite recipient rate is considerably greater than the rate for white recipients in old-age assistance (1.5 to 1 in 21 States in 1944)³ and in aid to dependent children (2.8 to 1 in 39 States in 1948).⁴ Recipient rates for the State programs of aid to the permanently and totally disabled are shown for mid-1951 in the aggregate, as well as by race, in table 1. The distribution of the States in mid-1951 by the number of recipients per 1,000 population aged 18–64 is as follows:

Rate	Number of States
Total.....	30
Fewer than 1.0.....	11
1.0–1.9.....	7
2.0–2.9.....	6
3.0–3.9.....	3
4.0 and more.....	3

Variations among States in recipient rates are, of course, found in all assistance programs and are believed

³ Based on *Preliminary Tables on Incomes and Living Arrangements of Recipients of Old-Age Assistance in 21 States, 1944* (Public Assistance Report No. 9), December 1945.

⁴ Elizabeth Alling and Agnes Leisy, *Aid to Dependent Children in a Postwar Year* (Public Assistance Report No. 17), June 1950.

Table 1.—Number of recipients of APTD per 1,000 population aged 18–64, by race, 30 States, mid-1951

States	All recipients	White recipients	Non-white recipients	Ratio of non-white to white recipient rate
Total.....	1.79	1.40	15.03	13.6
Alabama.....	4.94	4.10	6.93	1.7
Colorado.....	2.72	2.63	6.66	2.5
Delaware.....	0.47	0.33	1.33	4.0
Dist. of Col.....	1.51	0.54	3.39	6.3
Hawaii.....	2.13	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)
Idaho.....	1.79	1.78	2.06	1.2
Illinois.....	0.24	0.23	0.41	1.8
Kansas.....	2.26	2.04	7.34	3.6
Louisiana.....	9.62	6.22	17.52	2.8
Maryland.....	1.33	0.81	4.08	5.0
Michigan.....	0.18	0.19	0.14	0.7
Mississippi.....	0.33	0.30	0.38	1.3
Missouri.....	3.11	2.44	11.10	4.5
Montana.....	2.60	2.55	4.47	1.8
New Mexico.....	3.36	3.43	2.45	0.7
New York.....	2.46	1.89	10.39	5.5
North Carolina.....	0.96	0.76	1.61	2.1
North Dakota.....	1.06	0.95	8.84	9.3
Ohio.....	0.54	0.48	1.35	2.8
Oregon.....	1.53	1.53	1.79	1.2
Pennsylvania.....	1.91	1.65	5.86	3.6
Rhode Island.....	0.06	(²)	(²)	(²)
South Carolina.....	1.73	1.07	2.98	2.8
Utah.....	4.11	4.09	4.87	1.2
Vermont.....	0.68	0.68	0	-----
Virginia.....	0.88	0.46	2.47	5.4
Washington.....	3.38	3.30	6.27	1.9
West Virginia.....	0.41	0.37	0.98	2.6
Wisconsin.....	0.37	0.37	0.68	1.8
Wyoming.....	2.52	2.49	3.78	1.5

¹ Excludes data for Hawaii both on recipients and on general population aged 18–64; published data on age, by race and sex, not available.

² Not computed, sampling base too small.

to reflect primarily differences in extent of need arising from economic factors and the extent to which need is met through State legislative and administrative action. Recipient rates vary even more in aid to the disabled than in other assistance programs, since they reflect to a considerable degree differences in State agency definitions and interpretations of permanent and total disability.

Under the interpretation of permanent and total disability used by the Bureau of Public Assistance, a State agency may consider a person permanently and totally disabled even though he is not helpless, provided that he is substantially precluded from engaging in a useful occupation. Moreover, a hopeful outlook for an individual's vocational rehabilitation, which may at some future time succeed in rendering his disability less than total, does not under this concept bar a finding of permanent and total disability at the time of his application for assistance.

