

115657

BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

Report To The Congress

OF THE UNITED STATES

Weaknesses In The Planning And Utilization Of Rental Housing For Persons In Wheelchairs

Rental housing designed for the special needs of people who use wheelchairs is scarce. To help alleviate the shortage, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, established goals for building wheelchair-accessible units under some of their rental housing programs. However, only a small portion of the accessible units were occupied by persons in wheelchairs. Also, the goals for building accessible units in effect since about 1970 were set without information about the number of people using wheelchairs in the United States or the demand for such units in areas served by the projects.



HUD and the Farmers Home Administration need to take steps to ensure that (1) housing units designed for people in wheelchairs are occupied by such persons, (2) valid goals for producing wheelchair-accessible units are set and met, and (3) information is accumulated to determine whether production and occupancy objectives are being achieved for accessible units.



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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON D.C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This report discusses Federal efforts to provide housing designed especially for the needs of people who use wheelchairs.

We made our review to determine whether the Departments of Agriculture's and Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) goals to produce wheelchair-accessible housing units were reasonable and being complied with and people in wheelchairs were occupying the special housing units. HUD provided us official comments on this report. However, the Secretaries of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Education were not able to provide us with official comments within the allotted time period.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and the Secretaries of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and Education.

Milton J. Rowland
Acting Comptroller General
of the United States

D I G E S T

Housing units produced under Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) programs and designed especially for people who use wheelchairs are not being produced efficiently or rented primarily to wheelchair users.

GAO's review of 847 accessible housing units produced under six HUD and one FmHA program in eight States showed that only 27 percent of the units were occupied by persons using wheelchairs. Moreover, the HUD and FmHA goals for constructing these units were based on inadequate data.

HUD and FmHA did not have essential data needed to establish and evaluate policies relating to housing people who use wheelchairs, for example (1) the total number of accessible units in existence under their programs, (2) the number of people using wheelchairs who occupy the units, or (3) the people's characteristics such as their age and income.

ACCESSIBLE UNITS NOT USUALLY OCCUPIED BY
PERSONS IN WHEELCHAIRS

HUD and FmHA did not have information available on how many who use wheelchairs occupied federally assisted accessible housing units nationwide. Only about 27 percent of the accessible units GAO reviewed in eight States--Arizona, California, Florida, Indiana, Ohio, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Texas--were occupied by persons using wheelchairs. (See p. 9.)

Reasons for the limited occupancy of accessible units by wheelchair users include:

- HUD and FmHA do not require accessible units to be occupied by people using wheelchairs; consequently, project sponsors had divergent practices relating to the eligibility and priority for these units.
- Project sponsors do not always have effective outreach programs to advertise the availability of accessible units and rental assistance.
- Projects do not often have services such as personal attendant care which people in wheelchairs may need to live independently.
- Projects at times had restrictions based on age or ability to live independently which precluded certain people in wheelchairs from living in them. (See p. 11.)

Regarding services some people in wheelchairs need, the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education provide funds for many of these services to States that ultimately offer welfare and social services to people with handicaps. However, almost no coordination exists between (1) these Departments and HUD and FmHA and (2) Federal, State, and local organizations providing these services to people in wheelchairs living in HUD and FmHA assisted housing projects. (See p. 18)

Although no reliable statistics exist on the number of accessible housing units in the United States, officials of the Departments of Education, HHS, HUD, and some national organizations serving people with handicaps told GAO that accessible units are in short supply. Because of this shortage and the fact that accessible units contain special features not found in regular housing units, GAO believes that accessible units should be occupied to the greatest extent possible by people for whom the units were designed. GAO also believes the lack of overall HUD and FmHA guidance and requirements relating to advertising and

selection and assignment of tenants for the accessible units has permitted project managers to determine policy matters on a project-by-project basis. (See p. 22.)

As a result, GAO found limited occupancy of accessible units by wheelchair users, people in wheelchairs occupying regular units, restrictions which denied housing to certain wheelchair users, and that some people in wheelchairs may be unaware that accessible units are available to them. (See pp. 9, 10, 15, and 20.)

GOALS FOR ACCESSIBLE HOUSING UNITS ARE QUESTIONABLE

Although HUD and FmHA have established specific percentage goals for constructing accessible units in elderly and family housing projects, they have no (1) studies to support using these percentage goals, (2) reliable statistics on the number or characteristics of people in the United States who use wheelchairs, and (3) data on the demand for accessible units in the market areas served by their projects. (See p. 25.)

The first goal, in effect since 1970 for most programs, provides that 10 percent of the units in all new HUD and FmHA elderly housing projects shall be designed for persons in wheelchairs. The second goal, established in November 1977, provides that 5 percent of the newly constructed family units funded under public housing and section 8 programs shall be designed for persons with handicaps. (See pp. 28-29.)

