



Center for Disability Health and Wellness

A PRIMER FOR CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



**Advancing Health Equity among Adults
with Disabilities from Diverse Communities**

REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER

*Supported by a grant from the National Institute on Disability,
Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR #90RTHF0005)*

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Living with Disability: Bernard's Perspective



To consider...

What is *Disability*
to you as a
healthcare provider
or organization?

Objectives

- To discuss what disabilities are and what it means to live with one
- To examine how many people think about disability and the impact of those attitudes on outcomes for people with disabilities
- To discuss the responsibilities of healthcare systems to develop supportive environments and policies that allow them to listen to and collaborate with people with disabilities

Flow

- **Key Terms**
- **Health and Healthcare Disparities Disability**
- **Research Findings**
- **Creating Accessible Environments and Tailoring Care to Optimize Outcomes**
- **CDHW**
- **Summary**
- **Questions**

DISABILITY

Disability by the Numbers

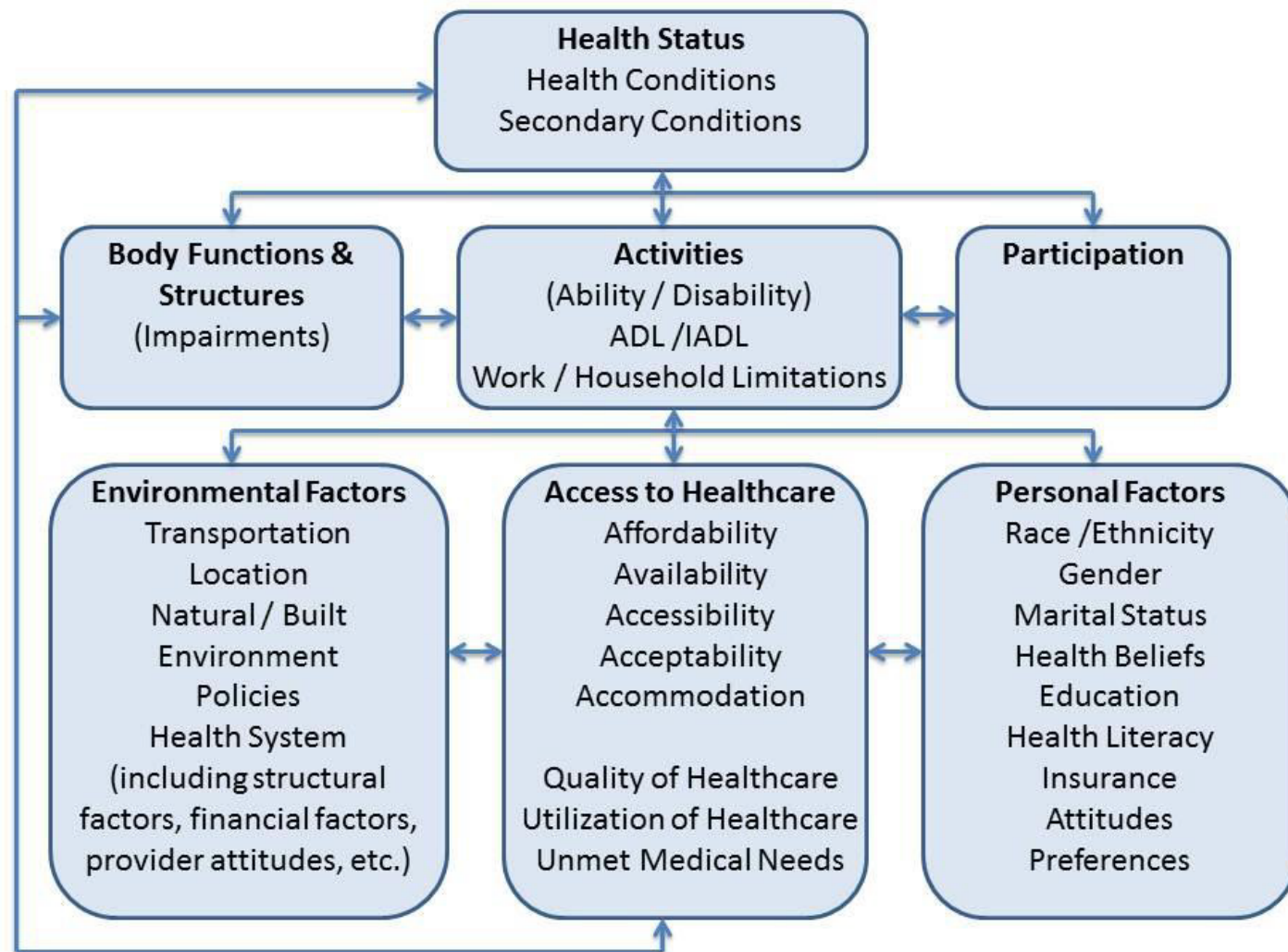
- 70.1 million – or more than 1 in 4 - adults in the United States
- 1 in 3 adults in Michigan
- Poorer Health Outcomes
- Less Access to Care
- Lower Quality of Care
- Compounded Disparities based on Social Determinants of Health