Many States have adopted this interpretation as the basis of their programs. A few, however, have limited their program to individuals who are completely helpless, or nearly so. These differences in program scope produce wide variations in recipient rates. Objective evidence is found in the fact that differences among the States in the proportion of recipients who are confined to their homes and in the proportion needing one or more personal services in essential activities of daily living are negatively associated with differences in recipient rates. The higher the proportion housebound and the higher the percent needing personal services, the lower the recipient rate tends to be, and vice versa.

In general, the States in which the ratio of nonwhite to white recipient rates is high in aid to the disabled are also States in which the similar ratio is high in aid to dependent children, and States that have low ratios in one program also have low ratios in the other. Comparable data are available for 21 States. Of the first 11 States, when ranked by ratio of nonwhite to white rates, eight were also among the first 11 States in aid to dependent children in a study conducted in 1948.⁵ Similarly, seven of the 10 States with lowest ratios in their programs of aid to the permanently and totally disabled were also low in aid to dependent children. These data suggest that there may be certain constant factors, of which the relative economic position of nonwhite persons in the State may be dominant, that influence similarities from program to program in the extent to which nonwhite individuals receive assistance at a rate greater than white ones.

Relation to General Disabled Population

Comparisons of the recipients of aid to the permanently and totally disabled with disabled persons in the general population and with persons disabled for specified periods of time are of interest. In making such comparisons, however, differences in concepts of what constitutes disability must be recognized. Most surveys of

the disabled in the general population enumerate the persons unable to engage in their customary activities on a given day or for a specified period of time. A number of persons meeting these criteria are disabled by conditions of a temporary nature, even though the disability may last for a considerable period of time. Similarly, many of the disabling conditions result in less than total disability and do not keep the person affected from engaging in a useful occupation. Many persons are accordingly included in such surveys whose impairments are not permanent, whose resulting disabilities are not total, and whose characteristics may therefore differ considerably from those of the persons who are eligible for aid. The needy persons who receive aid to the permanently and totally disabled are, however, among the most seriously handicapped of all disabled persons in the general population, and comparisons with the larger group of which they are a part are accordingly appropriate.

In surveys of the noninstitutional population conducted by the Bureau of the Census in February 1949 and September 1950, the proportion of persons disabled increased from 2.5 percent for persons aged 14-19 to 9.4 percent for persons aged 55-64.⁶ These two surveys provide some basis for comparing the recipients of aid to the permanently and totally disabled with the general noninstitutional population suffering from disabilities. This comparison is more realistic than comparisons with the general population aged 18-64.

The two surveys differed considerably in their estimates of the total disabled population as of the date of the survey, but the difference arose almost entirely from the greater number of short-term disability cases in the February 1949 survey. The surveys were consistent in their estimates of the long-term disabled population, and aid to the permanently and totally disabled is concerned with individuals in this group whose impairments are permanent and whose disabilities are total. Both surveys in-

⁶ Theodore D. Woolsey, *Estimates of Disabling Illness Prevalence in the United States* (Public Health Monograph No. IV), August 1952, table 1, p. 2.

cluded some individuals who continued to be in the labor force although unable to work full time or at their usual occupation, as well as persons not in the labor force.⁷

Several general observations based on these surveys parallel the data obtained from the study of disabled assistance recipients. The disability rate is significantly greater in the nonwhite population than in the white. It is greater among white men than among white women, but less for nonwhite men than for nonwhite women. All these relationships are observed among the disabled recipients of assistance. The overall sex distribution of the disabled population also is found to have a reasonable relationship to that of the disabled recipients, when the component parts of the total are examined.

Among all the disabled in the February 1949 survey made by the Bureau of the Census (estimated at 4,569,000), 51.2 percent were men and 48.8 percent women. Among those disabled 7 months or more, men made up 61.9 percent and women 38.1 percent. These data, however, included some persons in the labor force. The disabled individuals classified as not in the labor force are made up of four groups—those keeping house, those in school, persons unable to work, and "other." Actually among the group disabled for 7 months or more, there are only the two classes—those keeping house and those unable to work—who can be considered as the primary population group of which the disabled recipients of assistance are a part. Among this limited group, in February 1949, 52.5 percent were men and 47.5 percent were women.