The specific percentages used for the 5 and 10 percent goals and application of these goals to housing projects in all geographical areas of the United States may not be appropriate. (See p. 25.)

In addition, there have been problems in getting project sponsors to comply with established goals. Only 42 percent of the 55 HUD and FmHA family housing projects

in Arizona, Florida, and southern California where GAO did its analysis complied with the 5-percent goal. HUD and FmHA field officials either were unaware of the goal or adequate guidelines implementing the goal such as type of unit (accessible or other) had not been communicated to them. (See p. 25.)

Although HUD and FmHA have had problems in getting project sponsors to construct the number of accessible units required by the 10-percent goal in the past, currently the goal is being achieved. (See p. 25.)

While no reliable data exists to demonstrate the need for additional accessible units, GAO estimates that an additional 1,359 units could have been constructed in 287 elderly and family projects analyzed if the established goals had been achieved. HUD and FmHA officials in California and Florida said they would be achieving established goals in the future. (See p. 34.)

DATA ON THE PRODUCTION AND
OCCUPANCY OF ACCESSIBLE UNITS
NEEDED

HUD and FmHA do not have management information data on the total number of accessible units in existence under their housing programs, the number of such units occupied by people using wheelchairs, or the characteristics of the people such as their age and income. Without such data, it is difficult for the agencies to establish policies for housing people in wheelchairs or to evaluate the effectiveness of program operations. (See p. 38.)

Specifically, the agencies are unable to determine nationwide the extent to which accessible units are being occupied by people using wheelchairs as intended and whether sponsors are complying with the percentage goals for constructing accessible units. (See p. 38.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretaries of HUD and Agriculture should take steps to ensure that rental housing for persons in wheelchairs is better planned and utilized. (See pp. 23, 36, and 40 for detailed recommendations.)

GAO also recommends that the Secretaries of HUD, HHS, Agriculture, and Education take steps to help insure that federally funded health and welfare services are available to some people in wheelchairs living in HUD and FmHA projects. (See p. 23.)

AGENCY COMMENTS

GAO sent draft copies of this report to the Secretaries of HUD, HHS, Education, and Agriculture to obtain their comments on the report. HUD, the only agency that provided official agency comments, generally concurred with GAO's findings and recommendations. (See pp. 23, 37, and 41.)

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ABBREVIATIONS

FmHA	Farmers Home Administration
GAO	General Accounting Office
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
MPS	minimum property standards
PHA	public housing agency



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), Department of Agriculture, administer several housing programs which provide, in part, assistance in the production and/or operation of rental housing units designed especially for the needs of persons who use wheelchairs (accessible units). HUD programs which provide these accessible units are the sections 8, 202, 221, 231, and 236 programs and the public housing program. FmHA provides such units under its section 515 program. Appendix I contains a detailed description of these housing programs as well as HUD and FmHA activities.

According to the Public Health Service's 1977 Health Interview Survey, there are an estimated 645,000 persons who use wheelchairs in the United States. These disabled persons are often among the poorest of the poor. Many worked only a few years before they became disabled and some have never been employed. Compared to nonhandicapped persons, persons who use wheelchairs have less employment, lower incomes, and at the same time, higher living expenses such as health care costs primarily due to their disabilities.

HUD AND FmHA GOALS FOR CONSTRUCTING ACCESSIBLE HOUSING UNITS

Both HUD and FmHA have goals that require at least 10 percent of the units in a newly constructed elderly housing project be designed for persons who use wheelchairs. This goal has been part of HUD's minimum property standards since 1966. FmHA adopted HUD's minimum property standards, including the 10 percent goal, for its section 515 program in October 1971.

In November 1977, HUD established a second goal for providing specialized housing units for persons with handicaps in family housing projects. The goal required that at least 5 percent of the units in newly constructed family housing projects assisted under the public housing and section 8 programs be designed specifically for people who are handicapped.

The Chief of the Architect and Cost Branch, Division of Multifamily Housing Development, at HUD told us that the specialized units referred to under this goal were also accessible units for people in wheelchairs.

Although the 5-percent goal relating to family projects was not part of HUD's minimum property standards, HUD intended FmHA to follow the 5-percent goal. HUD headquarters notified FmHA of the goal by directing HUD field office directors to advise the FmHA State offices in their jurisdiction of the goal.

