

People with Disabilities

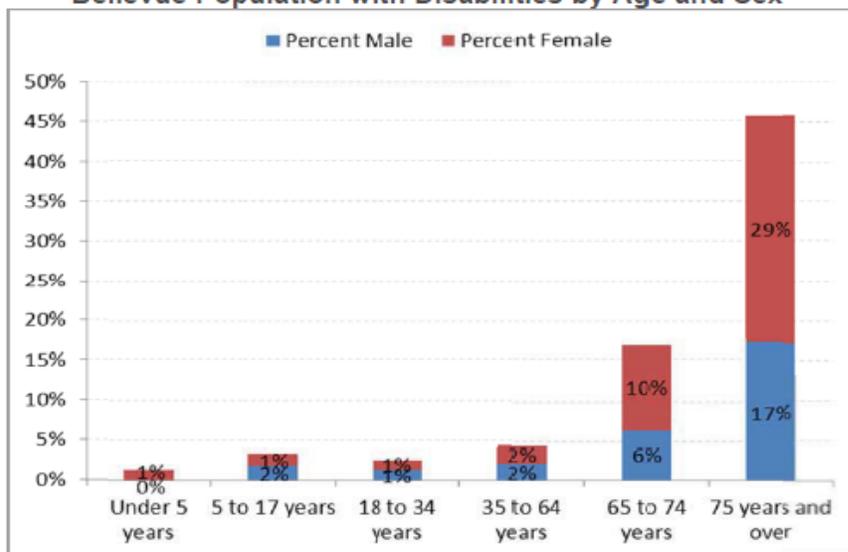
It is estimated that 1 in 5 people in the U.S. population has some type of disability.¹ With medical advances helping more people survive longer with disabilities than in the past, there is a greater need for communities to provide a network of supports. A top priority among many people with disabilities, and those who help care for them, continue to be improving community-based services, including access to information about services, affordable housing, after-school programs, respite care, employment support, and accessible transportation, to facilitate their inclusion in all activities of daily life.

Note: This chapter will deal primarily with issues related to developmental and physical disabilities. For more information on mental illness, please see *Goal 4: Health Care to Be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible*. For more information about *Older Adults or Veterans*, please see these sections under *Specific Populations*.

What's Working?

- AtWork! was selected as an embedded provider in the Bellevue School District and it has been an excellent partnership. Staff work with school staff on site to help students with disabilities make the transition between school and adult life with a job in the community. During the 2011-2012 school year, AtWork! placed 100% of the students with disabilities who were graduating in jobs.
- Kindering and Harrington House have a collaboration in which Kindering provides developmental evaluations and/or screenings for all of the children/families at Harrington's residence. In addition, they offer a 10 week home visiting program to all interested residents, regardless of their child's developmental need. They are also developing collaborations with other transitional housing programs to better serve families who may experience barriers when accessing early intervention, or for whom an early learning, home-visiting program is of benefit.
- Elder and Adult Day Services has created an innovative day program, Young Adult Achievement Center, for those 18-30 years old with developmental disabilities in King County. The program works to increase social skills, facilitate community access, and reduce isolating behaviors.
- My Home, My Life, a program funded by King County Division of Developmental Disabilities, meets each month in Shoreline, Kent and Mercer Island. They begin and

Bellevue Population with Disabilities by Age and Sex



Source: 2008-2010 American Community Survey

end each meeting with networking and a dessert potluck. After introductions, the Self-Advocacy Group (for adults with disabilities) breaks out to have their own meeting, where they discuss their chosen topic and build their social networks. In the larger group, made up of parents, siblings and/or other family members, presentations and open discussions have addressed such issues as affordable housing; independent living options; the adult service system; employment; social and recreational opportunities; SSI and other benefits; adult family homes; relationships; and accessing community resources.

