

Depression and Health Risks Among Rhode Island Adults in 2006



Rhode Island Department of Health, October 2007 Center for Health Data and Analysis

This report presents data from Rhode Island's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) on depression and health risks among adult Rhode Islanders in 2006.

About the BRFSS: The BRFSS is a telephone survey administered in all 50 states and 4 U.S. territories with funding and specifications from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The BRFSS monitors behavioral health risks that contribute to the leading causes of disease and death among adults 18 and older in the United States. It also monitors access to health care and certain health conditions. Rhode Island has participated in the BRFSS since 1984.

From January through December 2006, the Rhode Island BRFSS, conducted for the Department of Health by a professional survey firm, completed 376 random-digit dialed telephone interviews each month with non-institutionalized adults, for a total of 4,515 during the year.

In this Report: Depression rates are presented for demographic subgroups, as well as data for twenty-one health indicators by depression status. A calculated depression severity score (DSS), based on respondent answers to 8 questions about feelings in the prior 2 weeks, has been used to measure depression. "Error" bars represent the 95% confidence limits around values calculated from the sample data. This means there is a 5% chance that the true value is NOT within the error bar's span.

Interpreting Results: It is important to remember that some groups may be underrepresented in the BRFSS (e.g., nursing home residents, the homeless, cell phone only users). Also, although this report indicates an association between depression and several health-risks, causal relationships cannot be determined, e.g. people with depression may be more likely to begin smoking, but it is also

possible that those who smoke are more likely to develop depression.

Despite these limitations, results identify "at risk" populations and indicate a need for increased health care and community support for such persons. As those experiencing depression are at increased risk of compromised health, the assessment of health (e.g., asthma, obesity) and health risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, seatbelt use, sedentary lifestyle) for this population is of special importance.

Highlights

- ❖ Nine of every 100 adults in Rhode Island, or roughly 80,000 persons, currently has moderate to severe depression (M/SD). (Fig. 1)
- ❖ M/SD rates are highest among adults: who are females (11%), with less than a college degree (12%), in households with incomes less than \$25,000 (22%), who are divorced/separated (16%), unemployed (26%), unable to work (50%) or disabled (25%). (Fig. 1)
- ❖ More than half of those with M/SD never, rarely, or only sometimes get the social/emotional support they need. A third are dissatisfied with life. (Fig. 2)
- ❖ One quarter of those with M/SD lack health care coverage. Persons with M/SD are at greater risk for several important health risks: 46% have a sedentary lifestyle, and 41% are smokers. (Fig 2)
- ❖ People with M/SD more frequently have compromised health than other persons. One in 4 has asthma, 1 in 3 is obese, more than 1 in 2 has a physical disability, 1 in 3 is limited by pain, and 1 in 2 has trouble learning, remembering or concentrating. (Fig. 3)