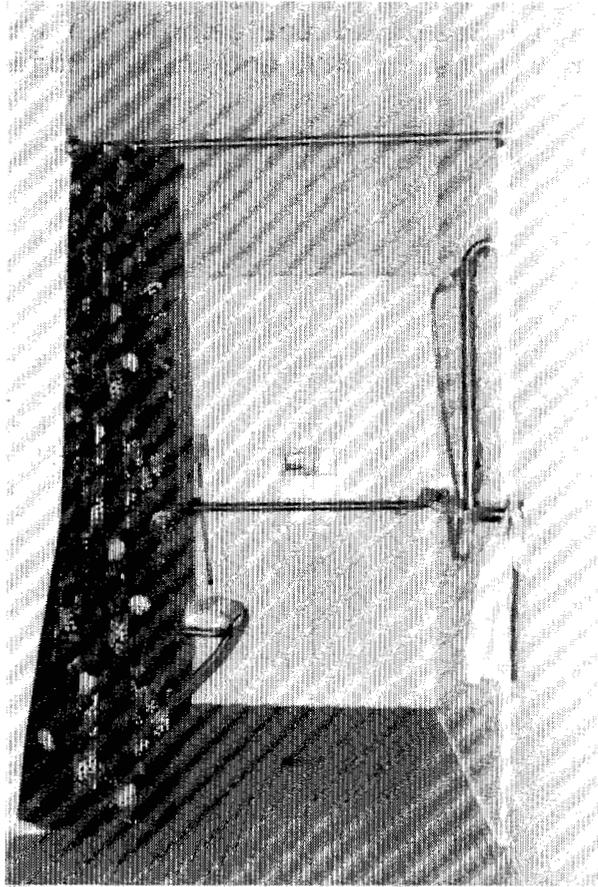
MINIMUM PROPERTY STANDARDS RELATING
TO HOUSING FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Since the 1960s, HUD has had minimum property standards (MPS) for multifamily housing which provide guidance relating to the planning and design of various types of housing produced under HUD programs. The MPS define the minimum level of quality acceptable to HUD.

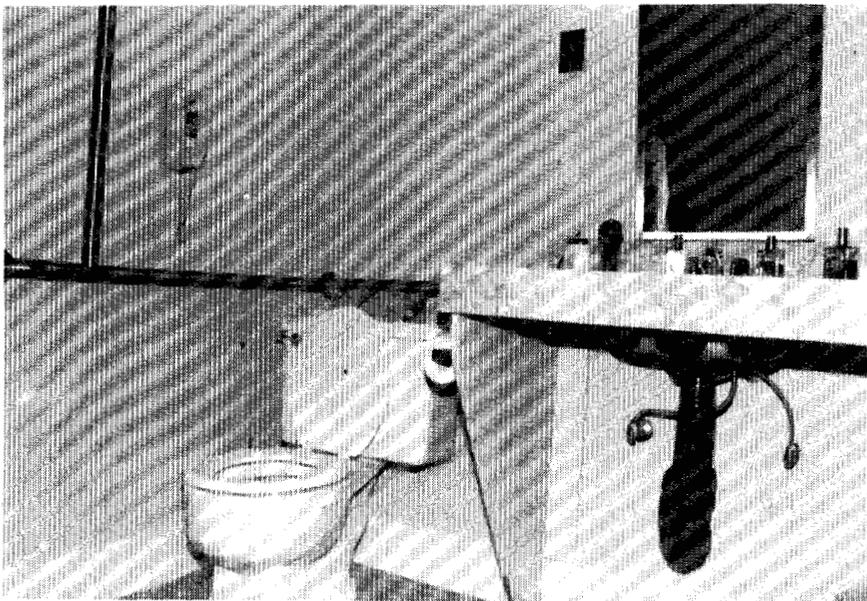
The MPS relating to housing designed for people who are handicapped contain guidance on the specially adapted housing needs of this group. Some of the more important standards applicable to housing for people who use wheelchairs deal with the following areas:

- A primary entrance readily accessible to the physically handicapped shall be provided.
- An entrance walk with no steps or stepped ramps.
- Five percent of the resident parking spaces should be arranged for persons on crutches or in wheelchairs to use.
- Bathtubs shall be slip resistant and shall have at least two grab bars. Ten percent of the units in elderly projects shall have bathrooms designed for people in wheelchairs to use.
- At least one-half of the 10 percent of the units with bathrooms designed for people in wheelchairs shall have kitchen equipment and work space and storage space that is accessible to and usable by these persons.
- Minimum widths of doorways, halls, and corridors.
- Elevators with controls accessible to people in wheelchairs shall be provided in buildings of three or more stories.
- Each bathroom and bed location shall have an emergency call system.

