

# Health-related Travel Difficulties

## Personal Travel Factsheet - March 2010

### Introduction

This factsheet summarises findings from the National Travel Survey (NTS) about the travel patterns of people with health problems that affect their personal mobility. The figures quoted are based on the 2008 survey and cover Great Britain. The NTS covers adults and children, but asks only people aged 16 and over about personal mobility difficulties.

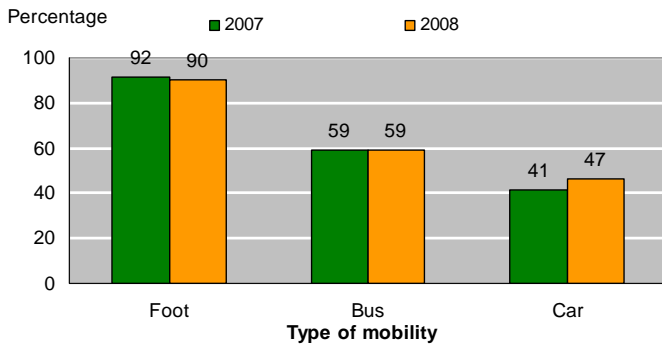
The NTS asks whether respondents have any disability or other long standing health problem that makes it difficult to: **go out on foot; use local buses or drive a car.**

Throughout this factsheet, all those who say yes to at least one of these questions are defined as having a mobility difficulty.

### An overview of mobility difficulties

- In 2008, 13% of adults 16 years and over experienced mobility difficulties.
- Of these, the majority (90%) of adults reported mobility difficulties going out on foot in 2008, slightly lower (2%) than 2007 (Chart 1).

**Chart 1: Percentage of adults with mobility difficulties by type of difficulty: 2007 and 2008**



Adults who said they had difficulty going out on foot were asked if they go out on foot alone, if they go out only with someone to assist them, or if they never go out on foot at all.

- Over half of them reported that they go out on foot alone despite their walking difficulties and one in five needed assistance (22%) or do not go out at all (23%).

The NTS asks people how often they walk for 20 minutes or more, for any reason.

- One-fifth of adults with mobility difficulties said they go out on foot at least once a week and seven in ten said they did so less than once a year or never. In contrast, those without any difficulties were 62% and 19% respectively.

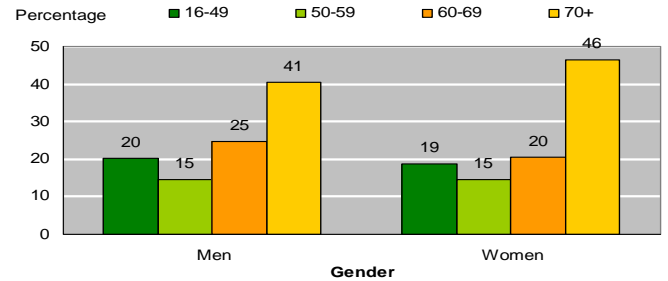
Adults with mobility difficulties were asked what difficulties they had with local buses and whether they used local buses at all.

- Nearly three quarter said they had difficulty getting to the bus stop, and two-third said they had difficulty in getting on or off buses or difficulty waiting at the bus stop.

### Who do mobility difficulties affect?

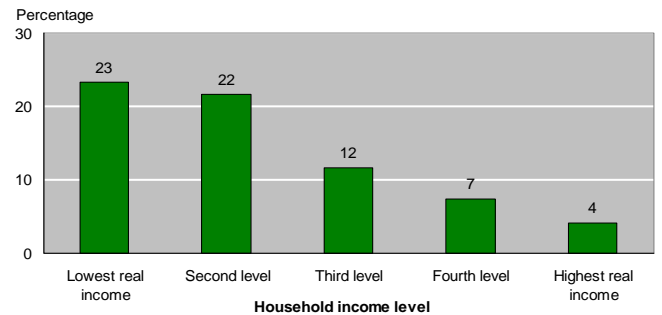
- Mobility difficulties are much more common among older people; 46% of females aged 70 and over experience mobility difficulties, compared with 41% of males (Chart 2).

