

# Violence against people with disability in Australia: differences by impairment



**CRE-DH**

Centre of Research  
Excellence in  
Disability and Health

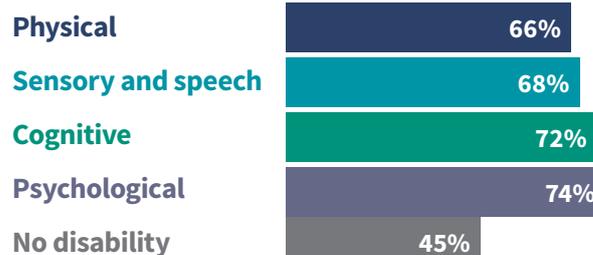
In Australia the extent and nature of violence\* against people with disability varies by impairment.

This fact sheet is part of a series on violence against people with disability in Australia and is based on current data for men and women aged 18-64 years. Data are sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Personal Safety Survey where people have reported on their recent experience of violence in the last 12 months and since the age of 15, referred to here as Lifetime Experience. The survey invites people to disclose impairments. We report on data using this term acknowledging that disability stems from the interaction between impairments (a limitation in function) and societal barriers created by attitudes, structures and environments.

## KEY FACTS

### LIFETIME EXPERIENCE

People with disability who report experiencing violence since the age of 15 by impairment.



### RECENT EXPERIENCE

People with disability who report experiencing violence in the last 12 months.

People with **cognitive impairments** and **psychological impairments** are three times as likely than people without disability to report violence in the last 12 months.



## DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE

### PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

People with disability who report at least one incident of physical violence since the age of 15 by impairment.



\* Violence includes physical or sexual violence, emotional abuse, intimate partner violence, stalking and/or harassment.

# DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In comparison to people without disability:

- People with **sensory and speech impairments** are nearly twice as likely to report sexual violence.
- People with **physical impairments** and those with **cognitive impairments** are nearly 2.5 times more likely to report sexual violence.
- People with **psychological impairments** are nearly four times as likely to report sexual violence.



## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

People with disability who report at least one incident of violence by an intimate partner\*\* since the age of 15 by impairment.



## STALKING AND HARASSMENT

People with disability who report at least one incident of staking and harassment since the age of 15 by impairment.

In comparison to people without disability:

- People with **sensory and speech impairments** and those with **physical impairments** are twice as likely to report being stalked and harassed.
- People with **cognitive impairments** are 2.5 times more likely to report stalking and harassment.



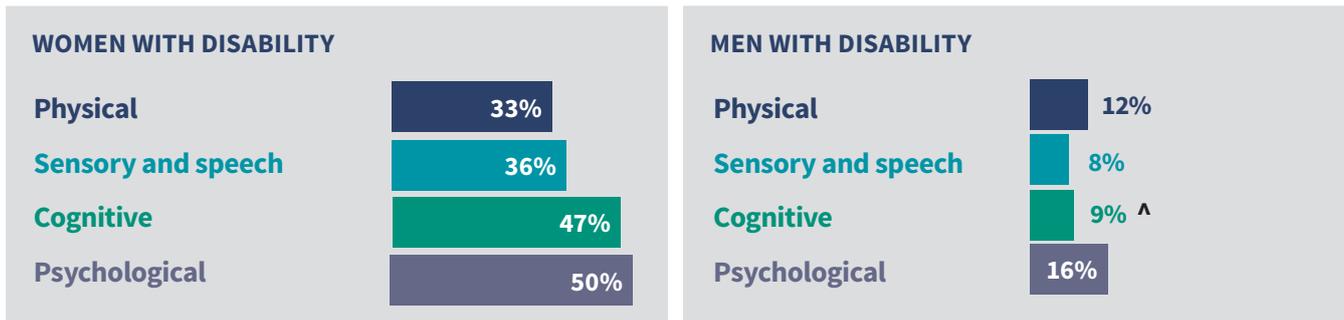
People with **psychological impairments** are three times as likely to report stalking and harassment.

\*\* Intimate partner violence comprises sexual assault, sexual threat, physical assault, and physical threat by a current or previous partner with whom the respondent lived, or current or former boyfriend, girlfriend, or date with whom the respondent did not live.