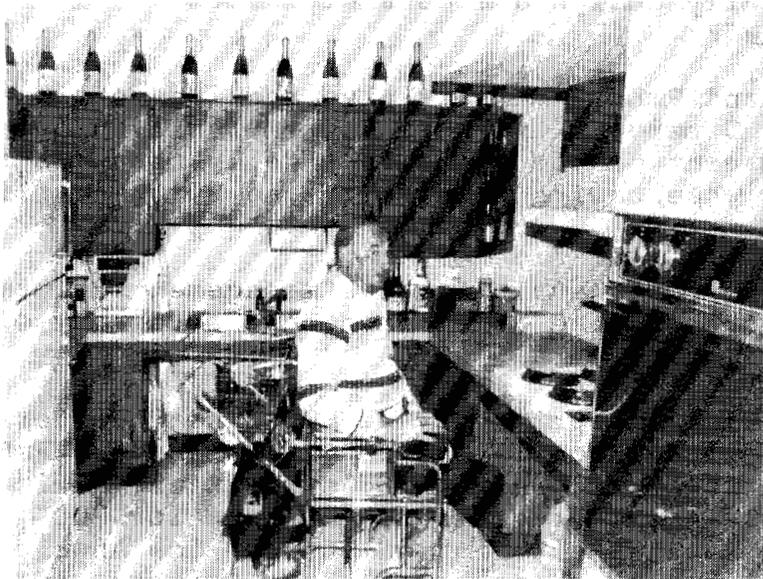
The photographs on pages 4 and 5 of kitchens and bathrooms specially designed for people in wheelchairs were taken during our visits to HUD and FmHA projects.



ROLL-IN SHOWER WITH A SEAT, GRAB BARS, AND HAND-HELD SHOWER.



OPEN AREA UNDER SINK, RAISED TOILET, EMERGENCY CALL CORD, TELEPHONE AND GRAB BARS.



OPEN AREA UNDER SINK AND STOVE, LOWER CABINETS AND COUNTER, AND SPACE TO MANEUVER



OPEN AREA UNDER SINK AND STOVE CONTROLS IN FRONT.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

We focused our review on three main issues:

- Were people who used wheelchairs occupying the specially designed accessible units constructed?
- Were HUD and FmHA administrative requirements to construct 5 percent of the units in family projects and 10 percent of the units in elderly projects for people in wheelchairs reasonable and being complied with?
- Did HUD and FmHA have effective management information systems covering the development and occupancy of accessible units?

Our review was made primarily at HUD's headquarters and its Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices and at FmHA's headquarters and its California and Florida State Offices. HUD's Jacksonville Area Office is responsible for HUD projects within the State of Florida and the Los Angeles Area Office is responsible for projects in Arizona and southern California. The two FmHA State offices are responsible for all FmHA projects located within their States.

To determine whether the 5- and 10-percent goals were being complied with, we examined the records of 232 elderly projects (165 HUD and 67 FmHA) and 55 family projects (39 HUD and 16 FmHA) located in Florida, Arizona, and California. These projects represented all HUD projects in Florida and 58 percent of the HUD projects in Arizona and southern California approved after the 5- and 10-percent construction goals became effective. Also, we reviewed all FmHA projects in Florida and in California approved after the goals for building accessible housing units became effective. (See pp. 30 and 31.)

To determine the extent people in wheelchairs were occupying housing units designed especially for people in wheelchairs, we analyzed the occupancy of 847 accessible units in 84 HUD and FmHA projects in eight States. (See p. 9.)

As part of our review, we visited 55 of the 232 elderly housing projects, (37 HUD and 18 FmHA), or 24 percent, primarily to determine the number of accessible units actually constructed and who was occupying them. The HUD projects

visited were selected at random and the FmHA projects visited were those with 40 or more units in Florida and 50 or more units in California which we identified as containing accessible units. We did not visit any family projects because there were few such projects with accessible units and at the time of our visits construction work had just been completed.

In addition, we sent questionnaires to managers of 199 projects (164 HUD and 35 FmHA) in six States--California, Indiana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas--which had been approved after the goals for building accessible units became effective. The purpose of the questionnaires was to obtain a broader nationwide perspective of the extent to which accessible units were occupied by persons in wheelchairs and to obtain information on the characteristics of the people in wheelchairs living in the accessible units. Eighty-two of the projects--65 HUD and 17 FmHA--returned questionnaires and 40 had information relating to people in wheelchairs. Appendix II contains information relating to the average age, income, and rent paid by 332 people in wheelchairs living in the projects we visited or who returned our questionnaires.

The eight States that were used in our review were selected because they were among the States that had the highest number of persons with handicaps as well as the highest number of HUD and FmHA projects approved for construction.

We met with Department of Education and Health and Human Services (HHS) officials to obtain information relating to the number of people who used wheelchairs in the United States and type of coordination between them and HUD concerning the services people in wheelchairs need. We also contacted representatives of four national organizations which served people who use wheelchairs to obtain their views on certain matters presented in this report. (See p. 15.)