Since persons who are able to perform the duties of homemaking⁸ are not eligible for aid to the disabled, there may be some question as to why

⁷ Ibid. See also Theodore D. Woolsey, "Estimates of Disabling Illness Prevalence in the United States," *Public Health Reports*, February 10, 1950, and Marjorie E. Moore and Barkev S. Sanders, "Extent of Total Disability in the United States," *Social Security Bulletin*, November 1950.

⁸ Homemaking is defined as ability to carry home-management and decision-making responsibilities and provide essential services for at least one other person. Persons caring for themselves only are not measured against tests of ability to engage in homemaking.

⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

recipients of aid to the disabled should be compared with a disabled population group that includes housewives. This comparison has been made because, in the general population, there is no clear dividing line between "unable to work" and "housewife" as reasons for not being in the labor force; many seriously disabled persons are probably reported as housewives when they are in fact unable to work. When the disabled recipients are compared with the disabled population not in the labor force who are classed as "unable to work" or "housewife," the contrast between the sex distribution of the two groups does not appear as striking as when the comparison is made with the total disabled population.

Marital Status

The percent of married women is much smaller among the disabled than in the general population. Of all women aged 18-64, 76 percent are married. The Bureau of the Census survey of February 1949 showed that among women disabled 7 months or more, 52 percent were married, and 48 percent were single, widowed, or divorced. Among the recipients of aid to the permanently and totally disabled the percent of married women was far smaller. One factor that undoubtedly increases the proportion of nonmarried women receiving aid is the higher median age of the recipients than of the population disabled 7 months or more. The difference was nearly 7 years for white women and 3 years for nonwhite women; men receiving aid were also older than the disabled men reported in the 1949 survey.

Fewer married persons than nonmarried persons are found among recipients. Only 16.9 percent of the women receiving aid to the disabled were married, as compared with 42.6 percent of the men. Among both the men and women receiving assistance, however, the proportion married was much smaller than that in the general population aged 18-64. This finding applied for the total number of recipients, as well as for each age group (table 2).

What appears as an even distribution of the sexes among the total number of recipients of aid to the dis-

Table 2.—Percent of married men and women in the general population (aged 18-64), April 1951,¹ and on the APTD rolls mid-1951, by age group

Age	Percent married			
	General population		APTD recipients	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total.....	77.1	76.1	42.6	16.9
Under age 35....	64.9	74.8	19.6	9.8
35-54.....	86.5	81.8	42.1	19.3
55 and over.....	88.1	63.6	48.1	16.6

¹ Based on data from the Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports: Population Characteristics* (Series P-20, No. 38), Apr. 29, 1953.

abled obscures a markedly different distribution when considered in terms of marital status. Among the married recipients, 71.4 percent were men and 28.6 percent women, but among the nonmarried recipients, 40.6 percent were men and 59.4 percent were women. In the general population aged 18-64, 48.5 percent of the married individuals and 47.1 percent of the nonmarried individuals were men.

On the assumption that the distribution of men and women by marital status is the same in the country as a whole as in the 30 States included in the study, it is estimated that among married men 1 in every 1,000 received aid to the permanently and totally disabled, while among nonmarried men 4.6 in every thousand received aid. The corresponding rates for women are 0.4 for married women and 6.2 for nonmarried women.

While the recipient rate among married men was almost 2.5 times that for married women, probably reflecting the greater likelihood of continued family economic independence if a wife becomes disabled than if her husband does, even greater differences were found between the rates for the married and nonmarried of each sex. Among men the rate for the nonmarried was almost five times that for the married, and for nonmarried women the rate was almost sixteen times that for married women.

The proportion of married recipients was greater among men than among women at all ages, but the difference was greatest among recipients aged 55 and over, for whom the per-

centage of married men (48.1) was almost three times that for women (16.6). In the general population aged 18-64, the percentage married is smaller for men than for women under age 35, is somewhat greater in the age group 35-54, and is considerably greater at ages 55 and over.