# VIOLENCE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY BY IMPAIRMENT AND GENDER

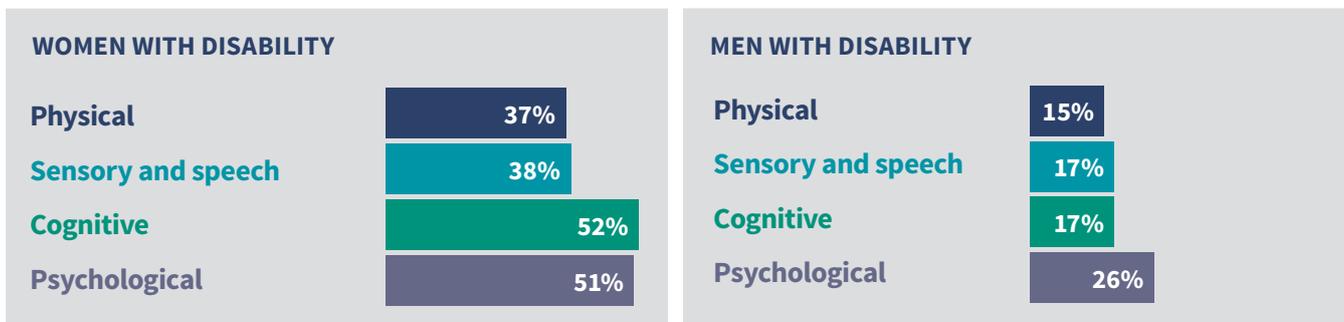
## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Women with disability are more likely than men with disability to report being sexually assaulted in their lifetime. One in two women with psychological and cognitive impairments has reported experiencing sexual violence. One in three women with sensory and speech and physical impairments has reported experiencing sexual violence.



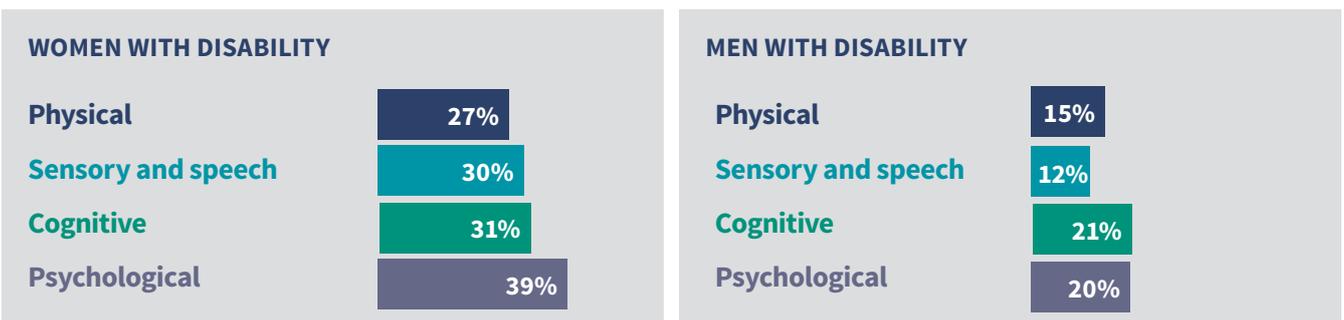
## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Women with disability are more likely than men with disability to report intimate partner violence in their lifetime. One in two women with psychological and cognitive impairments have reported at least one incident of violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15..



## STALKING AND HARASSMENT

Women with disability are more likely than men with disability to report stalking and harassment in their lifetime.



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## DATA ON DISABILITY AND VIOLENCE

Violence against people with disability is a significant human rights violation. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of people with disability who have survived violence. We thank those who have disclosed their experiences for making this work possible.

The Personal Safety Survey does not provide support for people who need assistance to complete the survey and therefore does not represent the experiences of all people with disability.

Prevalence estimates are for individual impairment types including: physical; sensory (including sight and hearing) and speech; cognitive (including intellectual impairments, stroke, head injury and brain damage); and psychological impairments.

Many people report more than one impairment type and not all impairment types are represented in these data.

We report on recent experiences of violence (last 12 months) and since the age of 15 (the survey selected reference period for lifetime experiences):

- **recent experiences** (the last 12 months) provide an indication of recent experiences of violence.
- **lifetime experiences** (since the age of 15) estimate the total number of people ever affected by violence.

While gender is non binary, the data sources we refer to define people as men or women and we have reflected that in our findings.

Estimates are directly age-adjusted to the June 2018 Australian population.

In the data, violence refers to an occurrence, or threat and includes violence perpetrated by persons both known (current or former partner or family member) and unknown.

For more information on how disability is collected in the survey, see: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4906.0.55.003main+features122016>

^ These estimates are based on small numbers and should be interpreted with caution.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

This fact sheet was produced by the team at the Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH) and funded by the Melbourne Disability Institute.

Source: ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2017. Microdata: Personal Safety, Australia, 2016. ABS cat. No. 4906.0.55.001. Canberra: ABS. CRE-DH analysis of DataLab. Note: Figures are rounded.

[www.credh.org.au](http://www.credh.org.au)