Models of Disability

- Medical Model
- Independent Living / Social Model
- ICF Model

Model of Healthcare Disparities and Disability

(Meade, Mahmoudi & Lee, 2015)





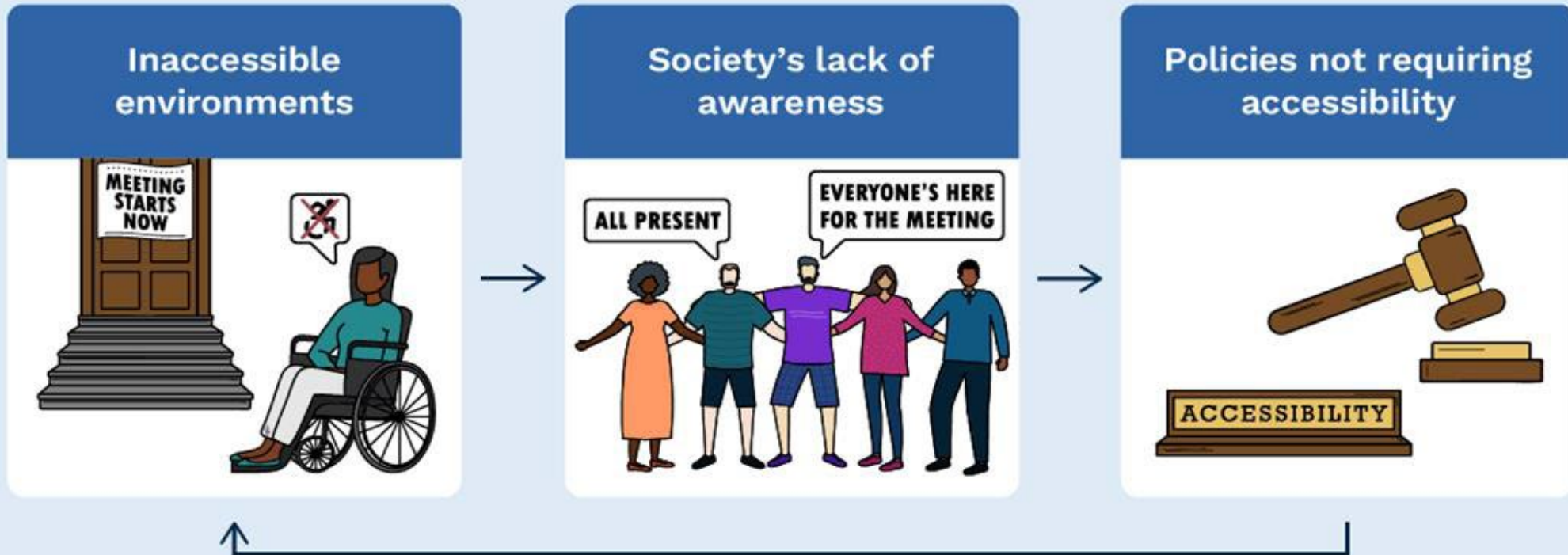
➤ <https://youtu.be/UMSj7Jx5Qmo>

Disability and Invisibility

INFOGRAPHIC OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDES, OPPORTUNITIES AND POLICIES

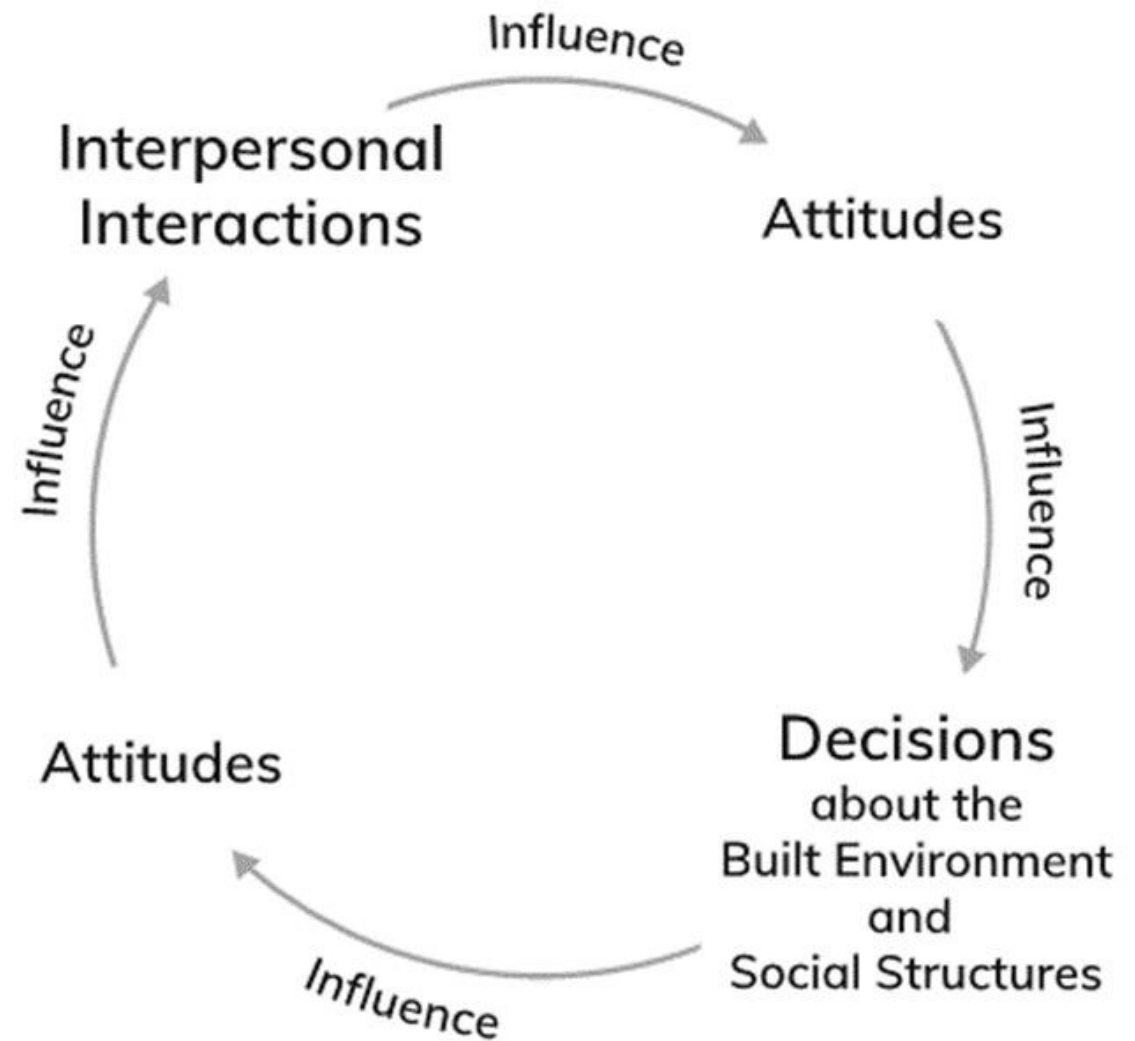


How people with disabilities experience society's attitudes through their interactions with people, places, and programs



Learn more: Reber, L., Kreschmer, J. M., James, T. G., Junior, J. D., DeShong, G. L., Parker, S., & Meade, M. A. (2022). Ableism and Contours of the Attitudinal Environment as Identified by Adults with Long-Term Physical Disabilities: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(12), 7469 <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19127469>. This research was supported by a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR #90RTHF0001-01-00).

