

reported income from one or more pension or assistance plans; disability pensions from the Canada Pension Plan or the Quebec Pension Plan were the most frequently cited sources of such incomes.

Many disabled adults were restricted in their ability to travel and those who were able to leave their homes may have required special transportation. Among the 2,448,000 disabled adults, 158,000 were unable to leave their residences because of their condition or health problems; 302,000 could not take long-distance trips and 121,000 reported that they could not travel at all.

Local public transportation was available to 59% of those who were able to leave their homes, and among those who did have access, some 281,000 persons (21%) reported difficulties in using it. The most frequently mentioned difficulties concerned getting on or off the bus or streetcar, or simply getting to the bus stop. Some communities have a special bus or van service for people who cannot use regular public transport. Approximately 142,000 disabled adults indicated a need for this service, of whom 80,000 indicated that it was available to them. Those disabled adults who were able to leave their homes and make trips of more than 80 kilometres were asked if they had difficulty using each of three modes of long-distance public transportation. Problems with air travel were mentioned by 7%, difficulties in travelling by bus were mentioned by 15%, and 7% mentioned problems in travelling by rail. Boarding was the most frequently reported problem for each mode of transport.

Approximately 302,000 children under the age of 15, or 6% of the Canadian population in this age group, were identified as disabled. This prevalence ranged from 4% of those aged 0-4 to 7% among those aged 10-14.

Disabled children were most likely to be identified by being reported to have an activity limitation at school, play or in other typical activities (110,000); other categories frequently mentioned were learning disabilities (66,000), heart conditions (40,000), hearing trouble (33,000) and other chronic health problems (37,000). For the 110,000 children with a general activity limitation, diseases of the respiratory system were the most common cause (23%) of such limitation.

Of the 224,000 disabled children aged 5-14 in Canada, many required special schooling. In October 1983, 12,000 disabled children who were going to school attended special schools. A further 10,000 children were attending special classes in a regular school and 31,000 were attending a mix of regular and special classes. A learning

disability was the most frequently cited problem requiring attendance at special schools or classes.

**Canada's disability database program.** The first data collection activity in the creation of a national database on disability was the Canadian Health and Disability Survey which was conducted in 1983-84 and described in detail in the preceding part of this section.

The second activity toward the creation of this database was the inclusion of a question on disability on the 1986 Census population questionnaire distributed to one out of every five households across Canada. The primary purpose for the inclusion of this question on the Census was to identify the disabled population for a follow-up, more in-depth survey, *The Health and Activity Limitation Survey*.

*The Health and Activity Limitation Survey*, conducted by Statistics Canada in 1986-87, was the third data collection activity in the building of the national database on disability. The release of the data from this first postcensal survey gives data users the opportunity to obtain comprehensive and detailed information on the characteristics of disabled persons, and on the socio-economic circumstances they encounter.

*The Health and Activity Limitation Survey* was the first to include residents from the 10 provinces and the two territories, residents of remote areas of the North and Indian reserves, as well as long-term residents of institutions such as orphanages, children's homes, homes for the aged and other health-care facilities. Greater geographic detail provided data for large cities as well as a number of municipalities. The large sample size provided information on children, 0-14 years, adults, 15-64 years, seniors, 65+ years, and disabled persons residing in institutions. The types of disabilities have been extended to include psychiatric and learning disabilities.

Respondents in private households were asked questions designed to paint a portrait of the living conditions of Canada's disabled population. The questions asked of respondents in residential-care facilities were modified slightly to take account of the institutional environment.

*Survey highlights.* Approximately 3,316,870 Canadians (13.2% of the total population) experienced some level of disability according to *The Health and Activity Limitation Survey*, conducted in 1986-87; 247,275 were residing in health-related institutions and homes for senior citizens. These rates were slightly higher than those measured in the 1983-84 study, but reflected the change in geographic coverage as well as the changes in the types of disabilities.