There are thus two reasons that so few of the women receiving aid to the disabled were married. First, the disabled population generally contains relatively fewer married women than the total population. The second reason, even more important, is the fact that, in the great majority of instances, married women who do become disabled do not need to seek public assistance.

Many of the married women who received aid to the permanently and totally disabled had husbands who were unable to support them, as evidenced by the fact that they also received public assistance. Among all recipients who had a spouse and/or children under age 18, the spouse received public assistance in more than half the cases.

Disabling illness or injury does, of course, strike the married as well as the nonmarried. The rate at which it strikes increases with the age of the individual. If the disability occurs before or at the age at which marriage might normally occur, the chances of marriage would appear to be rather severely limited, both for men and for women but more so for women than for men.

It seems likely that, among disabled individuals who are single, the proportion who became disabled at an early age would be much greater than the similar proportion for married individuals. Some support for this inference can be obtained from the study data on disabled male recipients. Almost 4 out of every 5 male recipients under age 35 were unmarried. Among all recipients under age 35, men constituted a majority (55.6 percent). Recipients under age 35 were sharply distinguished from older recipients in that a much higher proportion of their impairments were due to congenital defects and the current and late effects of infectious diseases. The older recipients usually suffered from degenerative diseases. Congenital impairments and impairments

representing the late effects of infectious diseases were usually of much longer duration than other types of impairments. It should be noted, however, that degenerative diseases are unlikely to produce disability during the ages at which most marriages occur and accordingly are unlikely to affect the chances of marriage.

Living Arrangements

The proportion of women living alone (34.0 percent) was more than twice as great as the proportion of men (14.9 percent). This difference reflects the greater proportion of the women recipients who were not married. Within each sex group, the proportion of recipients living alone increased sharply with advancing age, rising from 2.6 percent for men under age 35 to 19.2 percent for those aged 55 and over; for women, the proportion living alone increased from 9.7 percent for those under age 35 to 39.5 percent for those aged 55 and over.

On the other hand, only 8.8 percent of the women lived with their husbands in their own homes, compared with 34.6 percent of the men who lived with their wives in their own homes. Women more often than men lived in the homes of relatives, and men lived more frequently than women in hotels, rooming houses, or boarding houses.

Employment History

Three-fifths of the women and more than four-fifths of the men receiving aid to the permanently and totally disabled worked at some time in regular paid employment. Among the men the proportion with work experience increased sharply from 45 percent for those under age 35 to 71 percent in the age group 35-44 and to 95 percent at ages 60 and over. Among the female recipients there was also a sharp increase from 34 percent with work experience for those under age 35 to 60 percent in the age bracket 35-44 and about the same percentage for the more advanced ages.

Somewhat the same relationships are observed among the general disabled population, according to the February 1949 survey by the Bureau of the Census. Among the women, however, the proportion with earlier work experience rose from 19 percent

at ages 20-24 to 64 percent at ages 45-54, and then declined to 48 percent at ages 55-64.⁹ The reason for this difference in trend between men and women is not clearly apparent. The labor-force participation rate for women is at its peak, however, at ages 18-19, and it is possible that the decline represents the lower labor-force participation of the older group of women 30-40 years ago. Over the past several decades an increasing number of women have been in the labor force. It may be that the longer period that today's older women have had in which to acquire work experience is more than offset by the limitations on opportunities available to them in their youth.

Since the nonwhite recipients include proportionately more women, it is likely on the basis of sex distribution that fewer of the nonwhite recipients than of the white recipients would have work experience. Actually, however, the reverse occurred; 82 percent of the nonwhite recipients and only 67 percent of the white recipients had worked. The reason is that a high proportion of nonwhite women (77.8 percent) and a low proportion of white women (48.4 percent) had work experience. The larger concentration of the nonwhite women recipients in the younger age groups may have influenced their greater rate of work experience. About half the nonwhite women, as compared with 40 percent of the white women, were under age 55. Among the men, there was little difference between races; more than 80 percent of both groups had work experience.