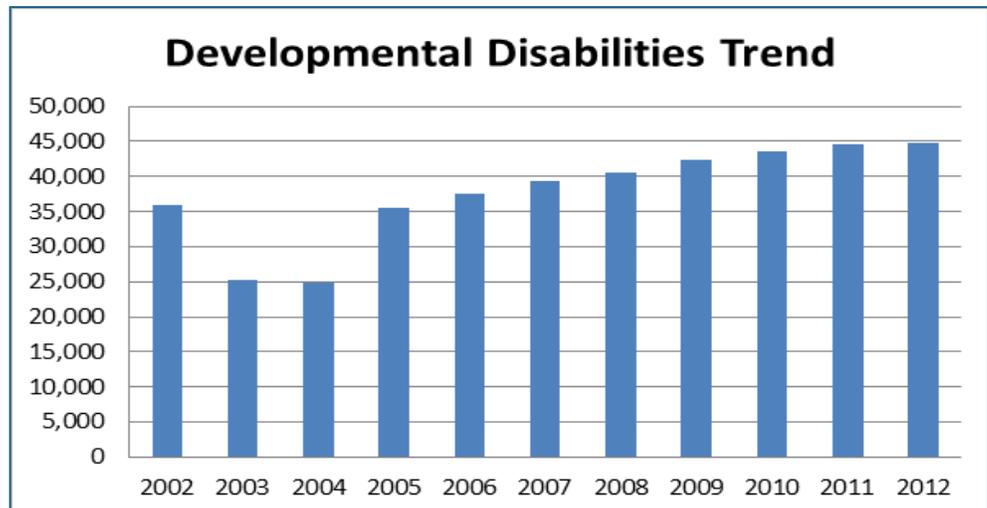
Prevalence Adults

- According to 2011 American Community Survey estimates, about 37 million people in the U.S. have some type of long-lasting condition or disability. This represented 12% of the population aged five and older.²
- Approximately 7% of Bellevue's population 5 years and older has a disability. More specifically, approximately 4,300 residents reported having at least one disability. Among the different disabilities reported, 17% were hearing; 6%, vision; 16%, cognitive; 27% ambulatory; 12% self-care; and 21% independent living.³
- Developmental disabilities are severe physical and/or mental impairments that occur before adulthood, are permanent and limit an individual's ability to function. Washington State's current definition includes epilepsy, autism, cerebral palsy and intellectual disability.⁴ The prevalence rate of developmental disabilities, as defined in federal law, has been estimated to be 11.3 people per thousand (1.13%) of the non-

institutionalized U.S. population. Based on this rate, the estimate of King County residents who have developmental disabilities is 21,108. The estimate is likely lower than the actual number due to the increase in the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders during the past ten years.⁵

Service Trends People with Developmental Disabilities

- The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) most recent client participation report indicates that there were 44,844 persons in the State who were enrolled in their services at the end of 2012, about 1% more than the 44,555 enrolled in 2011.⁶



Source: Washington State DSHS Client Participation Report

- Enrollment has also increased over the last few years for services offered by the King County Division of Developmental Disabilities (KCDDD). Since 1980, the KCDDD client caseload has increased by about 6% per year; between 2004 and 2005, there was a 10% increase. KCDDD forecasts a continued annual increase in caseloads, based on Washington State population estimates and a national trend in which the number of babies born with developmental delays and special health care needs is increasing. This increase is partly due to medical advances that enable infants who might not have survived several years ago to live. Another

factor is longer life expectancies for persons with developmental disabilities.⁷

- As of 2012, there were 10,704 people with developmental disabilities enrolled in the State program in King County.⁸

Individuals Enrolled in DSHS/DDD, Region 4 as of December 31, 2012, by Age Group		
Age Group	No. of Individuals Enrolled in DSHS/DDD, Region 4	Percent
0-2	2,065	19.29
3-5	1,723	16.1
6-9	657	6.14
10-13	418	3.91
14-17	581	5.43
18-20	489	4.57
21-61	4,346	40.6
62-80	404	3.77
81+	21	4
Total	10,704	100
Source: DSHS Case Management Information System		

- In 2013, 898 adults ages 18 and older living in East King County were enrolled in DSHS/DDA. Of these, 369 were Bellevue residents.⁹

