

# One in five disabled nationwide

AUSTRALIAN Bureau of Statistics figures, contained in the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, revealed almost one in five Australians, or about four million people, had a disability in 2009.

The main disabling conditions were back problems (15.6% of all people with a disability) and arthritis (14.8%).

Labour force participation among the disabled remained low at about 54%, compared to 83% for others.

Just over half (52%) of people aged 60 and over had a disability, but most (63%) did not need assistance with everyday activities.

The most commonly reported needs were help with property maintenance, household chores and mobility.

There were 2.6 million carers in Australia who provided some assistance to others who needed help because of a disability or old

age, and about 55% of carers were women.

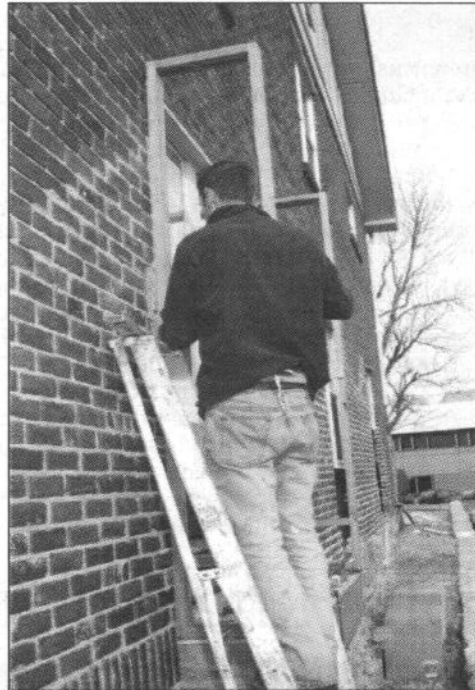
Self-care, mobility, and communication are regarded as being fundamental to daily living and are therefore termed core activity tasks.

Of the 3.8 million people with a disability living in households, 59% reported they needed assistance in at least one of the 10 activity areas.

The three most common areas of need for assistance were property maintenance (30%), health care (27%) and household chores (25%).

The use of aids by people with disabilities plays an important role in helping them to maintain as much independence as they can.

The most commonly used aids were walking sticks (6.7%) and walking frames (6.6%). The number of people using walking frames increased by more than 62,000 people from 2003-2009.



**NEEDING HELP** – Home repair was at the top of the list of help needed by disabled people living in their own home.

## Gadgets big and small make life a little easier

THE simple, everyday acts of opening a jar or turning a tap are not given a second thought by most of us.

But, for people with a disability – temporary or permanent – they can be a painful, frustrating experience.

Assistive technology, in the form of gadgets and equipment, is helping make life a little easier

for those who find such tasks challenging.

The South Australian Independent Living Centre is a community service which provides information and advice on assistive technology to help people improve the quality of their lives and maintain their independence.

Staffed by occupational therapists,

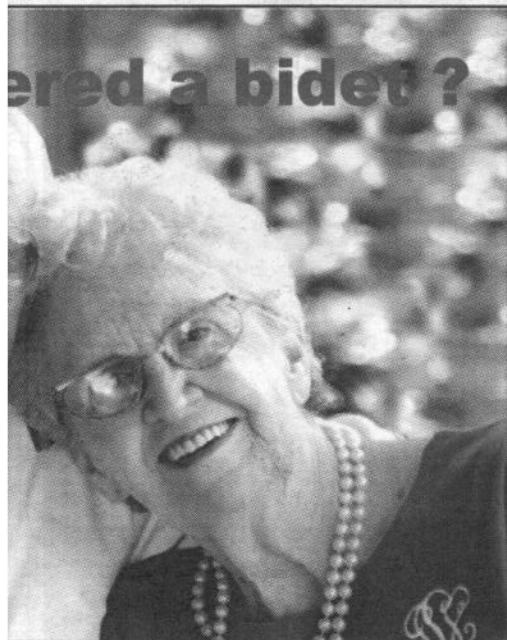
the service is available to anyone and is free.

With the guidance of an experienced professional, visitors to the centre can discover for themselves equipment and techniques to help with everyday tasks.

Equipment ranges from complex wheelchairs, walking frames, scooters (gophers) and

electric recliner chairs, to simple household gadgets such as long-handled pick-up sticks, book and card holders, or devices to help in putting on lotions in hard to reach places.

■ Independent Living Centre  
1300-885-886 (SA/NT) or  
8266-5260, email  
ilcsa@dcsi.sa.gov.au



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