

Wheelchair and Scooter Use and Access in Canada: Prevalence and Policy

Emma M. Smith and William C. Miller
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

WFOT Congress 2018
Cape Town, South Africa

May 24th, 2018



Acknowledgements



Canadian Disability Participation Project



Canadian Disability Policy Alliance
**Alliance Canadienne concernant
les politiques reliées au handicap**



**REHABILITATION
RESEARCH
PROGRAM**

REVOLUTIONIZING REHABILITATION PRACTICE; ENABLING ABILITY



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

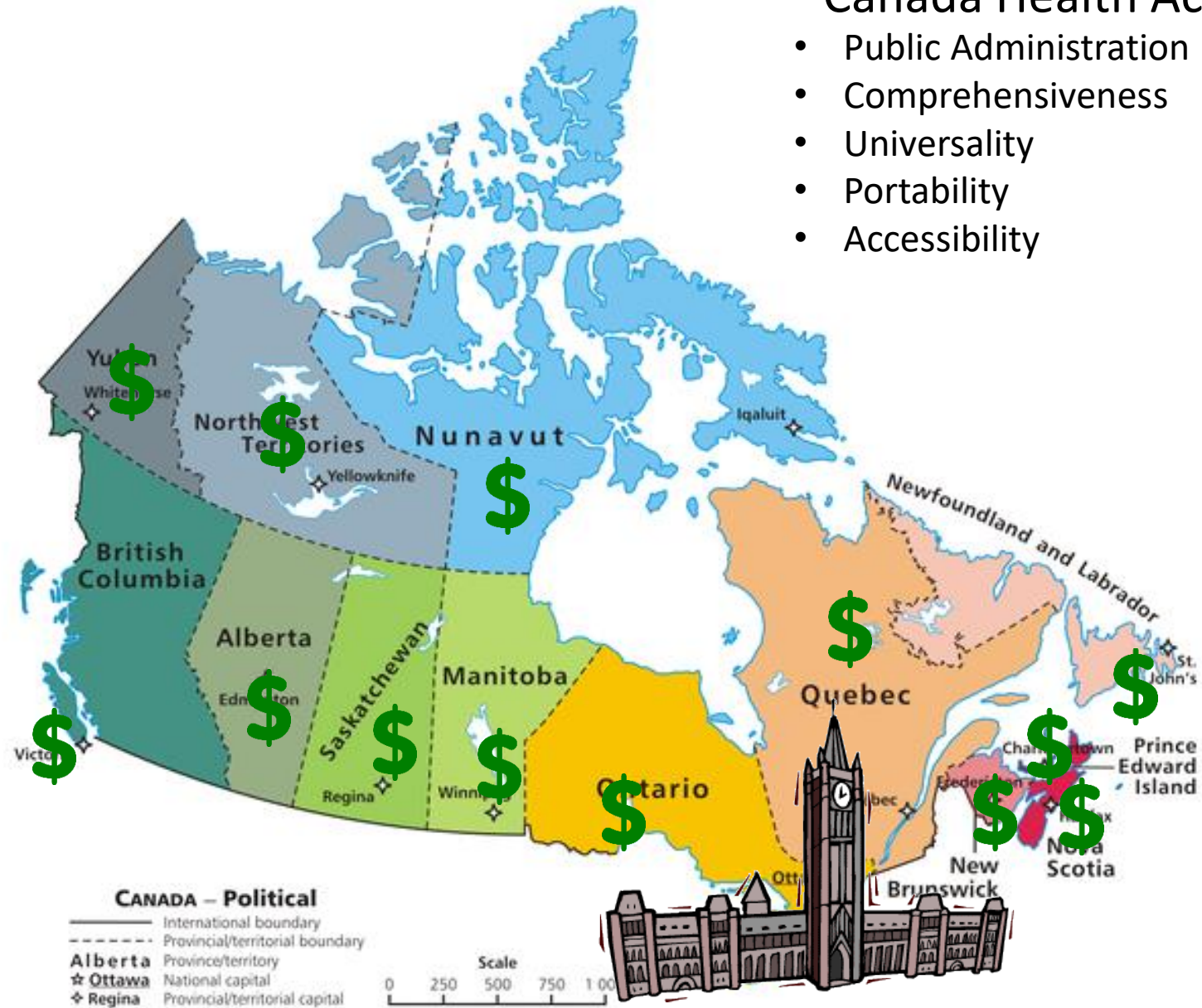
Alzheimer Society
CANADA



CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

Canada Health Act, 1984

- Public Administration
- Comprehensiveness