Support Services With and Without Waiver Plans

- The State DDD replaced its Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Community Alternatives Program (CAP) Waiver with five waivers. Waivers are agreements between the State and the Federal agency responsible for Medicaid. The State receives Federal matching funds for services provided under the waiver plan. Four waivers - Basic, Basic Plus, Core, and Community Protection – were renewed effective April 1, 2007. The newest waiver, the Children’s Intensive In-home Behavioral Support (CIIBS) waiver, was effective

May 1, 2009. Each of the five waivers provides an array of services tailored to the specific populations they serve. However, the capacity of the waiver program is limited based upon State funding. As a result, there are many more clients who are eligible and want to participate in the waiver programs than there are available slots. As of July 2013, there were 7,598 DSHS/ DDD clients in Washington State who were eligible and waiting for a space in one of the waiver plans. In King County (Region 4), as the chart below shows, only 7.1% of clients ages 0-20 are on a waiver plan, and 53.6% of clients age 21 or older are on a plan.¹⁰

- Services for clients who have waivers include Adult Residential Care, Emergency Assistance, Employment Services, Personal Care, Respite Care and a long list of other opportunities. Services for clients without waivers include some of the same programs, such as Respite and Employment Services, but access depends on eligibility and funding availability.

DSHS/DDA, King County Clients by Age Group and Waiver Status as of July 16, 2013	
Age Group	No. of DSHS/DDA King County clients
Clients ages 0-20 on a waiver plan	409
Clients ages 0-20 not on a waiver plan	5,333
Total Clients ages 0-20	5,742
Percent Clients ages 0-20 on a waiver plan	7.1%
Clients ages 21+ on a waiver plan	2,616
Clients ages 21+ not on a waiver plan	2,265
Total Clients ages 21+	4,881
Percent Clients ages 21+ on a waiver plan	53.6%
Source: DSHS Case Management Information System	

Residential Habilitation Centers (RHC)

- Since the 1960s, there has been a decrease in the number of people with all disabilities living in institutions and an increase in the number living in the community. The civil rights movement was a motivator for people with disabilities to seek jobs, hous-

ing and activities in their own communities instead of institutions. The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law in 1990, eliminating discrimination in housing, employment, transportation, and public accommodation. More recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that states must place people with disabilities in community settings when appropriate.¹¹

- Statewide, the number of persons with developmental disabilities living in residential habilitation centers (RHCs) and nursing homes, which are facilities which provide intensive nursing care and skill development for those who are severely disabled, has decreased dramatically. As of January 2011, there were fewer than 900 individuals in one of these 5 facilities in the State, compared to 4,145 at their peak in 1967. In 2011, one of these RHCs, Frances Haddon Morgan Center in Bremerton, was closed and Rainier School in Buckley will be closed by 2014. The residents of these facilities are given the choice of either moving to another RHC or to a community based residence. The average annual cost per client living in RHCs is \$172,000 compared to \$43,000 per client annually to receive personal and community support services in the family's home or community residential facilities.¹² A follow up report by the state found health and well-being indicators among former residents of the Frances Haddon Morgan Center to be high one year after moving.¹³

Residential Services

- In Washington State, the majority of people with developmental disabilities (97%) live in the community, most with their families. The remaining 3% either live in their own homes, receiving non-facility supported living services, or in licensed group care, such as adult family, boarding, or nursing homes. For those who can't live independently, supported living services offer instruction and support to persons who live in their own homes in the community. Supports may vary from a few hours per month up to 24 hours per day of one-to-one support. Clients pay for their own

rent, food and other personal expenses.¹⁴ Adult family homes (licensed facilities for six residents or more) and boarding homes (licensed facilities for seven or more residents) are available as an intermediate level of care. Nursing homes support people who need the assistance of 24-hour nursing staff. In 2013, there were 126 adult family homes, 11 boarding homes and 2 nursing facilities licensed by the State in Bellevue.¹⁵ Some of these facilities also serve frail elderly people and individuals with other disabilities, such as those related to head injuries, strokes or chronic diseases.