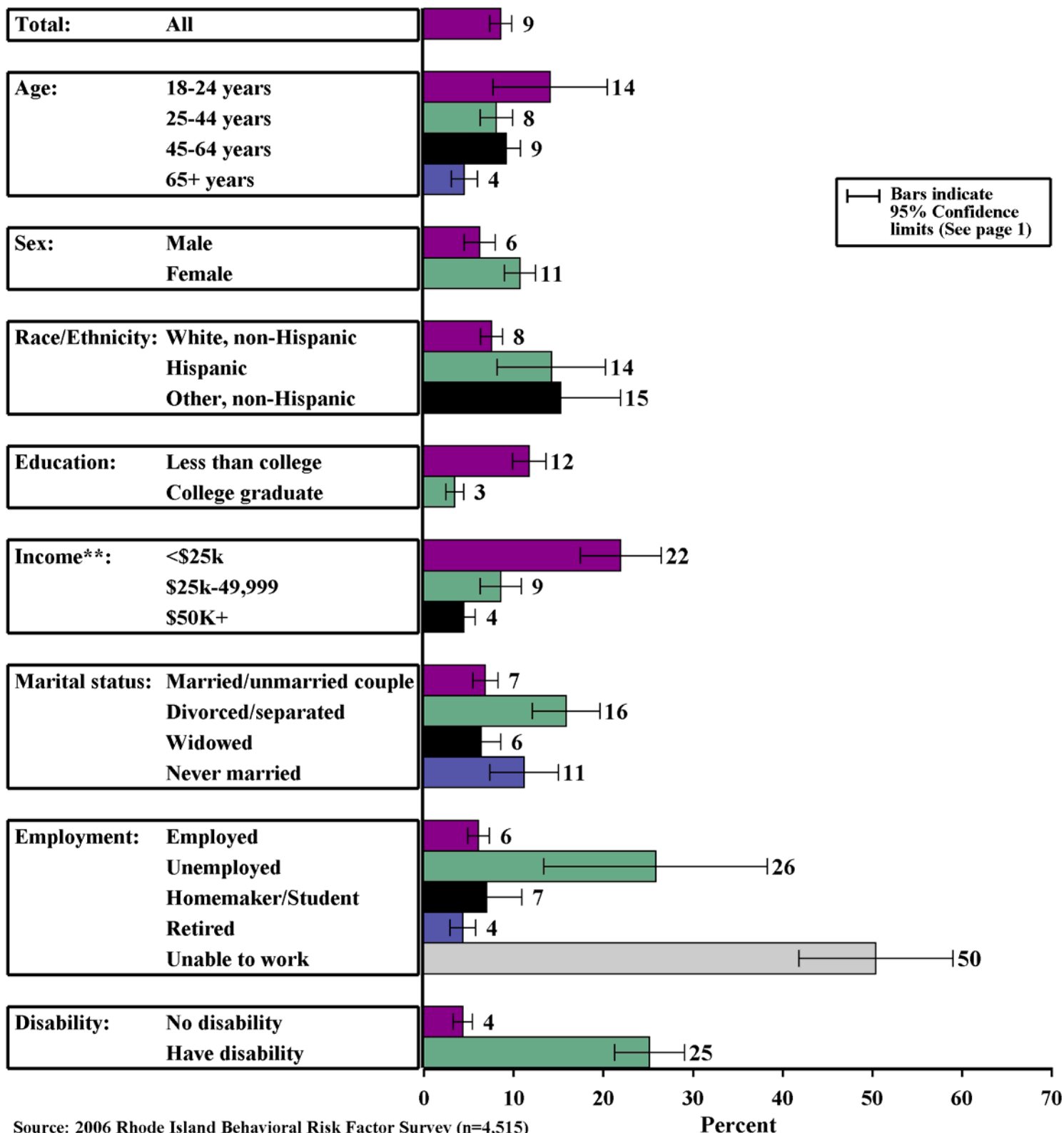
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For further information: Go to <http://www.health.ri.gov/chic/statistics/brfss.php>, <http://www.health.ri.gov/webquery/index.html>, <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss>, or contact the Center for Health Data and Analysis, RI Department of Health (401-222-2550).

Report prepared by: Y Jiang, PhD, JE Hesser, PhD (RI Dept of Health), K Quinlan PhD and R Tremper MBA (RI Dept of MHRH).

Figure 1

Current Depression* Among Rhode Island Adults (Ages 18 and older) within demographic subgroups -- 2006



Source: 2006 Rhode Island Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (n=4,515)

