

“I’m in Hell...”: Experiences of Unmet Health Care Needs Among People with Pre-Existing Disability and Long COVID

Summary

This study looked at how unmet health care needs were different between people with disabilities who also had long COVID and people with disabilities who do not have long COVID. Unmet health care need is when someone needs to see a doctor, get medicine or a medical device, but they can’t.

Here’s what we did:

1. The study included 581 people who had disabilities before the COVID-19 pandemic. The data was from the 2022 National Survey on Health and Disability (NSHD).

Here’s what we found:

1. People with disabilities and long COVID had more unmet health care needs than people with disabilities who did not have long COVID: 73% of people with disabilities and long COVID had unmet health care needs, compared to 62.6% of people with a disability but not long COVID.
2. Many people with disabilities and long COVID had experiences like:
 - their disability getting worse,
 - financial problems,
 - trouble getting health care, and
 - not being believed by doctors.

This study showed how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted people with disabilities.

Sullivan DL, Goddard DS, Kurth NK & Hall JP. (2025). "I'm in Hell ...": Experiences of unmet health care needs among people with pre-existing disability and Long COVID. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*: 36(2). 572-589. [10.1353/hpu.2025.a959114](https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2025.a959114)