- In 2013, there were 5,383 adults in King County who are identified as clients of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). 1,362 of these clients live in the City of Seattle with 4,201 living outside of the city. 1,612 clients who live outside of the City of Seattle receive residential services in a variety of settings such as Supported Living, Group Homes, Adult Family Homes and State Operated Living Alternatives; 2,409 clients who live outside the City of Seattle do not receive residential services.¹⁶

Adults with Developmental Disabilities Living with Aging Parents

- Many providers believe there is a crisis emerging regarding the increased support needs of aging people with developmental disabilities who live at home with older adult parents. As of 2011, 316 individuals enrolled in DSHS/DDD Region 4 were age 40 and above and living in their parent's home. Families who are caring for this population are aging, and need assistance with transition planning, including legal, financial and residential information.¹⁷
- The Arc of King County Senior Family Caregiver Program provides services to older adult caregivers, usually parents, of adults with developmental disabilities. In some cases, the adults with disabilities have always lived at home, and are not connected with any services. Gaps include low-cost legal services for caregivers who are not low-income, but still cannot afford the full

cost of attorney fees, and housing with support services.¹⁸

- AtWork! staff report more clients with Down's Syndrome are living longer and developing early onset dementia. This results in decreased independence and increased reliance on staff and other supports to maintain employment and community living. Specialized supports to assist people with Down's Syndrome who develop dementia are being researched. Many older adults with disabilities are living with elderly parents who are struggling to maintain their own level of independence and continue to care for their adult child with disabilities. There is a growing need for supportive housing for both the individual with disabilities and their parents.¹⁹

Affordable Housing for Independent Living

- Finding affordable housing in the community is challenging for many people, but those with disabilities who seek an independent living arrangement, such as an apartment, have additional barriers. There were 8.1 million individuals receiving federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) because they are elderly, blind or disabled and have few economic resources, as of January 2013. With the average federal monthly payment of \$507/month in 2013, an SSI recipient could only afford \$169/month rent (30% of income). SSI is the only source of income for 57% of all recipients nationally.²⁰ In 2012, Out of Reach, an annual report of the cost of rental housing affordability in the U.S., stated that the Fair Market rent for a one bedroom apartment in the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan area is \$944/month, more than an entire SSI check.²¹ For individuals who rely solely on their SSI check for income, or even who receive supported employment services which pays higher wages, market rate housing is not an option.
- In response to the need for more independent housing units, KCDDD has begun to assist in capital funding of housing that reserves the lowest income units in new affordable, multi-family housing for their

clients, and also come with an additional operating subsidy, like Section 8, to ensure that units are affordable. On the Eastside, as of 2011 the last year for which numbers were available, there were a total of 119 beds in 16 facilities for Special Needs populations funded in part by A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH). Of these, 10 facilities with 83 beds are designated for people with developmental disabilities. These include group homes in Redmond, Issaquah and Bellevue as well as condos in Bellevue and apartments in Bellevue and Redmond.²²

- Locally, affordable housing for people with all disabilities is in high demand. Approximately 20% of Washington adults with developmental disabilities live in their own apartment or home.²³ Besides these individuals, many other individuals with disabilities also seek low-cost housing. The Alliance of People with disAbilities serves anyone with any disability at any age. A significant percentage (40%+) of people who ask for assistance have multiple disabilities combined with long term complex problems as a result of a lack of resources appropriate to the person's needs and preferences. Housing continues to be the top need followed by legal assistance, transportation, financial problems, health care, Social Security and other issues. The Alliance has a Disabilities Law Project that handles civil rights cases for people with disabilities.²⁴