We limited our review primarily to Federal efforts to house persons in wheelchairs because this was the principal type of Federal housing specially designed for persons with handicaps at the time of our review. HUD also provided about 8,200 housing units for persons with various handicaps under its section 202 program during fiscal years 1976 through 1979. All of these units were in projects entirely for persons who had handicaps, but most of the units were not structurally designed for the needs of the particular persons served. Instead, the units were regular housing

units which provided a suitable living environment and included related services needed by persons with certain types of handicaps, such as cerebral palsy or mental retardation.

In addition, we did not make an independent analysis of the scarcity of or demand for accessible housing units. However, officials of the Departments of Education, HHS, HUD, and some of the national organizations serving persons with handicaps told us that the existing supply of accessible housing units is not fully meeting the housing needs of people in wheelchairs. (See p. 15.)

We also did not compare the cost to construct wheelchair accessible units with that of regular units. However, we obtained several studies from HUD officials which demonstrate that the cost of accessible unit features vary, depending on the type of building in which they are built. For example, a study made by Battelle's Columbus Laboratories in 1977 for HUD stated that if approximately 10 percent of a new multi-family project's units are designed for accessibility by the disabled, the additional cost would probably range from 0.25 percent to 0.5 percent of the total construction cost required for regular housing. HUD officials told us that, in their opinion, the costs of providing accessible units ranged from about 0.33 percent less than regular housing units to 0.5 percent more.

CHAPTER 2

NEED TO INCREASE THE USE OF

ACCESSIBLE UNITS BY PEOPLE NEEDING THEM

Although housing designed for the special needs of people who use wheelchairs (accessible units) is scarce according to agency officials and representatives of national organizations serving people in wheelchairs, neither HUD nor FmHA require that accessible units developed under their housing programs be occupied by persons using wheelchairs or that project managers have effective outreach programs to obtain such people as tenants. The absence of such requirements has permitted project managers to determine the extent people in wheelchairs are housed in accessible units on a project-by-project basis.

As a result, only about 27 percent of the 847 accessible units we reviewed in eight States were occupied by people in wheelchairs, people in wheelchairs were occupying regular units at some of these projects, restrictions which denied housing to certain people in wheelchairs existed at some projects, and some people in wheelchairs may be unaware that accessible units are available.

HUD and FmHA need to increase the percentage of these persons in the accessible units by providing project managers adequate guidance concerning the occupancy of accessible units and the outreach efforts needed to obtain more people in wheelchairs. Since we began our audit, HUD and FmHA program officials have taken certain actions to correct some of these problems. However, HUD and FmHA need to take additional actions.

ACCESSIBLE UNITS NOT USUALLY OCCUPIED BY PERSONS IN WHEELCHAIRS

HUD and FmHA headquarters and the field offices we visited have no reports which show what type of persons--in a wheelchair, ambulatory handicapped, or nonhandicapped--are occupying accessible housing units. Consequently, no information is available to determine the extent people in wheelchairs are occupying federally supported accessible housing units nationwide.

To determine, on a test basis, the extent that people in wheelchairs were occupying HUD and FmHA assisted accessible housing units, we analyzed the occupancy of 847 accessible units at 84 HUD and FmHA projects in eight States. We

visited 33 HUD and 16 FmHA elderly projects with accessible units located in Arizona, Florida, and southern California. We also analyzed responses to our questionnaire from 35 HUD and FmHA projects with accessible units located in California, Indiana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. The results are presented in the following table.

Number of accessible units occupied by

<u>Program</u>	<u>Total accessible units</u>	<u>People in wheelchairs</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>People with other handicaps</u>	<u>Nonhandicap elderly persons</u>
Public housing	54	31	57	12	11
Section 8	130	45	35	54	31
Section 202	226	73	32	101	52
Section 221	143	33	23	56	54
Section 231	48	14	29	20	14
Section 236	80	6	8	9	65
Section 515	<u>166</u>	<u>28</u>	17	<u>68</u>	<u>70</u>
Total	<u>847</u>	<u>230</u>	27	<u>320</u>	<u>297</u>

Only 230, or 27 percent, of the 847 accessible units tested were occupied by persons in wheelchairs, while the remaining accessible units were occupied by ambulatory persons. All of the housing programs had a very low percentage of accessible units occupied by people in wheelchairs. The public housing program showed the highest percentage (57) and the section 236 program had the lowest percentage (8).

While there were an additional 320 persons with handicaps in the accessible units, these persons did not need wheelchairs. Undoubtedly, everyone living in these projects can benefit from some special features found in accessible units such as handrails, lower shelves, and controls on the front of the stove. Such features are usually found in regular units of elderly housing projects. However, the accessible units also contain other features which benefit only people in wheelchairs, for example, roll-in showers, open space under the kitchen and bathroom sinks, and wider doors and hallways.