**Chart 2: Percentage of individuals with mobility difficulties by age and sex: 2008**



- Chart 3 shows a strong correlation between mobility difficulties and income level. The lowest income groups are nearly six times as likely to have mobility difficulties as those in the wealthiest groups. This is likely to be because most people with mobility difficulties are over 60 years old and are less likely to be in full time employment, meaning their arranged income will be lower.

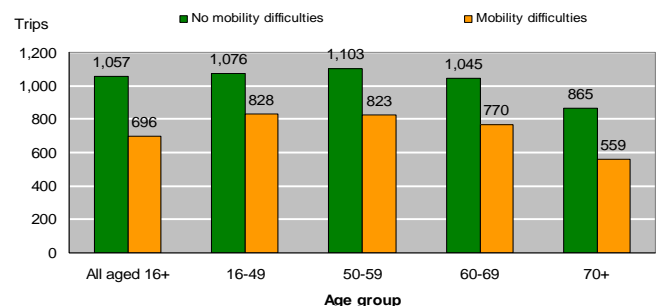
**Chart 3: Percentage of adults with mobility difficulties by income quintile: 2008**



### How do mobility difficulties affect personal travel?

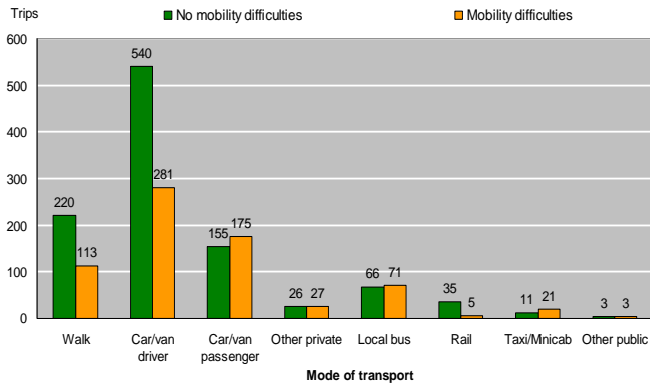
- For each age group, there is a significant difference in trips per person per year for those with and without mobility difficulties (Chart 4).
- The difference is greater among those aged 70 and over; those with mobility difficulties on average make 559 trips per year, while those with no mobility difficulties average 865 trips.

**Chart 4: Trips per person per year: 2008**



- This difference in average number of trips made can largely be accounted for by much lower trip rates on foot (this was also noted in chart 1 that the majority of difficulties was going out on foot), as a driver and by rail among those with mobility difficulties (Chart 5).
- People with mobility difficulties make more trips by local bus and taxi.

**Chart 5: Trips per person per year by main mode: 2008**

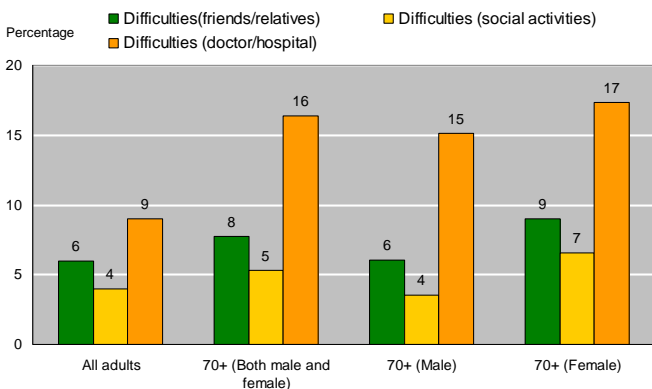


### Difficulties with particular journeys

The NTS asks all adults whether they have difficulties in making journeys for particular purposes.