Influence of Attitudes on Environment



The COVID-19 Pandemic and People with Disabilities



Research and Reports

■ Research

- Rates of death among individuals with down syndrome 10 x's higher with adjustment (Clift et al, 2020)
- 82.4% of physicians thought that people with disabilities have a worse quality of life (Iezzoni et al, 2021)

➤ US Office of Civil Rights Statement (3/2020)

➤ In the Community (Detroit)

- Health
- Transportation
- Jobs
- Access to Care
- Personal care attendants
- COVID Treatment
- Vaccination

Listening to People with Disabilities & Their Families





U-M Center for Disability Health and Wellness (CDHW)

In Summary

- More than 70 million adults in the United States are Living with Disability
- People with disabilities experience significantly worse health outcomes and healthcare disparities, with women, those living in poverty and black, indigenous and persons of color (BIPOC) most likely to experience negative outcomes
- People with disabilities are an underserved and often overlooked component of the population who experience many negative social determinants of health and are at enhanced risk for poor health outcomes
- The perceptions and negative attitudes about people with disabilities enhance the likelihood that people with disabilities will be forgotten
- Healthcare and Public Health Programs and Organizations must work in partnership with people with disability and disability organizations to ensure that they are engaged, counted and able to access programs and resources

Healthcare disparities result from mod
factors in health systems

**THEY ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITY
TO ADDRESS AND CHANGE**

Questions?

**For more
information
about the
U-M Center for
Disability
Health &
Wellness**

mameade@med.umich.edu

www.disabilityhealth.medicine.umich.edu



How the Michigan AgrAbility Project Works with People with Disabilities

Samantha Wolfe

Agricultural and Occupational Health Educator, MSU Extension

Michigan Center for Rural Health Symposium

April 24, 2025

This presentation is supported by the AgrAbility Competitive Program of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), grant number 2022-41590-38121



Extension Demographic Data Collection



<https://bit.ly/3ExB4xa>



*Or raise your hand if you'd like a paper copy



Objectives

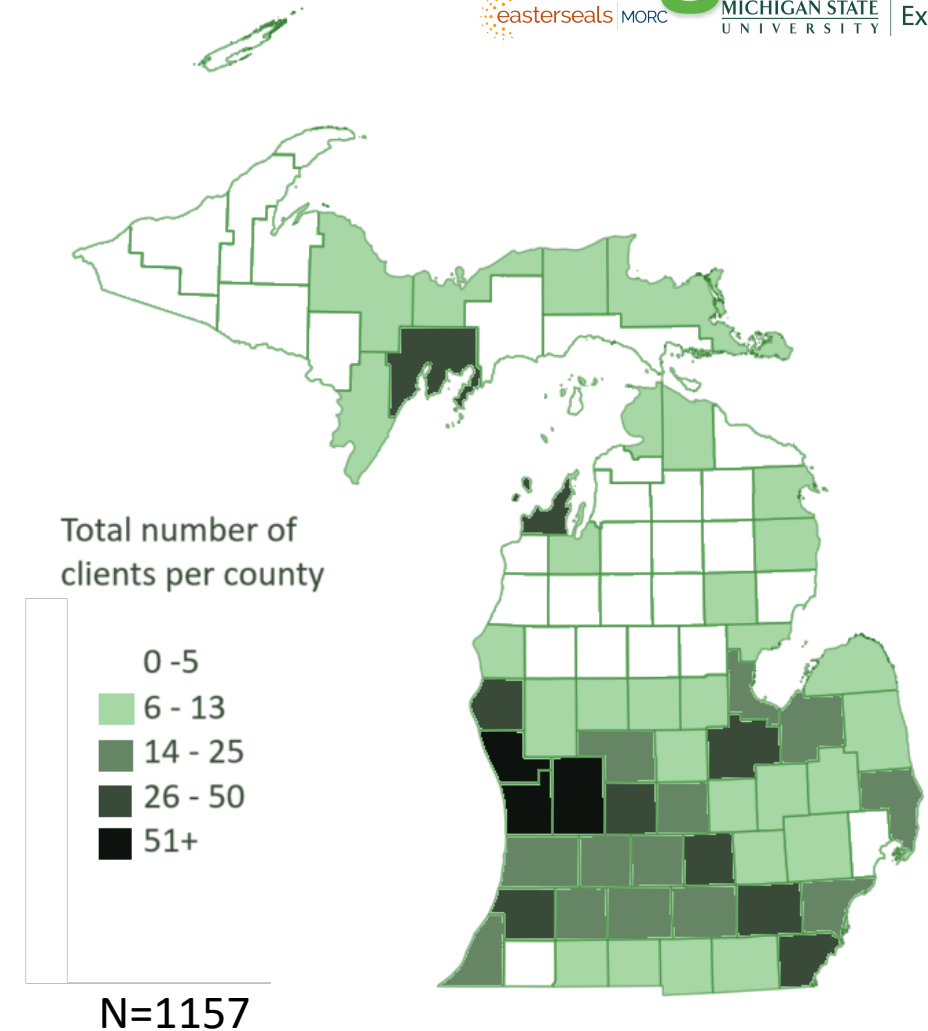
- **Explain** the purpose and scope of the AgrAbility program and its role in supporting farmers and workers with disabilities.
- **Identify** common physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities encountered in our clients and describe how these impact occupational performance.
- **Describe** assistive technologies and modifications used in agricultural settings to improve quality of life.
- **Demonstrate** effective strategies to collaborate with AgrAbility and similar resources to better serve agricultural clients with disabilities.