In addition to housing people who use wheelchairs in accessible units, we noted that 46 projects had 102 people in wheelchairs who occupied regular units. Fifty-three of these persons, or 52 percent, were not occupying specially designed accessible units because the projects they lived in did not contain such units. For the remaining 49 people, 19 chose regular units because the accessible units were already occupied, 18 did not believe the special features were useful and/or they occupied regular units prior to becoming wheelchair bound and elected to remain in their unit, and 3 needed features such as second bedrooms not available in the accessible units.

REASONS FOR LOW OCCUPANCY
BY PEOPLE IN WHEELCHAIRS

The main reasons why people in wheelchairs occupied a small percentage of the accessible units we reviewed include:

- HUD and FmHA do not require accessible units to be occupied by people using wheelchairs.
- Most project sponsors do not have effective outreach programs to advertise the availability of the accessible units and rental assistance.
- Many projects do not have services which people in wheelchairs often need to live independently.
- Some projects had restrictions which deny certain people in wheelchairs the opportunity to live in the projects.

HUD and FmHA do not require
accessible units to be occupied
by people needing them

Although accessible housing units are scarce, neither HUD nor FmHA have a requirement that such units be occupied by people in wheelchairs to the maximum extent possible.

HUD and FmHA officials have not provided adequate guidance to project managers concerning the occupancy of the accessible units. Consequently, project managers are faced with many difficult decisions concerning who should occupy the specialized units. The following are examples of situations we noted during our visits which involve questions concerning the priority of occupancy of the accessible units.

- Are only people in wheelchairs or all persons with handicaps eligible for the accessible units?

- Should a separate waiting list of only people in wheelchairs or all persons with handicaps be kept for the accessible units?
- Should an accessible unit be left vacant for a specific time period before renting it to a person not in a wheelchair?
- If a person not in a wheelchair is occupying an accessible unit and a person in a wheelchair applies for such a unit, should the person in a wheelchair be moved to the top of the waiting list and the person not in a wheelchair be moved into a regular unit so the person in a wheelchair can occupy the accessible unit?

During our visits to the 49 1/ projects with accessible units, we noted that project managers had divergent tenant selection practices concerning the occupancy of such units, including the following:

- Anyone eligible to participate in the housing program is eligible to occupy the accessible units at 41 projects.
- Only persons with handicaps were eligible for the accessible units at five projects.
- Only people in wheelchairs were eligible for the accessible units at three projects.

Regarding giving priority for selecting persons in wheelchairs to fill the accessible units, we noted the following practices:

- Priority was given to people in wheelchairs at 27 projects.
- No priority was given; tenants were selected on a first come, first serve basis at 16 projects.
- Priority was given to persons with handicaps regardless of whether the person was in a wheelchair at six projects.

1/During our review we actually visited 55 projects; however, six projects had no accessible units.

Some managers of projects for the elderly tried to place tenants in accessible units who could make the best use of the specially designed features. If people in wheelchairs were not readily available on their waiting lists, the managers selected people who had other handicaps, but were ambulatory or elderly people who had difficulty in walking.

For example, 14 HUD and 7 FmHA projects out of the 49 projects with accessible units we visited had only people with handicaps in their 182 accessible units. Sixty-nine units were occupied by people in wheelchairs and 113 units were occupied by persons with other handicaps (those who were blind or deaf who did not benefit from the special features of the accessible units).

Other managers did not make any special efforts to effectively use the accessible units. For example, the executive director of one public housing authority told us that he was not concerned about placing persons with no handicaps in accessible units because they were eligible to be housed under the program and he was making good use of the unit merely by the fact the unit was occupied.

Another HUD project we visited with 16 accessible units had 6 people in wheelchairs, among 1,600 applicants on a waiting list. None of the six were housed even though they were on the waiting list long before the project opened because they were too far down the waiting list. The resident manager of the project estimated in May 1980 that the first person in a wheelchair on the waiting list will have to wait about 6 years to be housed.

The Chief of the Architectural Branch, Housing Division, in HUD's Jacksonville Area Office told us that many developers do not want to build accessible units because the units are difficult to rent. During our visits, however, we noted there was no problem in renting these units although they were not always rented to people in wheelchairs.

The use of separate waiting lists for perspective tenants also varied. Only 16 of the 49 projects maintained separate waiting lists of people in wheelchairs for the accessible units. Also, three projects had separate waiting lists which included persons with all types of handicaps, as well as a list for persons with no handicaps. Thirty of the projects had only one waiting list for everyone.

