



Assessing Health Care for People with Disabilities

A fact sheet about the need for and creation of the OHCUP

People with disabilities face significant barriers to accessing health care. Over 58 million Americans live with a disability and the difficulty in getting health care has a serious impact on their health and wellness. Despite the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibiting discrimination in 1991, many health care clinics are not accessible for people with disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) have over 500 individual items and they do not allow for any distinction between what is accessible for some types of disabilities and not for others, nor do they specifically address health care clinics.

Making the Outpatient Health Care Usability Profile (OHCUP)

While other checklists do exist, these tools were not validated by people with disabilities, are unable to capture accessibility for different users or they do not address outpatient health care clinics specifically.

We wanted to make a valid, reliable, and easy to use tool that would measure health care clinics and show if they are usable for people with three different types of disabilities: mobility, sensory and cognitive.

Establishing validity

Survey of people with disabilities

First, we analyzed over 900 responses from people who told reported their experiences with accessing health care and identified areas of greatest concern.

Workgroups of people with disabilities

Then, we formed three work groups of people with various types of disabilities and asked them to review the ADAAG Checklist for Existing Facilities 2.1 and, by consensus, narrow the items to those they considered “essential to usability”.

Subject Matter Expert review

Finally, we sent the list to the Directors of the ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers and their staff to further narrow the items based on their designation of “essential to usability” using a Content Validity Ratio cutoff of .5.

Definitions

Accessible: an outpatient clinic that meets the standards set forth by the ADAAG.

Usable: an outpatient clinic that meets the standards that people with disabilities and subject matter experts feel are essential to accessing health care services.

Establishing reliability

Recruiting clinics

Ten clinics in the Portland Metro Area, ranging from one to twelve clinicians, were randomly selected and consented to participate in the study.

Testing was done by two researchers working independently during off-peak clinic hours to minimize inconvenience to daily operations.

Reliability statistics

After running reliability statistics, we decided to modify items that had low inter-rater reliability by refining some language and adding graphics.

Testing was then repeated at the same ten clinics using one original researcher and one new researcher in order to ensure remove the possibility that inter-rater reliability was increasing due to the researcher's familiarity with the questions.

Reliability statistics were run again. The few remaining items with low reliability were further refined and tested again so that acceptable agreement (Kappa >.8) was reached.

Establishing ease of use

The OHCUP requires an average of 45 minutes to complete.

No prior experience or knowledge of ADA or ADAAG is necessary.

No special tools required, only the checklist, a pen and a measuring tape.

The checklist follows the path of travel of a patient through the clinic to eliminate unnecessary testing of every area of the building.

For more information

To get a copy of the OHCUP, please visit our website at www.healthwellness.org or call us at 503.494.3534.

On our website, you can read more about our other projects promoting the health and wellness of people with disabilities, including barriers to accessing care for people with disabilities.

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