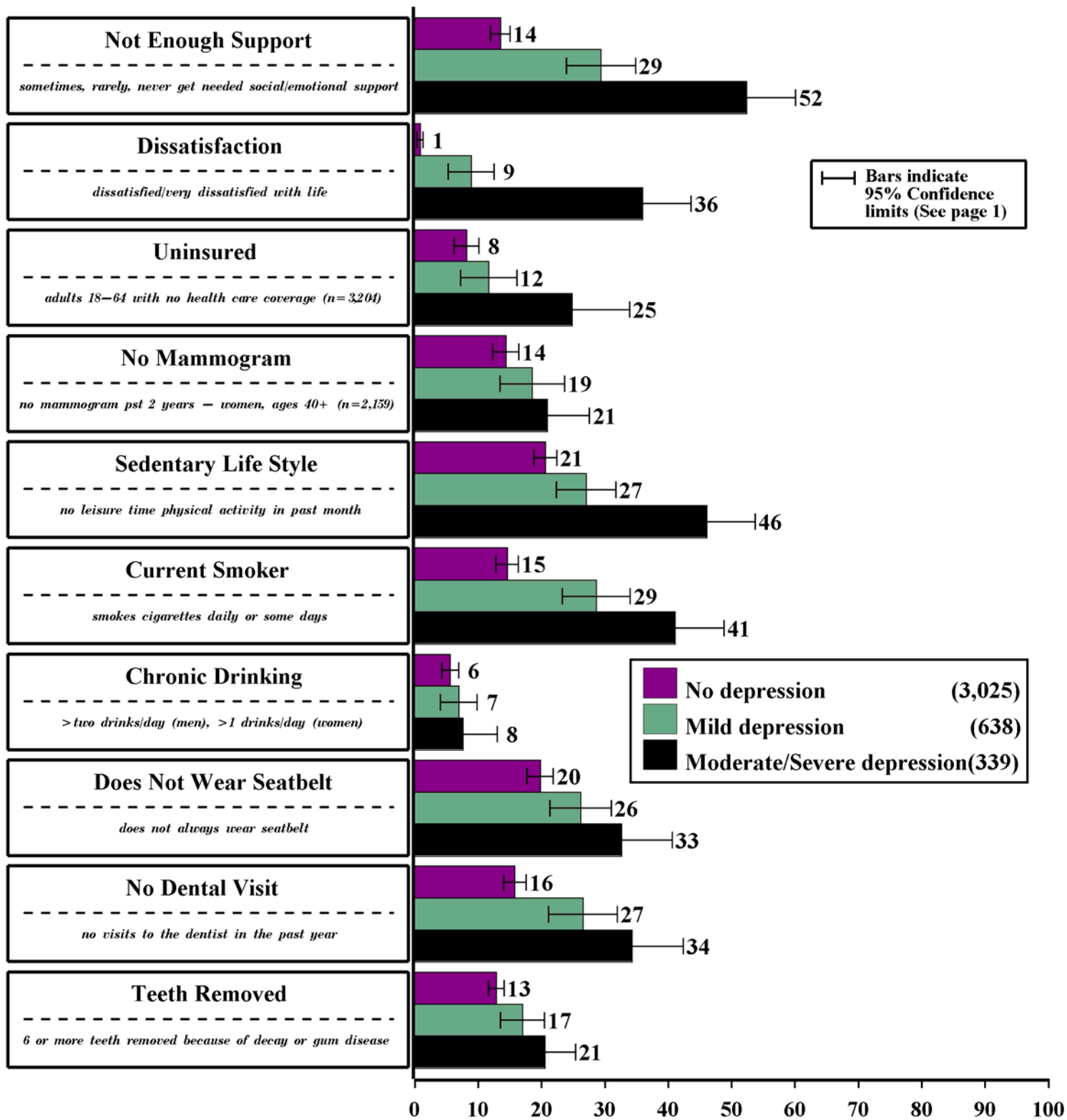
* Current Depression: A score ≥ 10 on the DSS indicates moderate/severe depression