The fact that relatively more nonwhite than white women work is clear from 1950 Census data. Among all women aged 14 and over in 1950, the proportion in the labor force was 37.0 percent for nonwhite women and 29.0 percent for all women.¹⁰ A greater proportion of nonwhite than of white women were members of the labor force at all ages except under age 25. This difference in turn may be a reflection of a greater need among nonwhite families to have the family in-

⁹ Moore and Sanders, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁰ U. S. Bureau of the Census, *U. S. Census of Population: 1950*, vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, part 1, *U. S. Summary*, chapter C, pp. 247, 248.

come supplemented by the wife's earnings.

Another factor that may partially account for a higher proportion of nonwhite recipients with work history is that fewer impairments of the nonwhite than of the white recipients are congenital in origin. Persons with serious congenital impairments have relatively less chance of ever obtaining work experience. Only 9.3 percent of the impairments of the nonwhite recipients were congenital in origin, as compared with 13.0 percent of the impairments of the white recipients. The impairments considered as congenital in this connection include mental deficiency, cerebral spastic infantile paralysis, epilepsy, and congenital malformations.

Among the recipients with work experience (as among the general population), fewer women than men had recent employment. Only 54 percent of the women recipients and 63 percent of the men had worked within the past 6 years.

Among recipients with employment history, relatively more men than women left their last job because of disability. Almost as many nonwhite women as white men left work because of disability, however (around 87 percent for each group), and more than 90 percent of the nonwhite men left work for this reason. On the other hand, only 76 percent of the white women with work experience left work because of disability.

These observations again point up the fact that paid employment is more often accepted as normal by nonwhite than by white women. More white women (17.7 percent) than nonwhite women (9.1 percent) tended to leave their last jobs for reasons other than disability.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Twelve percent of the men receiving aid to the permanently and totally disabled but only 5 percent of the women were known by or had been referred to a vocational rehabilitation agency within the 2 years preceding the survey month. In both sexes the proportion of referrals was by far the greatest for those under age 35. Twenty-nine percent of the men and 15 percent of the women in the younger age group were referred to

an agency, but only 6 percent of the men and 3 percent of the women aged 55 and over.

Major Impairments and Sex

Women had impairments associated with advancing years to a considerably greater extent than was found for men. The most frequent major impairment of the women, hypertension with heart disease, disabled more than twice as many recipients as any single impairment of the men. Of the 10 most common impairments of women, only two—mental deficiency and chronic rheumatic heart disease—were most frequently found among younger people. In contrast, the 10 most frequent impairments of the men included three conditions that are usually of congenital or birth origin—mental deficiency, cerebral spastic paralysis, and epilepsy—and two infectious diseases, tuberculosis and syphilis.

The 10 most common major impairments for men, by the proportion of the male recipients affected, are shown below.

Impairment	Percent
Arthritis	8.7
Arteriosclerotic heart disease	8.2
Cerebral paralysis	7.8
Hypertension with heart disease	7.7
Mental deficiency	6.5
Tuberculosis	4.0
Syphilis	3.4
Cerebral spastic paralysis	2.8
Paralysis agitans	2.6
Epilepsy	2.6

The following list gives the 10 most common major impairments of women.

Impairment	Percent
Hypertension with heart disease	17.3
Arthritis	11.4
Mental deficiency	6.6
Arteriosclerotic heart disease	5.7
Hypertension	5.6
Cerebral paralysis	5.3
Diabetes	3.0
Malignant neoplasms	2.7
Chronic rheumatic heart disease	2.4
Diseases of the digestive system	2.3

The diseases that were common to both men and women among the 10 most frequent impairments were arthritis, arteriosclerotic heart disease, cerebral paralysis, hypertension with heart disease, and mental deficiency. Diseases that were leading causes for

men but not for women were tuberculosis, syphilis, cerebral spastic paralysis, paralysis agitans, and epilepsy. The five most common diseases for women but not for men were hypertension (without mention of heart disease), diabetes, malignant neoplasms, chronic rheumatic heart disease, and diseases of the digestive system.