Overview

“The vision of AgrAbility is to enhance quality of life for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities, so that they, their families, and their communities continue to succeed in rural America.”

- 1990 Farm Bill
- National and state projects
- Collaborative program delivery
- Core services provided (education, on-farm assessments, referrals, AT recommendations)
- Secondary injury prevention



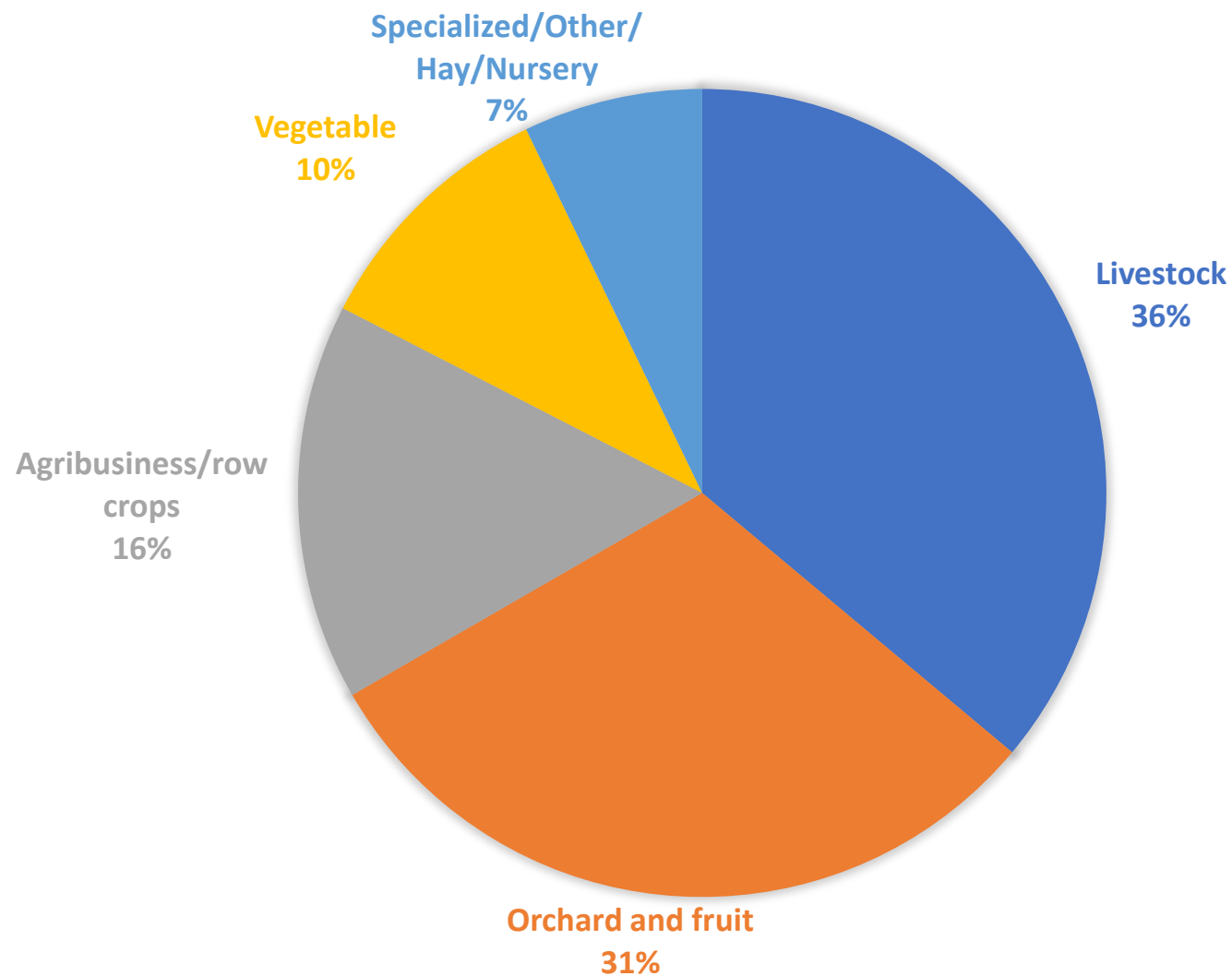