Employment: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

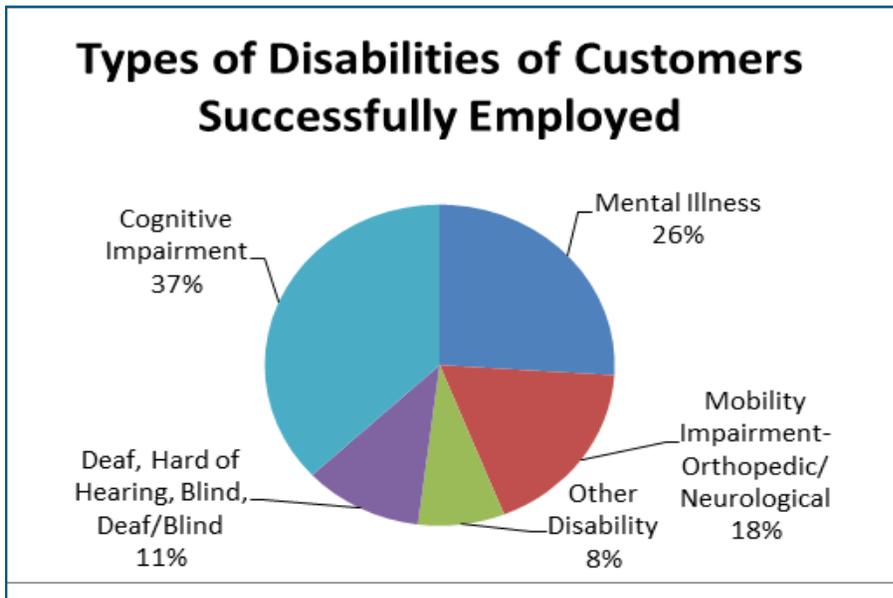
- The State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is the primary funder of services for people with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. During State Fiscal Year 2012, 37% of DVR clients had cognitive impairments, 26% had mental illness, 18% had mobility impairments, 11% were deaf, hard of hearing, blind or deaf-blind, and 8% had other disabilities.²⁵
- DVR eliminated its waiting list for services effective February 11, 2008. At its peak, the waiting list had over 14,000 individuals. In September of 2010, there were 12,502 appli-

cations for DVR services, in 2012 there were 10,217. In 2011-2012, DVR reported 2,785 total rehabilitations, at an average cost of \$6,103 per client.²⁶

- Bellevue clients represent 3.3% of the open DVR cases in Washington State as of July 31, 2013. Between October 2011 and September 2013, 509 applications for services were received at the Bellevue DVR office. Bellevue DVR clients had a somewhat higher rate of rehabilitation compared to the State (61.6% vs. 54.8%). Average hourly wages for Bellevue clients when they are placed in jobs are \$11.96, somewhat higher than the State average of \$11.03.²⁷
- The high unemployment rate in the State since the recession began in 2007 has made it even more challenging for people with disabilities to find jobs. In a recovering, but still competitive, environment, job developers need to be more creative to find work for their clients. The chart below provides the percentage of clients statewide within each disability category who were successfully employed in 2012 through DVR. Compared to two years ago, more people with cognitive impairments who are using DVR services are finding employment: in 2010, 35.09% found jobs compared to 37% in 2012.²⁸

Employment: King County DDD Contracts

- KCDDD funds long-term employment services for adults with developmental disabilities (ages 21 and over) who are enrolled with the Division Employment Vendors in the community, such as AtWork! in East King County, to provide ongoing support, job coaching, and job placement services as needed. However, State funding is insufficient to cover the cost of day programs/employment supports for the approximately 4,412 working-age adults enrolled in the KCDDD program.²⁹
- AtWork! has found success helping individuals find jobs through Customized Employment. Through volunteering, work trials, and one-on-one job coaching, each person establishes vocational goals and builds a resume that demonstrates skills needed by employers. AtWork! works with companies to customize positions that take advantage of an individual with disabilities' unique talents while meeting a critical business need. In 2012, with the economy recovering, 39 clients were placed in integrated, community jobs, a record number. 25 of these employers hired an AtWork! client for the first time.³⁰



Source: 2012 Data from Washington State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2012

Transition Programs for High School Graduates with Developmental Disabilities

- If high school students with disabilities do not have appropriate work experience and transition services while still in high school, they are often unsuccessful in finding employment. In King County, an estimated 641 individuals will be exiting high school transition programs for classes 2012 through 2015. To address this need, KCDDD, in collaboration with a series of

partners, provides the King County School to Work Project, (S2W) a program that helps young adults ages 20-21 with developmental disabilities transition from high school to the community, hopefully to a job. This program, in partnership with the Bellevue School District, provides work experience while students are still in school, and has been highly successful.³¹