The impairments were more heavily concentrated in a few diagnostic classifications for women than for men. Two types of impairment accounted for the disability of 28.7 percent of all female recipients, but only 16.9 percent of the male recipients suffered from the two leading impairments of the men. The ten leading impairments were the cause of disability for 62 percent of the women and 54 percent of the men.

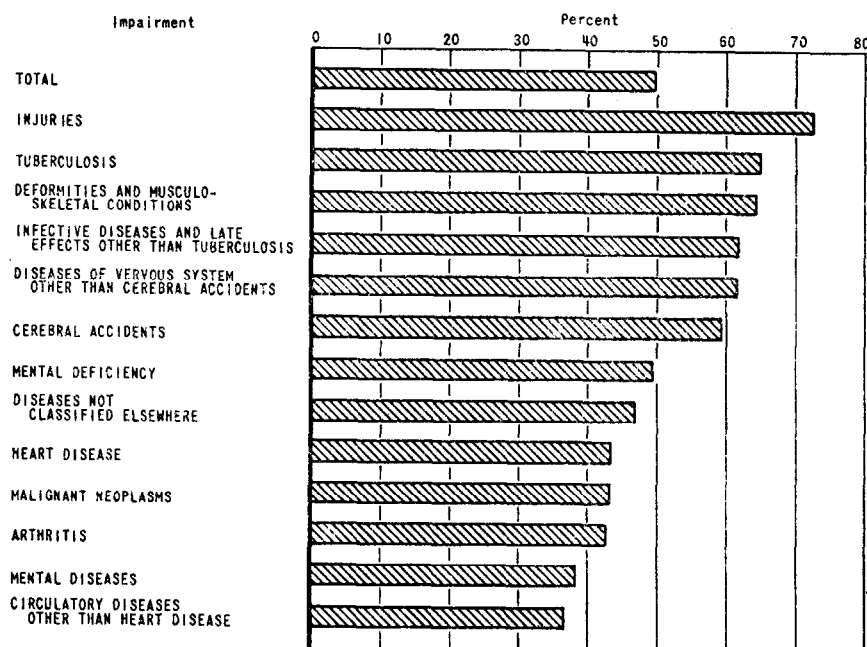
When the individual diagnostic classifications are combined into broad groups, sharp differences in sex distribution are apparent. For the various impairment groups, the proportions of recipients that were men ranged from 73 percent in the injury classification to only 36 percent in the group classified as circulatory diseases other than heart disease (chart 2). The sexes were about evenly di-

vided in only one classification—mental deficiency.

In table 3 the broad groupings of impairments are ranked according to the proportion of men affected by the impairment. Men predominated among recipients whose major impairments were injuries, tuberculosis, diseases of the musculoskeletal system, infective and parasitic diseases, diseases of the nervous system and the sense organs, and cerebral accidents. There were more women than men among recipients whose major impairments were heart disease, malignant neoplasms, arthritis, psychoses and other mental disorders, circulatory diseases other than heart disease, and all other disease groups.

Table 3 also shows for each broad disease group the proportion of recipients who were confined to their homes and the percentage needing one or more personal services in essential activities of daily living. Among the first six of these groups, in which men predominated, the proportion housebound was high except for the tuberculosis group, of whom only 13 percent were housebound. Also, except for the tuberculosis group, the proportion of recipients needing personal services was high. The classifications

Chart 2.—Percent of men among APTD recipients with specified impairments, mid-1951



with the highest frequency of confinement to home were cerebral accidents, other diseases of the nervous system and sense organs, and infective and parasitic diseases other than tuberculosis. The same three groupings stood highest in the proportion of recipients needing personal services. The victims of cerebral accidents appeared to be the most severely disabled recipients. Forty-five percent of this group were confined to their homes; 16.4 percent were bedridden. Similarly, 57.1 percent of the cerebral accident group needed one or more personal services, including 42.7 percent who needed help in dressing.