- 9% of all adults report difficulties with travel to doctor/hospital; this is quite high when compared to 6% (friends/relative) and 4% (social activities).
- Among people aged 70 and over, 16% report difficulties with travel to doctor/hospital. This high proportion could be accounted for by the nature of older people making regular medical trips than the younger age group.
- A small proportion (1%) of adults had reported that personal disability is the cause of difficulties in making journeys for those purposes.

**Chart 6: Proportion of adults with mobility difficulties having difficulties making particular journeys: 2008**

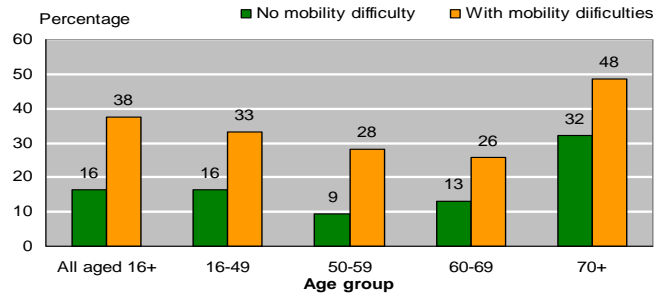


### Coping with mobility difficulties

The NTS shows that access to a car is one of the most important factors in the amount of travelling people do.

- People with mobility difficulties are more than twice as likely as those without to live in a household with no car, regardless of their age. In particular, those aged 50-59 are three times as likely to live in a household without a car (Chart 7).

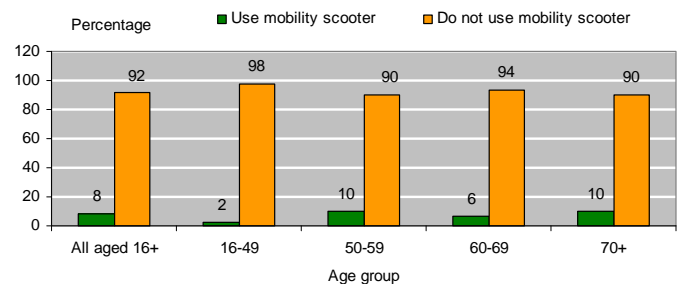
**Chart 7: Proportion of adults living in a household with no car: 2008**



- 51% of people with mobility difficulties aged 17 and over hold a full UK driving licence, compared to 75% of those without mobility difficulties.
- Among people with mobility difficulties aged 16-59; 50% are disabled drivers, 47% have never owned a licence and 3% no longer drive due to personal disability or other reasons.

A small proportion (8%) of adults with mobility difficulties have access or use a mobility scooter. The use of mobility scooter is high among the older age groups; 10% of adults aged 50-59 or 70 and over use a scooter compared to 2% aged 16-49.

**Chart 8: Proportion of adults with mobility difficulties who use a mobility scooter: 2008**

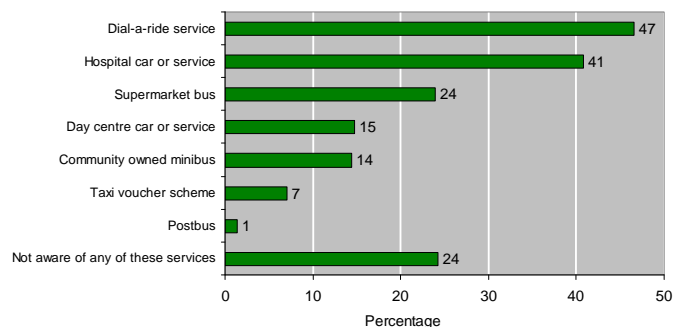


Note: This chart should be interpreted with caution as the sample size is based on 157 adults aged 16 and over.

The NTS asks whether respondents with mobility difficulties are aware of any special mobility services in their local area.

A quarter of people with mobility difficulties are not aware of special mobility service in their local area. In particular, the working age group (16-59) are less likely to have awareness of these services. Dial-a-ride and hospital car services are the most widely known to be available.

**Chart 9: Awareness of local mobility services: 2008**



Note: The above data is related to those with mobility difficulties