Michigan AgrAbility Project team





MI AgrAbility clients by industry

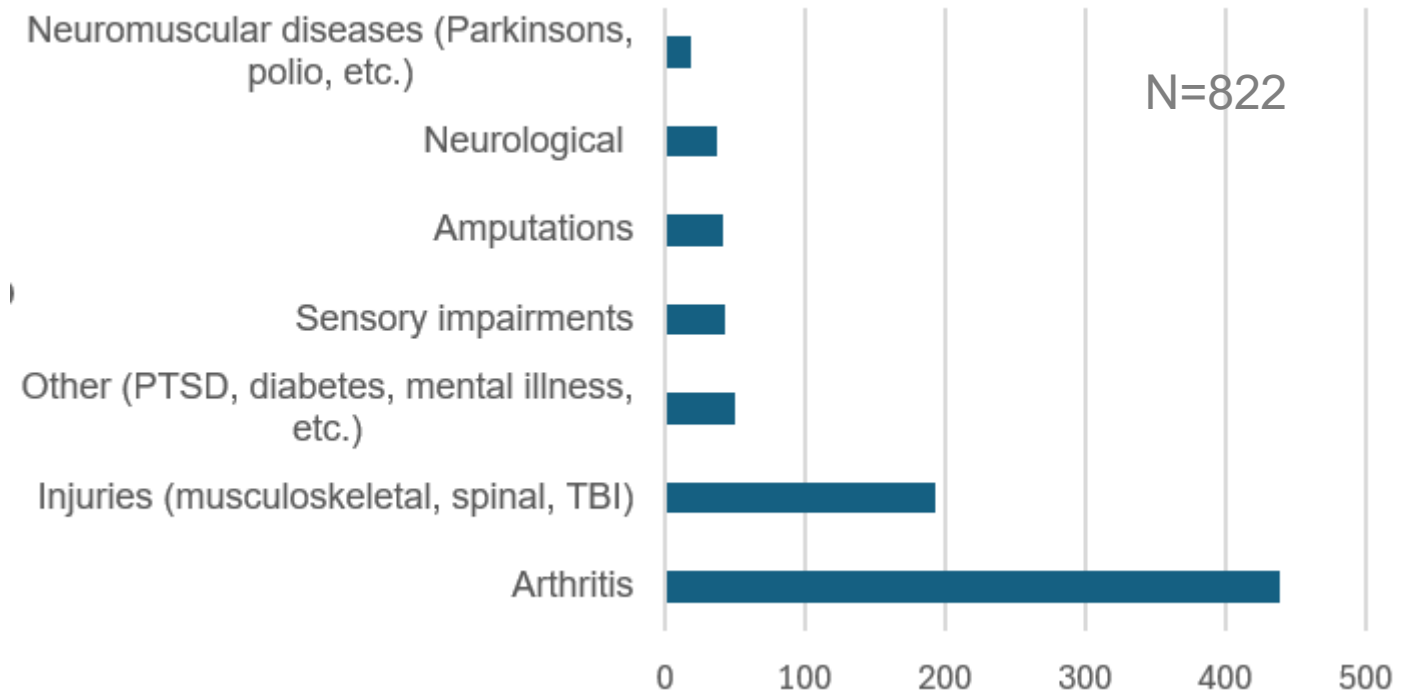


N=906



Client's conditions

Condition	Real Count	% of Total
Neuromuscular diseases (Parkinsons, polio, etc.)	18	2%
Neurological	37	5%
Amputations	42	5%
Sensory impairments	43	5%
Other (PTSD, diabetes, mental illness, etc.)	50	6%
Injuries (musculoskeletal, spinal, TBI)	193	23%
Arthritis	439	53%
TOTAL	822	