Most projects do not have effective outreach programs

Most of the 49 projects with accessible units did not have effective outreach programs to obtain prospective tenants who used wheelchairs. This situation occurred because HUD and FmHA do not require that project managers make an effort to get persons who use wheelchairs to apply for the accessible units.

Although nine projects advertised that they were accepting applications from the elderly or the handicapped, the advertisements usually did not mention that some units were specially designed for people in wheelchairs or that rental assistance was available. Also, several projects received so many applications before the projects were completed that the project managers did not seek additional applicants, even though not enough people in wheelchairs were on the list to fill the accessible units.

Only 12 of the 49 project managers had contacted organizations serving the handicapped in an attempt to get persons with handicaps to apply for tenancy. However, some of the organizations contacted were not usually associated with people who use wheelchairs. Also, officials of organizations serving the handicapped in Jacksonville told us that they were not aware that these Federal programs provided units designed for persons in wheelchairs.

Management officials of some projects had made a special effort to obtain people who used wheelchairs for the accessible units in their projects and had been successful. For example, the sponsors of three HUD projects we visited in California required resident managers to place people in wheelchairs in the accessible units. The resident managers were successful in filling all of the 21 accessible units available with people who used wheelchairs by conducting outreach efforts, including contacting various organizations that dealt with people who used wheelchairs.

To determine why many people in wheelchairs were not applying for accessible units, we asked project managers for their views on the matter. The project managers generally stated one or more of the following reasons:

- There were not that many people in wheelchairs in the area.
- People in wheelchairs generally stay with families or friends.

--People in wheelchairs do not want to leave the area where they presently live.

--Older people in wheelchairs generally need other types of housing, such as nursing facilities.

HUD officials told us that they believe these are incorrect assumptions. They stated that, in their opinion, the reasons why many persons in wheelchairs were not applying for the accessible units were those we cited on page 11. Namely, inadequate outreach for potential tenants in wheelchairs and no requirement to house persons in wheelchairs in the accessible units. The officials also said that most existing accessible housing units are in elderly projects and have only one bedroom and thus many families either could not or do not want to live in the units.

As discussed in chapter 3, no reliable statistics exist on the number of persons in wheelchairs living in the various cities and counties of the United States or on their need for federally subsidized housing. Consequently, it is difficult to determine how many wheelchair persons are in a particular location or whether they need federally assisted housing.

However, officials of the Departments of Education, HHS, HUD and some of the national organizations serving persons with handicaps told us that the existing supply of accessible housing units is not fully meeting the housing needs of people in wheelchairs. The shortage of accessible housing units was also pointed out in various research papers, including one entitled "Community and Residential Housing" prepared for the 1977 White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals.

During our review, we contacted officials of several national organizations which serve persons with handicaps to determine if they were aware that housing units designed for persons in wheelchairs were being constructed under certain HUD and FmHA programs and where the units were located. We spoke with representatives of the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, National Association for Physically Handicapped Persons, United Cerebral Palsy Association, and the Coalition for Barrier Free Living. These officials told us they were aware that such units existed, but did not always know where they were located. The officials also told us that there are many persons in wheelchairs who would like to live in HUD and FmHA assisted housing units, however, the officials had no data on the total estimated number of people in wheelchairs needing such housing.

These officials told us they would welcome the opportunity to assist HUD and FmHA in an outreach program to place people with handicaps in specially designed HUD and FmHA units. They said that their outreach efforts would be greatly simplified by having a list of HUD and FmHA projects which contain the name and location of housing projects with accessible units specially designed for people in wheelchairs.

Services often needed by disabled persons are not offered in many projects

In May 1977, before the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, a former Secretary of HUD said that "Housing without services is not adequate housing for people with disabilities." She added that she would work with the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) ^{1/} to develop programs that provide services to HUD-assisted projects. In addition, during our review, several officials of organizations serving people with handicaps, including the Director of the United Cerebral Palsy Association, told us that many people who use wheelchairs require services such as personal attendant care, housekeeping, nutrition programs providing food, and transportation in order to live independently. However, during our visits to the 49 HUD and FmHA projects we noted that services such as personal attendant care were often unavailable.

The lack of services is attributed, in part, to the following two reasons:

1. Neither HUD nor FmHA require their project sponsors to provide services to people in wheelchairs.
2. Almost no efforts have been made to coordinate federally funded services needed by the disabled with federally assisted housing.

Legislative requirements relating to providing services to people with handicaps

In the past, the Congress has recognized the importance of providing special housing-related services to persons with handicaps under various laws. However, there is no

^{1/}On May 4, 1980, HEW's responsibilities were split between the new Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services.

legal requirement that project sponsors provide the special services people in wheelchairs need.