Among the broad diagnostic groups in which women predominated, a low proportion of recipients were confined to their homes, except among the victims of malignant neoplasms and arthritis. In most of these classifications, the percent of recipients needing personal services was also comparatively low. Victims of malignant neoplasms and arthritis, however, had an average or high proportion of recipients needing personal services. The mental deficiency group, in which women and men were about equally divided, deserves special mention; 52 percent of the mentally deficient required one or more personal services, but only 18 percent were confined to their homes. In most other diagnostic groupings the proportion needing personal services was only slightly greater than the proportion housebound. The explanation lies in the large number of mentally deficient individuals who needed help in activities affecting personal safety. For such activities, about 9 out of every 10 mentally deficient individuals needing one or more personal services required the help of others—an indication of the severity of the mental defects of these recipients.

More than 1 out of 10 men had impairments that originated in an employment injury or disease (4.5 percent) or in an injury that was not work-connected (6.2 percent). On the other hand, only 3.9 percent of the women had impairments arising from injury; only 0.4 percent were due to an employment injury, and 3.5 percent were the result of other kinds of injuries.

In both sexes, congenital impair-

ments represented more than 10 percent of the total, accounting for 12.0 percent of all impairments for the men and 10.6 percent for the women. For recipients under age 35, however, congenital impairments accounted for around 40 percent of the total in both sex groups.

For both men and women the major cause of impairment was a disease—usually a chronic or degenerative disease that could not be attributed to an injury or a congenital condition. Fewer men (66.1 percent) than women (71.6 percent) had impairments arising from such conditions. These differences are the complement of the differences in the proportion of the two sexes with impairments arising from injuries.

The study data on mobility status and need of personal services lead to the conclusion that the men receiving aid are more limited in activities essential to daily living than the women. As previously indicated, men appeared more frequently than women in the diagnostic groupings associated with a high proportion of persons confined to their homes and needing personal services. The contrast is most apparent when impairment classifications in which the proportion of men was less than 40 percent are compared with classes in which men represented more than 60 percent of the group. In the classes with fewer men, 12.3 percent of the recipients were confined to their homes, and 15.4 percent needed one or more personal services. On the other hand, in the classes with more men, the proportion confined to their homes increased to 26.1 percent and the proportion needing personal services increased to 34.0 percent.

State Differences

Although, in the aggregate, there were about the same number of men and women recipients, men outnumbered women in 18 of the 29 States in which the study sample was large enough to warrant a percentage distribution by sex. The proportion of men ranged from 38.4 percent in the District of Columbia and 41.2 percent in Utah to 70 percent in Hawaii and 66.5 percent in West Virginia. The distribution of the 29 States by the percentage of men receiving aid to the

permanently and totally disabled is as follows:

Percent	Number of States
Total	29
Less than 40	1
40-44	5
45-49	5
50-54	5
55-59	7
60 and more	6

The difference between the distribution of the States and the distribution of the total number of recipients arises from the fact that in the three States (New York, Louisiana, and Alabama) that together had more than half the total number of recipients, there were fewer men than women.

Differences among the States in the sex distribution of the recipients cannot be entirely explained from available data. There is some tendency for the following factors to be associated with a relatively large number of men in the caseload—high percentages of recipients confined to their homes, high proportions needing one or more personal services in the essential activities of daily living, and high proportions of white recipients and of recipients with previous employment history. On the other hand, the reverse of each of these factors tended to be associated with a high proportion of women in the caseload. These factors, however, are not sufficient to account for all of the State differences observed.

Summary

Contrary to what might have been expected, the numbers of men and women receiving aid to the permanently and totally disabled were about equal. Men might have been expected to be more numerous because the disabled population generally contains more men; because the occurrence of a disabling impairment in a married woman is less likely to cause a total economic loss to a family than the occurrence of a similar impairment in a man; and because women more frequently engage in homemaking—an occupation for which a given disability is less likely to be total than for other occupations in which the standards of performance and regularity are often more exacting.