Causes of client conditions



Cause	Count	Percent of total	Percent of total when adjusted for chronic
Chronic or not incident-related	666	74%	---
Vehicular Incident (Non-ag related)	51	6%	22%
Other (Non-ag incident)	33	4%	14%
Occurred during military service	24	3%	10%
Tractor/Farm machinery (Ag related)	31	3%	13%
Falls (Non-ag related)	15	2%	6%
Falls (Ag related)	18	2%	8%
From birth	21	2%	9%
Vehicular incident (Ag related)	8	1%	3%
Recreational (Non-ag related)	8	1%	3%
Livestock animals (Ag related)	9	1%	4%
Other ag-incident	12	1%	5%
Chemicals/pesticides (Ag related)	1	0%	0%
TOTAL	897		231



Assistive technology & solutions for farmers

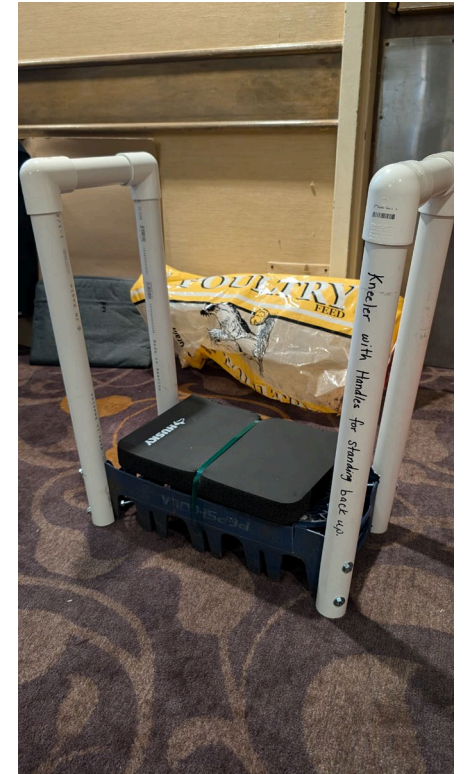




Partnering with MSU Mechanical Engineering



High vs. low tech



Low-tech: tractor steps





A fully-equipped tractor



- ✓ Climate control cab addresses noise and vibration.
- ✓ Rear-view camera and midmount PTO addresses twisting to see behind the tractor.
- ✓ Snow blower addresses walk-behind snow blower operation and low endurance.
- ✓ Tractor loader bucket and pallet forks addresses the walk-behind cart and low endurance lifting and carrying.
- ✓ Tiller addresses the walk-behind tiller vibrations and low endurance.
- ✓ Tractor mower addresses the lawnmower vibrations and noise.



AgrAbility.org/Toolbox

THE TOOLBOX

Assistive Technology Database

Search

5 ▾ results per page

If Search malfunctions, please refresh your browser and try again. If problems persist, contact us

Displaying solutions 1-5 of 17 found (search time: 0.012s)



Remote Sap-Harvest Monitoring System

Limitations: Lower extremity, Visual

Specialty Enterprises :: Other Specialty Enterprises :: Maple Syrup

...With a Remote Sap-Harvest Monitoring System, via smartphone or other digital device, the maple syrup maker (1) is kept informed, at pre-set times, of conditions at the harvest site (e.g., temperature, sap flow, pump status, tank level); (2) is alerted instantly of any problems (e.g., loss of vacuum, pump failure, tank full); (3) can initiate actions (e.g., turn pump on/off, engage temp control). ... [Full entry](#)



Tubing Sap-Collection System (Online Plans)