- Universality
- Portability
- Accessibility



Methods

Using the Canadian Survey on Disability (Statistics Canada), we conducted bootstrapping analysis to estimate the prevalence and demographic factors associated with wheelchair use for community-dwelling Canadians over the age of 15.

Using the Disability Policy Lens (Canadian Disability Policy Alliance), we conducted a national evaluation of policies regulating funding for wheeled mobility devices, verified by clinicians experienced in device provision in each jurisdiction.

Catalogue no. 89-654-X — No. 001
ISBN 978-1-100-22946-1

Data Tables

Canadian Survey on Disability



December 2013



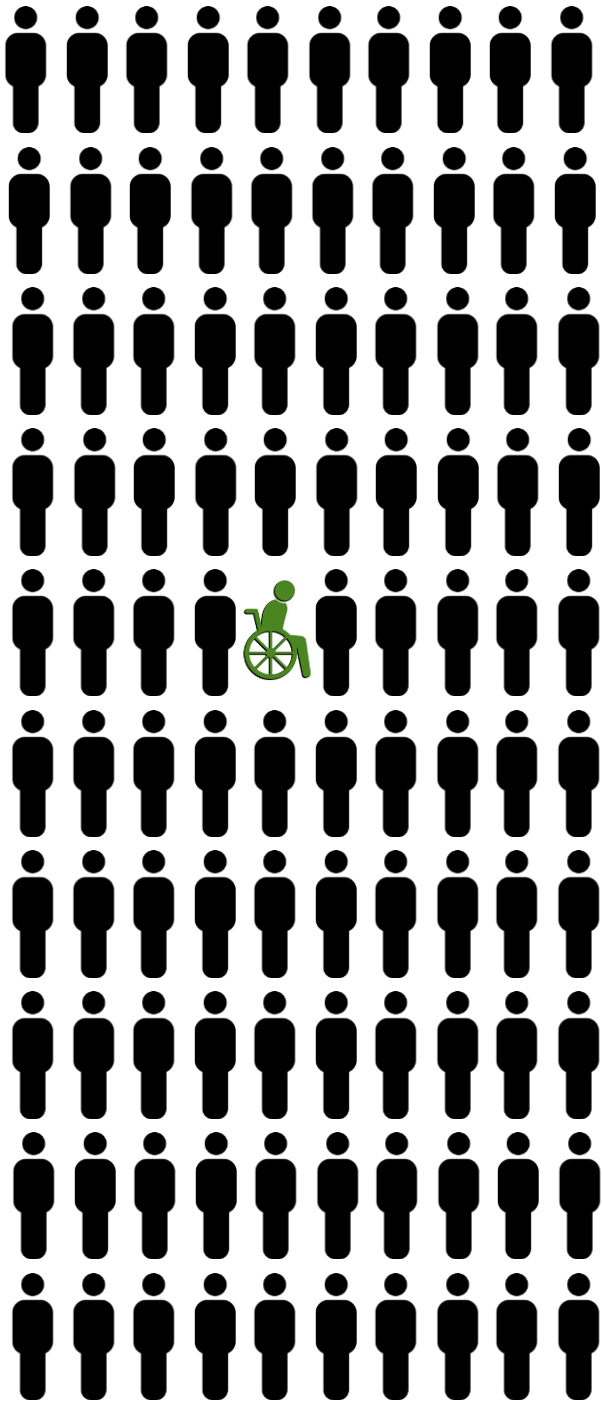
THE DISABILITY POLICY LENS (2nd ed.)