- AtWork! provides School to Work transition services to students in local school districts through KCDDD. Working with high school staff, AtWork! Professional Employment Consultants serve the needs of individual students through community work experience, job trials, resume development, job search, job placement, and on the job coaching while in school and after graduation. AtWork! is the “embedded provider” for the Bellevue School District. Staff reports that schools are asking them to work with younger students to help them and their families understand the system and access services. It is a growing need as families can have a significant disruption when school ends and the student does not have a job or services. In 2013 the Bellevue School District had 10 students enrolled in AtWork!’s School-to-Work program. Nine of the students served by AtWork! had a job at graduation. Only one other student graduated without a job and AtWork! assisted in the development of her job placement. They are also working now with two additional students who have been enrolled in DVR.³² Another organization, Alliance for People with disabilities, sponsors the Youth Transition Program. The youth ages range from 12-24 with any disability and are from cities on the Eastside, including Bellevue. The program’s focus is on what the individual wants to accomplish. This is not only post-secondary or work but can include living in the community as independently as the person wants. Skills built include leadership, development, recreation, socialization, or living life with a disability. The East King County office in Bellevue assists youth in setting goals and the accomplishment of those goals in any area of life.

Increasing Cultural Diversity

- The 2010-2013 King County Plan for Developmental Disabilities Services identified a need for culturally competent services and outreach for the increasing number of people from diverse ethnic and cultural communities. According to the 2011 ACS, King County as a whole has about 26% of its population age 5 and older who are foreign born and 23.5% speak a language other than English at home.³³ In King County, 25% of clients enrolled for DDD services speak a primary language other than English.³⁴
- In Bellevue, some providers of services for people with disabilities describe a growing diversity among their participants. Kindering Center reports an increasing number of diverse families using their services; 48 languages are spoken by their participants, and 50% are non-Caucasian. KCDDD worked with the Early Intervention (EI) Action Team of the King County Interagency Coordinating Council and established targeted outreach strategies for underserved minority populations: Somali, Vietnamese, and Hispanic. The Arc of King County with its federal funded “The Family Support 360 Program” and SOAR Promoters Program both worked actively with KCDDD to provide this outreach.³⁵

Need for Additional Recreational Opportunities

- The City of Bellevue Department of Parks and Community Services provides specialized recreation opportunities for those living with disabilities as well as inclusion support to participate in generalized recreation. The majority of specialized programs occur at the Highland Community Center and several programs are based at the Tennis Center and the Aquatics Center. The Bellevue Youth Theater, Kelsey Creek Farms, Northwest Center and the Crossroads Community Center experience a high number of participants living with developmental and physical disabilities. In 2012, 425 individuals participated in 125 different programs at the Highland Community Center, which is one of the highest

drop-off and pick-up sites for the Metro Access Van program. A Recreation Inclusion Coordinator is in place to assist with accommodations or adaptations to reinforce successful experiences in general recreation programs. Bellevue has financial agreements with Kirkland and Mercer Island to provide specialized services to residents of these two cities, as well. Highland Center staff report that boys living with autism now make up about 90% of their after school programs and their summer camps. As a result of more children with autism in their programs, a higher child to staff ratio is needed. Another issue is with funding for respite care decreasing, more parents of children with disabilities who are seeking other programs so they can get a break come to Highland Center looking for programs. Other specialized recreation programs in Bellevue are offered by Catholic Community Services, Special Olympics of Washington, Special Care and OUTDOORSFORALL.³⁶

“Clients with more complex support needs do not get enough hours of support to work as much as they can or want to. Clients can’t access more than one service, so they can’t get support for community activities or rehab at the same time as employment supports. Often families struggle because work does not provide enough for the persons whole life needs”
Provider Survey, AtWork!