Limitations: Lower extremity, Upper extremity, Back

Specialty Enterprises :: Other Specialty Enterprises :: Maple Syrup

...This Tubing Sap-Collection System enables one to gather the maple tree sap without having to walk great distances or carry heavy buckets. Plastic tubing is attached to taps in the trees, and the sap runs downhill by gravity to a central collection tank. The system presented here, which services 240 taps strung over 6 acres of trees in northern Wisconsin, can be scaled up or down for various-size operations. ... [Full entry](#)

THE TOOLBOX

Assistive Technology Database

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Recognizing when a patient could benefit from AgrAbility

- Difficulty completing daily farm tasks
- Recent injury or progressive condition
- Mental health concerns related to loss of identity, isolation, or financial strain
- Family members expressing concern about safety or well-being

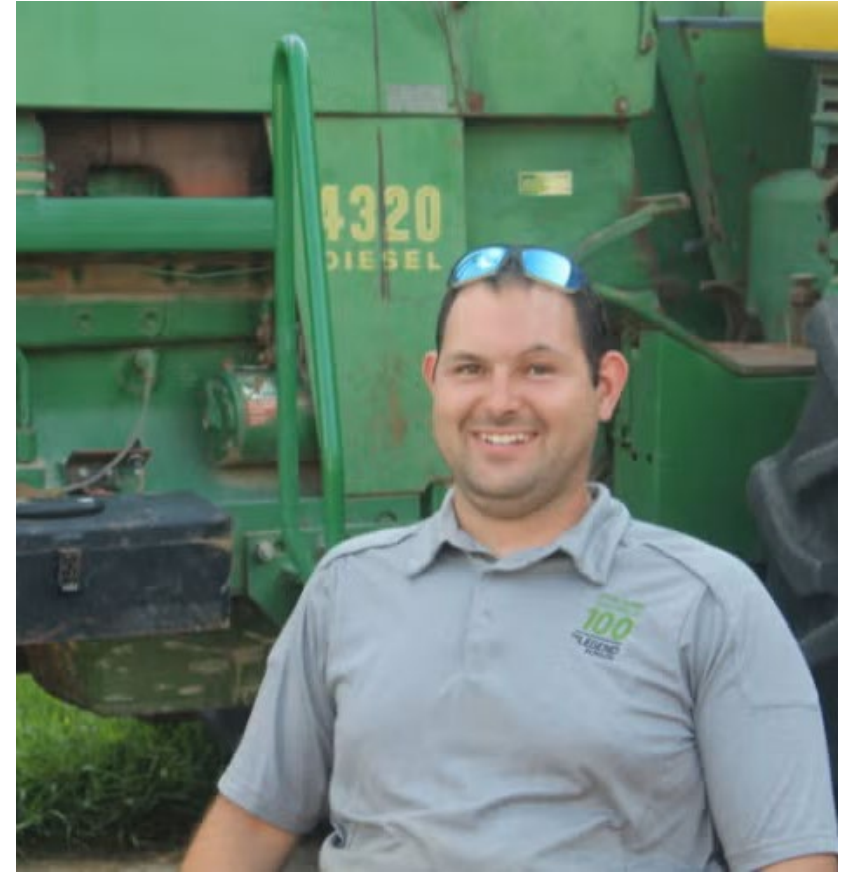




How to refer to AgrAbility

- michiganagrability.org/contact
- Call Ned at 800-956-4106
- Share our brochures, etc.
- Email me at wolfesa4@msu.edu
- MSU Farm Stress

** We are looking for more OTs and PTs to conduct farm site assessments!*

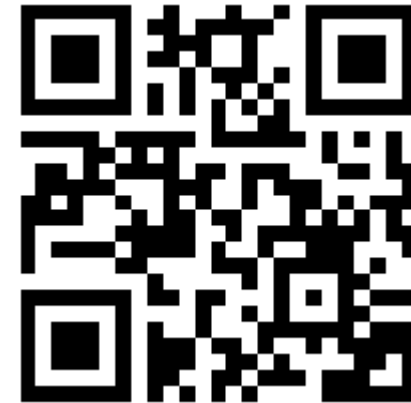




Potential action items

- ✓ Add AgrAbility contact info to clinic resource list
- ✓ Incorporate a screening question about work/livelihood into intake forms
- ✓ Take AgrAbility brochures for your waiting room
- ✓ Refer clients and document outcomes

<https://bit.ly/4joZeJq>



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mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442;

email:

program.intake@usda.gov.

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