

Exploring the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on People with Disabilities in North Carolina

Simran Prakash¹, Zavera Basrai¹, Ayra Charania¹, Tessa Delgo¹, Ashwin Kulshrestha¹, Gabrielle Lee¹, Symon Ma¹, Derek Mackel¹, Anil Prasad¹, Sophia Vera¹, Deepti Agnihotri², Elizabeth Aimone², Anna Tupetz³, Marion Quirici, Ph.D.⁴, Kearsley Stewart, Ph.D.², Michel Landry, PT, MBA, Ph.D.²

¹Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, Duke University, ²Duke Global Health Institute, ³Duke University School of Medicine, ⁴Thompson Writing Program, Duke University

The Question

How has COVID-19 disproportionately impacted People Living With Disabilities (PLWD) in North Carolina?

Emerging Policies



<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/about-the-cares-act>

- Unemployment checks
- Housing needs
- Family caregiver support
- Special education funding

- Does not address medical rationing
- No sick leave for PLWD
- No PPE for assistants of PLWD
- No support for incarcerated PLWD



What Do We Know Already?

Structural/Organizational Features

1. **Policy:** disruption of healthcare services due to pandemic mitigation efforts, lack of representation in health policy
2. **Emergency Response:** lack of infrastructure to support needs and inclusion of PLWD; COVID-19 pandemic presents opportunity for urban health reform
3. **Educational Disparities:** home isolation, lack of socialization, lack of services, pre-existing educational disparities, need to adapt curricula according to students' individual needs

Individual Impacts

1. **Economic:** PLWD more likely to lose jobs and experience higher financial stress during pandemic, telework potentially an ideal future option for PLWD
2. **Mental Health:** pre-existing burden faced by PLWD before the pandemic now exacerbated, moral responsibility to promote greater investment in tele-rehabilitation programs
3. **COVID Information Accessibility:** need for equal access of COVID-19 health information that accommodates PLWD

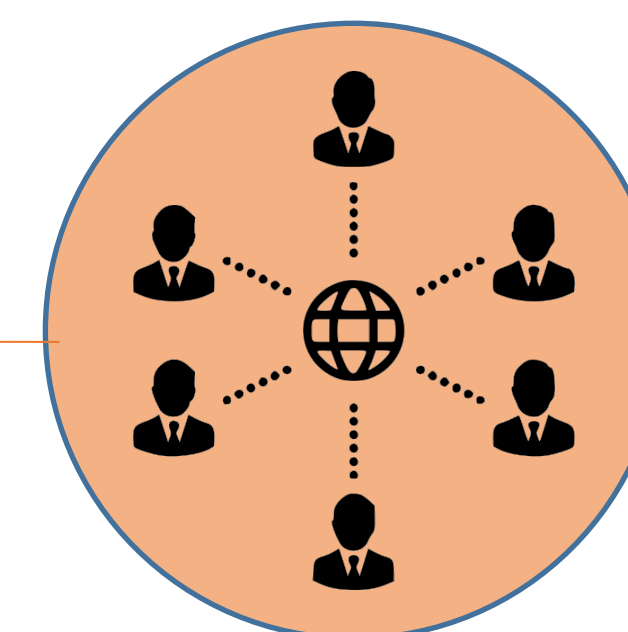
Moving Forward



- Continue using arts-based methodology to interview participants and gather more data



- Conduct data analysis using NVivo



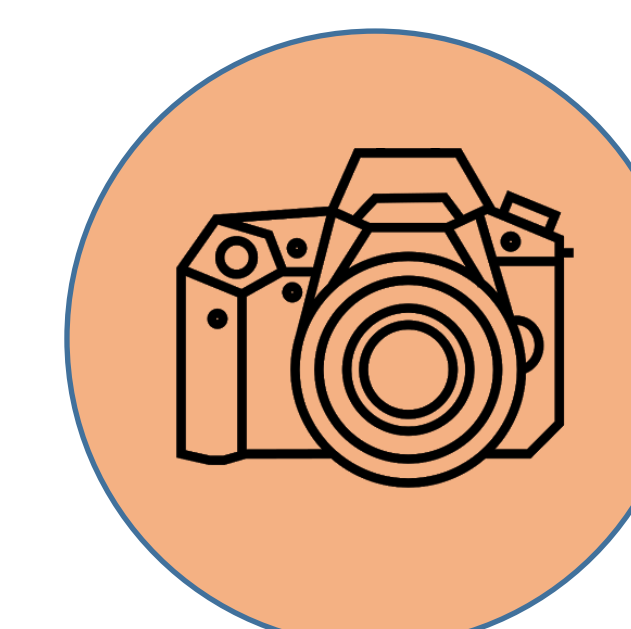
- Continue project with the 2021 Summer Story+ and 2021-2022 Bass Connections teams

Our Research Process



- Conducted 6 key informant interviews to gather first-hand testimonies of PLWD experiences during the pandemic

- Held focus groups with representatives of 5 different community-based organizations to discuss how organizations adapted to changing needs during the pandemic



- Used 3 arts-based methodologies to provide alternate modes of communication for participants to share their experiences. Methods used were Photovoice, Body Mapping, and Story Completion.