- During the 2012 State Legislative Session, a policy was passed that mandated that people with developmental disabilities must participate in a supported employment program for nine months before receiving approval to participate in a day program.³⁷ Elder and Adult Day Services provide a program for adults 21-30 years old with developmental disabilities. This program provides activities for them, five days/week and also serves as respite for their older parents. The Young Adult Achievement Center opened in June of 2012 and has provided 14,550 hours of service to 15 unduplicated individuals.³⁸
- Studies show adults with intellectual or physical disabilities, that had few or no ac-

tivities outside the home, suffer from much higher levels of emotional-behavioral and health problems and have fewer functional abilities than those that had jobs or activities outside of the home.³⁹

Transportation Gaps

- The demand for transportation for special needs populations, defined as older adults, people with disabilities, youth and people with low-incomes, is growing steadily. The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC), a group addressing this need, is the outgrowth of a group of King County agencies that came together informally several years ago under the leadership of the Seattle-King County Area Agency on Aging. After new legislation was passed in 2005 by the *Federal Transit Administration, called Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, (SAFETEA-LU)*, this group was formalized as the King County Coordinated Special Needs Transportation Steering Committee. Planning efforts already underway by Sound Transit led to the development of the first local and regional Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans for King County and the Puget Sound region. KCMC projects include the development of forums and trainings on mobility options and the impact of tolling of SR520 and the I-90 bridge, transportation brochures, and long-range planning for improving access.⁴⁰
- King County Metro’s Access program fills some of the need for door-to-door service for eligible people with disabilities, but continues to have gaps for many customers. In 2011, the King County Accessible Services Advisory Committee and the King County Transit Advisory Committee were merged and became the Transit Advisory Commission. This body advises Metro and King County on issues related to transit service in the county, including matters of concern to the elderly and persons with disabilities.⁴¹
- Elder and Adult Day Services (EADS) report a growing need for transportation for clients. The lack of transportation limits the number and types of outings clients

can take while participating in programs at EADS.

Prevalence Children

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that in the United States, 15% of children have a developmental or behavioral disability such as autism, intellectual disability, or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. In addition, many children have delays in language or other areas, which also impact school readiness. However, less than 50% of these children are identified as having a problem before starting school, by which time significant delays may have already occurred and opportunities for treatment have been missed.⁴²

Service Trends Need for More Funding for Early Intervention Services

- All children age birth to three who have disabilities are guaranteed early intervention services under a federal regulation called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C. King County Division of Developmental Disabilities is the Local Lead Agency that contracts to provide these services to children and families. As of December 1, 2012, 1,563 children age birth to three are enrolled in King County Early Intervention (EI) Services. This represents 2.1% of the County's estimated birth to three population as calculated using birth data; the rate required by the state is 2.5%. As of January 1, 2012, 197 children aged birth to three living in the Bellevue School District were receiving services.⁴³ In 2012, of the 3,934 children who exited EI services countywide, 180 (31%) no longer needed special intervention services.⁴⁴ Since 2008 DSHS/DDD funding for this entitlement service has been lidded so even though there has been a substantial increase in the number of children served, there has been no increase in state funding.
- Kinderling Center, one of two Eastside providers of early intervention services, reports steady 11% growth and state they have hit their physical building capacity. They are

currently the largest early intervention provider in the State. At the same time growth is so tremendous, a number of funding sources, such as Medicaid and federal dollars for children with special health care needs, have decreased beginning in 2008.⁴⁵

More Support and Information for Caregivers

- The Behavioral Support Team from Seattle Children's helps families with children with developmental disabilities in crisis. The team responds in home within 72 hours and offers 8-12 weeks of support. Their support includes completing an assessment and plan, one on one or family counseling, collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities to access services, and providing the family with community supports for when the program ends.
- According to the King County Early Intervention Service Plan, families of infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities report the need for more information and assistance from a skilled, knowledgeable person to help them with assessing and coordinating services. To address this need, KCDDD provides multiple ways for families to receive this information, including more opportunities for families whose children are in home and community settings to connect with other parents of children with disabilities.⁴⁶
- As more people with disabilities choose to live at home, respite care for their caregivers is a growing need. More than one in ten U.S. households report that at least one person has served as a family caregiver to an adult or a child. About 2% state that they have cared for a child, and 21% have cared for an adult.⁴⁷ Many families are not eligible for public funds to pay for respite care, and cannot afford to pay privately for it.⁴⁸