Table 3.—APTD recipients by impairment group and by sex, mobility status, and personal services needed, mid-1951

Impairment group	Total number of APTD recipients	Percentage distribution					
		Sex		Mobility status		Need of personal services in essential activities of daily living	
		Men	Women	House-bound	Not house-bound	Needing such services	Not needing such services
Total.....	93,359	49.8	50.2	20.7	79.3	28.2	71.8
Injuries.....	2,188	72.7	27.3	24.0	76.0	33.5	66.5
Tuberculosis (all forms, including arrested tuberculosis).....	4,081	65.0	35.0	12.7	87.3	6.9	93.1
Deformities, malformations, and diseases of the musculoskeletal system.....	3,663	64.4	35.6	22.4	77.6	32.6	67.4
Infective and parasitic diseases (including late effects) other than tuberculosis.....	4,653	61.7	38.3	28.5	71.5	38.6	61.4
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs other than cerebral accidents.....	9,929	61.4	38.6	28.5	71.5	48.7	51.3
Cerebral accidents.....	6,127	59.2	40.8	44.7	55.3	57.1	42.9
Mental deficiency.....	6,082	49.3	50.7	17.8	82.2	51.8	48.2
Diseases not otherwise specified.....	11,224	46.9	53.1	15.7	84.3	15.3	84.7
Diseases of the heart.....	23,809	43.3	56.7	13.9	86.1	14.0	86.0
Malignant neoplasms.....	2,248	43.2	56.8	27.4	72.6	28.3	71.7
Arthritis.....	9,375	42.9	57.1	28.5	71.5	34.5	65.5
Psychoses and other mental and personality disorders except mental deficiency.....	4,174	38.3	61.7	10.4	89.6	21.6	78.4
Circulatory diseases other than diseases of the heart.....	5,806	36.4	63.6	12.5	87.4	17.6	82.4

These factors are offset, however, by the fact that, among the disabled in the general population, men only slightly outnumber women among the individuals with long-term disabilities who are not in the labor force and who keep house or are unable to work. The marital status of the men and women receiving aid varied widely. In both sexes, the nonmarried—single, widowed, and divorced—were more numerous than the married. Nonmarried men exceeded married ones by a ratio of 1.3 to 1; among the women the ratio of nonmarried to married was approximately 5 to 1. One of the striking findings of the study was that only 1 woman in every

6 receiving aid was married, and that for a large proportion of these, the husbands were also recipients of some type of public assistance.

While all the reasons that most of the women who receive aid are not married cannot be identified, certain factors are apparent and others can be reasonably inferred. A woman who becomes disabled and has no husband to whom she can look for support is much more likely to need public assistance than a disabled married woman. The women receiving aid were also found to have a median age 2 years higher than that of the men. Data on earlier marital status are not available, but the higher average age

of the women, coupled with their greater life expectancy, makes it probable that a substantial proportion of the nonmarried women were widowed. Particularly for those older widows with permanent impairments who have not attempted to work for years, the likelihood of being able to engage in a useful occupation is slight. It also seems reasonable to infer that, because women have less work experience, a given type of impairment may cause a total loss of earning capacity more frequently among women than among men. The working skills possessed by the women may be less varied than those of the men; as a result, when a disabling impairment strikes, the women are less likely to have a residual skill that will enable them to maintain economic self-sufficiency.

The even distribution of the sexes among all recipients obscures wide differences in the distributions by race (more men than women were white, fewer men than women were nonwhite); by marital status (more men than women were married, fewer men than women were nonmarried); by employment history (more men than women had previous work experience); by origin of impairment (more men were disabled by injury); and by type of impairment (more men were disabled by injuries, deformities, tuberculosis, and cerebral accidents and more women by mental diseases, heart disease, and other circulatory diseases). The classification of impairments in relation to mobility status and personal services needed suggests that, on the whole, the men receiving aid to the disabled may have been more severely disabled than the women.