

7. ADULTS

7.8 Physical & Sensory Disability

Disability is defined by the Equality Act (2010) as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. 'Substantial' impairment means more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes you much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task. 'Long-term' means 12 months or more. Progressive conditions that worsen over time are also classed as a disability and may be classified as such from the point of diagnosis in some conditions.

7.8.1 The impact of physical and sensory disability

Disabled people face lifelong challenges and risks to their health, development and life opportunities. They are at increased risk of co-morbidities, developmental problems and poorer health later in life.

7.8.2 Information on Physical and sensory disability

The proportion of disabled children within Buckinghamshire is around 6%,



this proportion increases with age to 15% in working age adults



and 45% of people above retirement age.



These proportions do vary slightly from the national rates of disability where over 50% of people aged 65 and over could be considered as disabled. This difference in prevalence rates indicates that in Buckinghamshire, a smaller proportion of people

are born disabled or with sensory impairment than nationally and that fewer people become disabled as they age.

Though there are many reasons a person is or will become disabled, for adults the most common factors leading to disability or sensory impairment are age related. Some of the common (and in some cases preventable) causes of impairment include:

- Cataract
- Age related macular degeneration
- Glaucoma
- Diabetes
- Age related damage to the cochlea

7.8.3 Information relevant to physical and sensory disability of the Buckinghamshire population

In Buckinghamshire, the proportion of people with a serious physical disability has remained relatively constant, showing approximately 0.4% growth over the last five years. The long term forecast for this trend shows this growth rate increasing to 0.7% by 2030 (7,416 adults in 2015 vs. 7,993 adults in 2030)

An estimated 24,702 adults in Buckinghamshire aged 18-64 have a moderate physical disability. This figure is projected to rise to 26,040 by 2030 (5.4% increase)

For adults aged 65 and over in Buckinghamshire it is estimated that in 2015 there were more than 17,756 adults who were unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own. This figure is projected to rise by 55% in 2030 to a total of 27,534 people, with the biggest increases amongst those people aged over 85.

In Buckinghamshire there are an estimated 8,256 adults, most of them aged over 65, who have a moderate to serious visual impairment. This number is predicted to rise to 12,560 in 2030 (34.3% growth).

In addition to those with visual serious and moderate visual impairment, there are a predicted 2,790 people with registerable eye conditions. This number rises to 4,627 by 2030.

Numbers of people with profound hearing impairment is forecast to increase dramatically from 1,167 in 2015 to 1,885 in 2030 (an increase of 61.5%)

There are an estimated 73,321 people who are deaf/hard of hearing in Buckinghamshire. The majority of people who are hard of hearing are aged over 60.

7.8.4 Inequalities

People from Black and Minority Ethnic groups who have a physical/sensory disability represent 6% of adult social care clients, whereas they represent 11% of the 18+ population in Buckinghamshire. The disparity between those in receipt of social care and those expected to be disabled within the BME community is likely to suggest that the BME population is significantly disadvantaged when accessing health and social care.

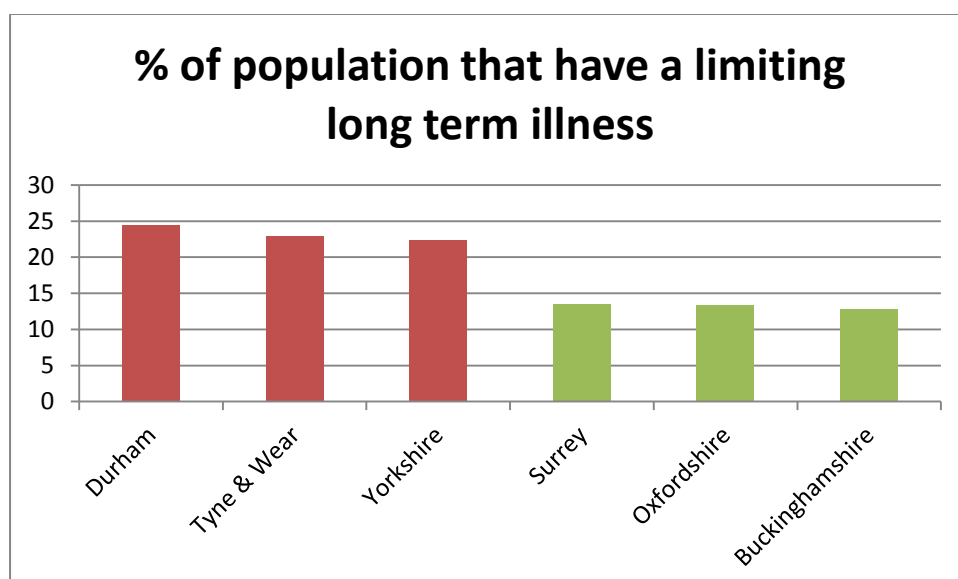
A substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled.

People with a disability are more likely to experience problems with hate crime or harassment; a quarter of all disabled people say that they have experienced hate crime or harassment.

7.8.5 Comparisons

The figure below shows the counties with the highest proportions of people who have a limiting long term illness, plotted against the counties with the lowest proportions of limiting long term illness.

Figure 1 Counties with the highest proportions of people who have a limiting long term illness, plotted against the counties with the lowest proportions of limiting long term illness



Following on from this statistic, it has been identified that adults with impairments living in the North and the South West of England have the highest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted. On the opposite end of this spectrum, adults with impairments living in the South East report the lowest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted.

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Disabled people whether they are born with a disability or become disabled in later life, are at risk of immediate and lifelong risks to their health and wellbeing. Therefore any increase in the proportion of disabled people in Buckinghamshire will have the potential to have a dramatic impact on the local health and care system.

7.8.7 Horizon scanning

A new PSD health and social care strategy on behalf of the CCGs and Buckinghamshire County Council is under development and will refocus the provision of services offered to disabled people in Buckinghamshire. The strategy will be produced by early Summer 2016. This will provide an opportunity for improved coordination between health and social care whilst improving the breadth of provision for the rapidly expanding population of older adults that are disabled.

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