The Disability Policy Lens was developed to assist scholars, policy-makers & advocates to analyze policy affecting people with disabilities in Canada. The 7 questions take readers through a process of considering the implications for people with disabilities of specific policies. The Lens is unique in that it is **brief**, and **non-prescriptive**. There are no correct or incorrect answers to these questions, but each has important implications that should be carefully considered when creating or amending policy.

1. Does the policy specifically mention people with disabilities? Has explicit consideration been afforded to the consequences for people with disabilities?
2. If so, how is disability defined? Who is considered “disabled” according to the policy? Does the policy refer specifically to people with:
 - physical, cognitive, sensory or mental illness-related disabilities?
 - permanent, long-standing, temporary or episodic disabilities?
 - severe, moderate or mild disabilities?

Who is considered eligible for consideration under the policy? Who is included / excluded, and who decides who qualifies as disabled?

3. Which of the following 3 aims does the policy seek to achieve?



288 800

wheeled mobility
device users

197 560



109.5%

use more than
one device



42 360



Average age 65.4



% of population using wheeled mobility

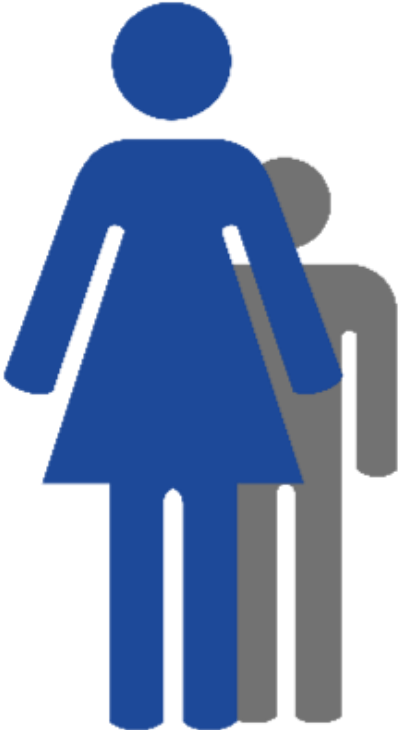
5%
4%
3%
2%
1%

15-24 25-44 45-64 65-74 75+

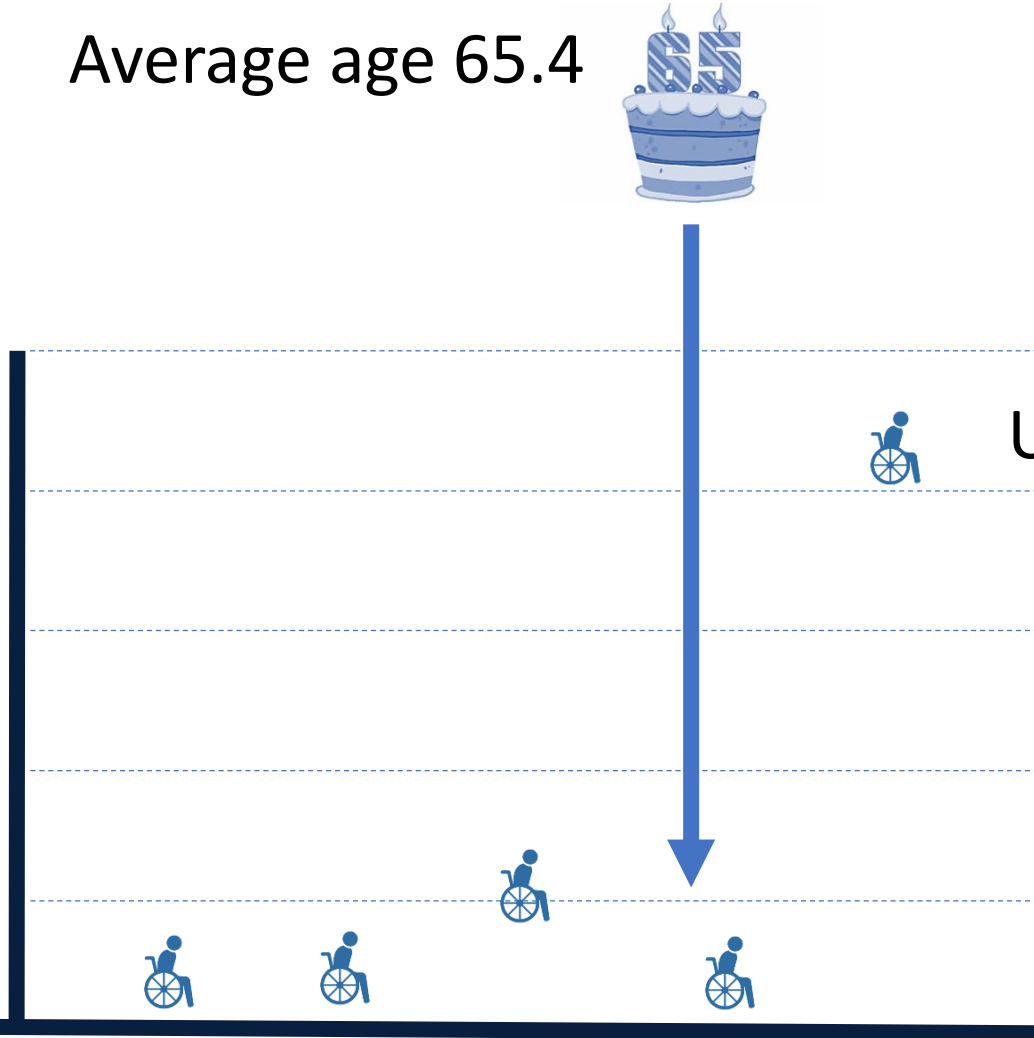
Age



Use increases with age

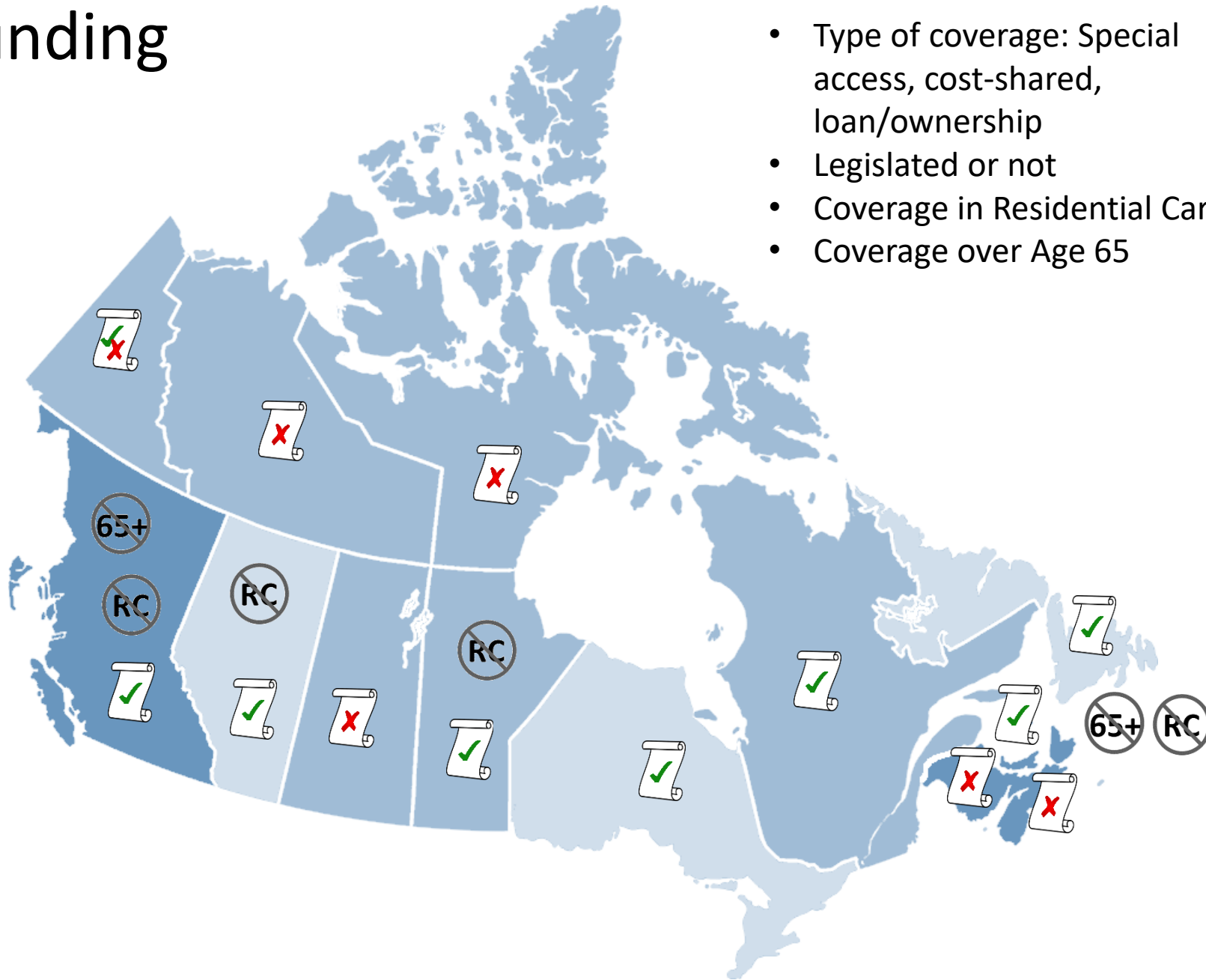


60% female



Funding

- Type of coverage: Special access, cost-shared, loan/ownership
- Legislated or not
- Coverage in Residential Care
- Coverage over Age 65



Key Issue

Coverage for Ageing Adults



Key Issue

Definition of Basic and Essential Mobility



Key Issue

Definition of Disability



Conclusions

- Unequal access to funding across/within jurisdictions
- Range in eligibility and funding levels
- Variance in requirement of income test
- Varying definitions of disability and basic/essential need
- Lack of available funding for multiple needs/devices

References

- Brandt, Å., Iwarsson, S., & Ståhle, A. (2004). Older people's use of powered wheelchairs for activity and participation. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*, 36(2), 70–77. doi:10.1080/16501970310017432
- Canada Health Act (1985, c. C-6). Retrieved from <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-6/FullText.html>
- McColl, M. A., Roberts, L., Smith, E., & Miller, W. (2015). *Policy governing support for mobility aids for people with disabilities in Canada*. Retrieved from www.disabilitypolicyalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Mobility-Policy-Scan-281015.docx
- Mortenson, W. B., Hammell, K. W., Luts, A., Soles, C., & Miller, W. C. (2015). The power of powered wheelchairs: Mobility choices of community-dwelling older adults. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 22(5), 394–401.
- Salminen, A.L., Brandt, A., Samuelsson, K., Töytäri, O., & Malmivaara, A. (2009). Mobility devices to promote activity and participation: A systematic review. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*, 41(9), 697–706. doi:10.2340/16501977-0427
- Shields, M. (2004). Use of wheelchairs and other mobility support devices. *Health Reports*, 15(3), 37–41.
- Smith, E.M., Giesbrecht, E.M., Mortenson, W.B., Miller, W.C. (2016) The prevalence of wheeled mobility device use among community dwelling Canadians. *Physical Therapy Journal*. (Epub ahead of print). Retrieved from: <http://ptjournal.apta.org/content/early/2016/02/03/ptj.20150574.long>
- United Nations. (2006). Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. *Treaty Series*, 2515, 3. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>