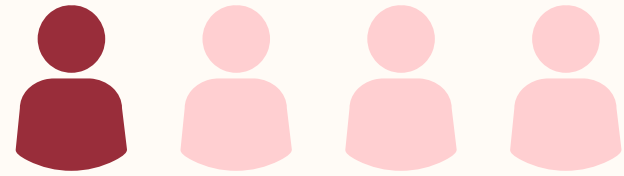


In Support of Creating a National Committee on Disability

The creation of this NASW National Committee would support the equitable participation of disabled social workers in the profession and advance disability inclusion.



Demographics

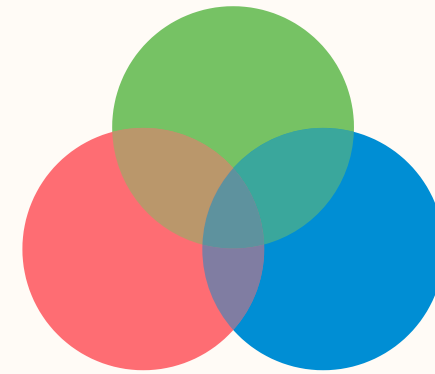


1 in 4

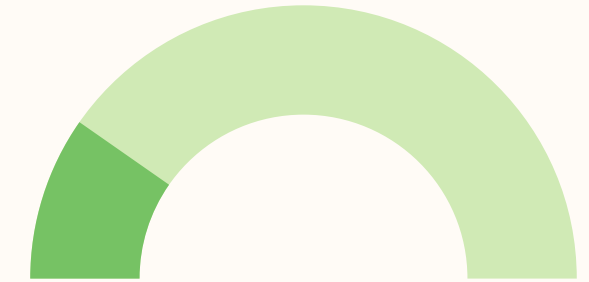
61 million U.S. adults report having at least one disability

2x

The unemployment rate is twice as high for disabled people



Disability is intersectional



19.4% of undergrad & 11.9% of graduate students report having at least one disability

Demographics

Currently, disability status is not measured as a demographic in the U.S. social work workforce.

The British Association of Social Work reports nearly 1 in 10 – 9.5% – of their social work workforce indicated they have a disability.

Estimated 9.5%

Applied to the U.S. social work workforce, that would estimate nearly **70,000** social workers with disabilities.



In Social Work Education

Barriers in internships

Less than 15% of social work students who identified as having a disability received field placement accommodations

Lack of disability inclusion

Addressing disability seems to be a low program priority, and neither students nor faculty feel confident of program capacity to meet this challenge

Lack of universal design principles as a priority

Universal design for learning (UDL) can reduce ableism & support accessibility. Less than 20% of instructors without disabilities consider universal design principles & less than 50% of instructors with disabilities consider UDL.



In Social Work Employment

Employment Barriers

The 2022 labor force participation rate for people with disabilities was 21.3%, compared to 65.4% for people without disabilities – a gap of 44%

Lack of Disability Knowledge

Employers are often unable or unwilling to imagine alternative ways of performing jobs.

Social Work Burnout

The systemic barriers that contribute to burnout in the profession also have the opportunity to disproportionately impact social workers with disabilities



In Social Work Associations

Lack of Data

No surveys have made an effort to investigate the prevalence of disability in the social work profession.

Barriers in Licensure

There is no info related to exam pass rates or licensure and disability and difficult or absent accommodation processes.

Lack of Representation

Only 7% of NASW Chapters have a disability related group publicly listed and only 29% have a general diversity related group, which often doesn't list disability.

Models

The 4 organizations and 2 NASW Chapters below each have disability focused committees that can be used as models for an NASW National Committee on Disability.



Recommendations

Create a 6 member National Committee on Disability to focus on

- Inclusion of disability and well-being perspectives in NASW policies and programs
- Promoting knowledge, theory and practice related to disability and well-being, especially in social work education, employment and the overall profession
- Monitoring legislative, policy and data changes, with regard to disabled people
- Identifying ways to eliminate ableist social work practices and policies