Community Perceptions

- In the 2013 phone/online survey, 15% of respondents indicated that *lack of services for people with disabilities* was a major or moderate problem in the community which was a significant decrease compared to past

survey results. Roughly 9.3% of respondents reported in the same survey that *not being able to find programs or affordable care for someone with a disability* was a major/moderate problem in their households, up from the 2005, 2007 and 2009 results.⁴⁹

- In the 2013 consumer survey, *not being able to find enough support as a caregiver for an elderly or disabled person* was rated by 20% of respondents as a major or moderate problem in their household compared to 28.2% in 2011; 18.6% said that it was a major or moderate problem finding affordable care or programs for a person with a disability which was a slight increase to responses in 2011 at 15%.⁵⁰
- Providers working with adults with disabilities frequently mentioned younger adults coming in for employment and community access services.⁵¹
- Information was gathered from community conversations with adults with disabilities and their families by KCDDD in spring, 2013. The feedback included issues around the constant coordination and perseverance required to obtain the services needed. Even parents with specialized training (nurse & special education teacher) found the system confusing and frustrating. Suggestions included routine screening of children and ready connection with specialized care for families. Also, a need for culturally competent services was mentioned frequently.

“The biggest barriers tend to be the various resources and programs, policies/procedures that are meant to assist. Many of the people we assist have no idea what steps to take to secure the information they need once they come to a barrier.”
Provider Survey, Alliance for People with disAbilities

- Staff from Child Care Resources reported an ongoing shortage of both childcare and after-school care for children with special needs. Funding that was once available for staff to help families find special needs care has been discontinued. Many providers are reluctant to take on special needs kids due to concerns about how to accommodate them without hiring extra staff.⁵²

- Parents who attend the Special Needs PTSA in the Bellevue School District suggested that more respite care for parents and scholarships for children in middle income families were needed. Some families just miss the cut-off to qualify for help with these costs.⁵³

Implications for Action

- Funding for services to people with all types of disabilities continues to lag behind the growth of this population in the State, in King County, and in Bellevue. The result is that there are wait lists for certain services such as housing and family support from KCDDD. And for those programs in which waiting lists are not allowed, agencies are strapped to find additional resources to fill the funding gap. This trend is predicted to continue over the next several years due in part to the higher life expectancy of the aging population with developmental disabilities, the increase of referrals of children with disabilities, and the continued development of medical procedures that now save the lives of those who in the past may not have survived trauma or complications at birth.
- Lack of affordable housing is as much of a problem for people with disabilities as it is for the rest of the population, if not greater. The need is growing faster than housing stock is produced. It is especially critical for people with disabilities to find housing in familiar neighborhood settings, near support systems and convenient amenities, in order to maintain their independence to whatever extent they are able. Another growing need in the economic recovery is for more paid and volunteer positions for people with developmental disabilities.
- Increasing options for transportation for those with disabilities is in demand and needed in order for them to participate fully in society. Without access to transportation people with disabilities are limited in their activities and growth.
- Early intervention services for children birth to three with disabilities are underfunded. Early intervention saves costs later; for some children whose special needs are identified when they are older, critical

time is lost. All sectors of the community—medical, business, education, public and non-profit could increase their efforts to promote early screening and make it easier for parents and caregivers to find help.

- There is a lack of programs for families that do not speak English as a first language. Development of programs in Spanish and other languages can better serve the large immigrant community on the Eastside.
- Childcare for children with special needs continues to be in very short supply in the community, as are programs appropriate for children age 12 and older. Community-based organizations already providing such services to typically developing children could, with training and support, help to fill this gap.
- Inclusion of people of all abilities in all communities needs to be a priority. People with disabilities who experience inclusion early in their lives are more likely to live in and actively contribute to their community as adults.

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