** Annual household

Figure 2

Health Risks Among Rhode Island Adults

(Ages 18 and older) by depression status* -- 2006

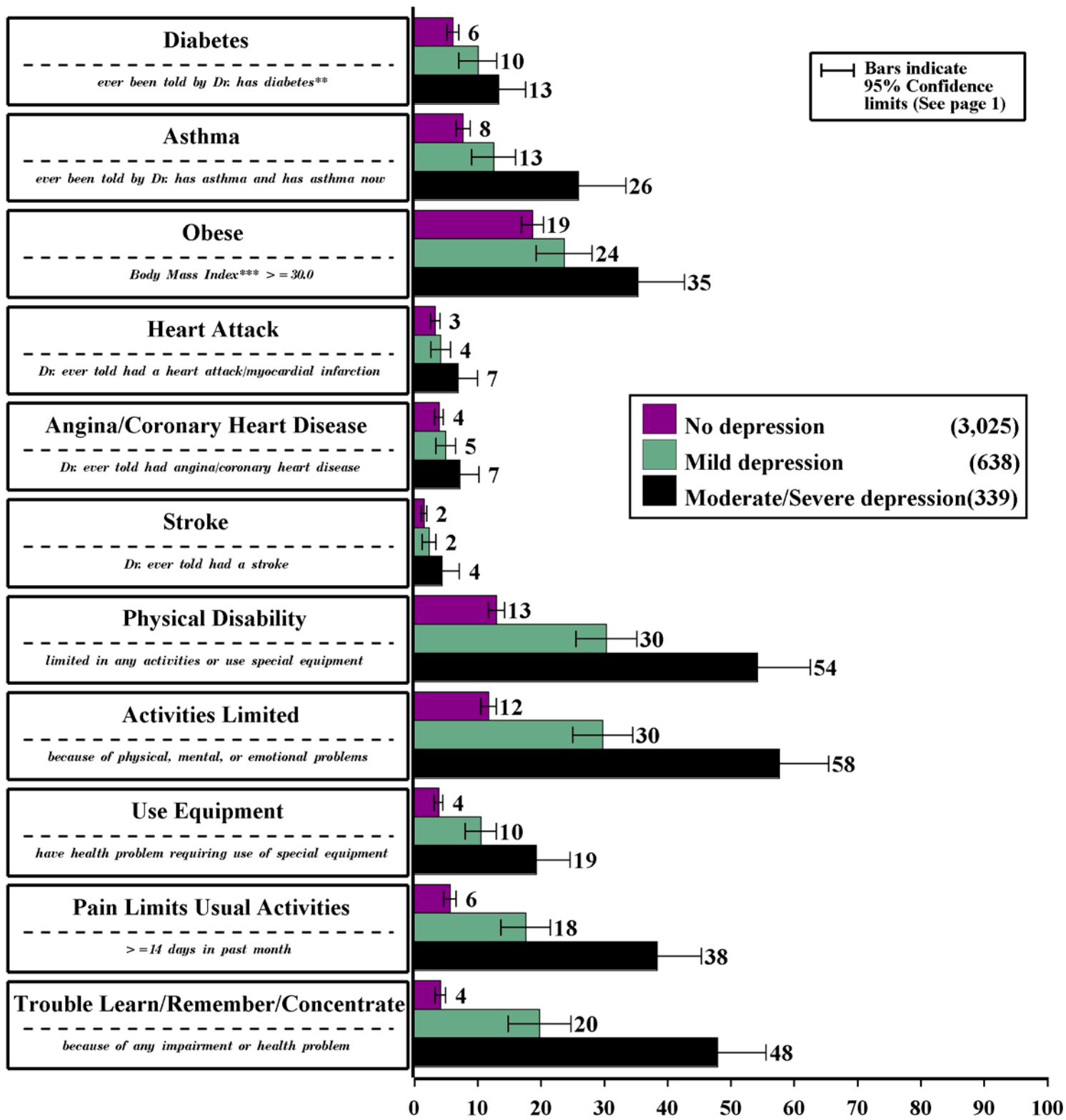


Source: 2006 Rhode Island Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (n=4,515)

* No depression: 0<=DSS<=4; Mild depression: 5<=DSS<=9; Moderate/Severe depression: >=10

Figure 3

Health Risks Among Rhode Island Adults (Ages 18 and older) by depression status* -- 2006



Source: 2006 Rhode Island Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (n=4,515)

* No depression: 0<=DSS<=4; Mild depression: 5<=DSS<=9; Moderate/Severe depression: >=10

** Other than during pregnancy

*** Body Mass Index = weight in kilograms / (height in meters)²