For example, the Congress acknowledged the importance of housing-related services in section 210(c) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383) when it amended the 1959 Housing Act (Public Law 86-372) to provide that housing developed under HUD's section 202 program will be in appropriate support of, and supported by, applicable State and local plans which respond to Federal program requirements by providing an assured range of necessary services, including health, welfare, homemaker, and transportation for individuals occupying such units.

The Departments of Education and HHS provide funds for many of the services persons in wheelchairs need. For example, under title XX of the Social Security Act of 1935, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1397), HHS provides funds to States that, at their discretion, offer services that include home management and maintenance, transportation, health support, and preparation and delivery of meals to the elderly, needy, or disabled.

The Congress also recognized the importance of coordinating HUD and HEW services to people with handicaps in section 209 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 when it instructed the Secretary of HUD to consult with the Secretary of HEW to insure that special HUD projects for the elderly or handicapped authorized pursuant to the United States Housing Act of 1937 shall provide quality services consistent with the needs of the occupants.

Project managers are not required to provide services to people in wheelchairs

HUD and FmHA do not require project sponsors to provide services such as personal attendant care, housekeeping, nutrition programs providing food, and transportation that persons in wheelchairs often need. Likewise, HUD and FmHA have not given project managers any guidance on which federally funded services may be available to persons with handicaps and how to obtain these services. As a result, few such services were available at the projects we visited.

Since there is no legal requirement that project sponsors provide the special services people in wheelchairs need, the amount of services available at a project usually depended on the initiative of the project manager to obtain such services. The services offered at some of the projects we visited included transportation, housekeeping, and nutrition programs providing food.

However, even these projects which offered more services than others often did not provide the most crucial services needed by people in wheelchairs. Representatives of the national associations of handicapped persons who we talked to consider personal attendant care among the most crucial services, but this service was not offered at any of the projects we visited.

Lack of coordination in obtaining services for disabled persons

Although the Departments of HHS and Education provide funds for many of the services people in wheelchairs need, almost no coordination exists between them and HUD and FmHA concerning providing such services to disabled persons living in HUD and FmHA assisted housing projects such as those included in our review.

There have been several HUD-HEW interagency agreements on such services. For example, there is an October 1979 agreement involving HUD's public housing program and HEW's Administration for Public Services (now part of HHS) under which comprehensive social services authorized by title XX of the Social Security Act of 1935 are provided to residents of public housing projects.

Also, the Rural Aging Specialist in FmHA's Office of Policy Coordination told us that there was one FmHA-HEW agreement involving the FmHA congregate housing program which provides a variety of services, including meals, transportation, housekeeping, and personal care to elderly and handicapped residents of FmHA's section 515 projects. However, this is a demonstration program which will serve only a few persons for 3 years.

To the extent that persons with handicaps live in the HUD and FmHA projects covered by the agreements, they may receive these services. However, such agreements have generally covered only a small number of projects. Further, there have been no overall agreements to provide social and welfare services to residents with handicaps living in HUD and FmHA assisted accessible units such as those included in our review.

We talked to the following officials responsible for coordinating their agencies efforts to coordinate services to disabled residents of HUD projects. The Acting Director, Office of Community Services, and the Director, Office of Independent Living, HUD; the Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Health Care Financing Administration, and

the Chief Program Analyst for Housing and Welfare, Administration for Public Services, HHS; and the Special Assistant for Independent Living Projects and the Acting Director for Advocacy and Coordination, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Education. These officials generally acknowledged that efforts to coordinate HHS and Department of Education services with HUD-assisted housing have been limited and ineffective.

These officials told us that one reason why agreements have not been more effective was that HUD and HEW failed to include representatives of State and local social service agencies. The officials added, that to succeed, these service agreements must include State and local agencies because the Congress has established a delivery system which gives State and local governments considerable discretion in administering HHS and Department of Education services to the handicapped. State and local officials have final decision, within broad guidelines of HHS and Education, concerning which services are to be offered, the nature and level of the services, and the criteria for obtaining the services.

HUD, Education, and FmHA program officials pointed out several other obstacles in their working together with State and local social service and welfare organizations to coordinate housing with the other services people in wheelchairs need.

For example, HUD program officials told us also that there are problems inherent in coordination between HUD and HHS since HUD construction money is committed for up to 40 years while HHS funds for services are committed for short periods of time--3 years. We recognize there can be problems due to the difference in which program funds can be committed; however, we believe this difference should not prevent coordination. In this respect, HUD officials stated that it is promoting interagency and State/local coordination on a limited basis through the HUD/HHS Demonstration Program for housing the chronically mentally ill.

FmHA officials were also concerned with our assessment concerning coordinating housing with the other services needed by people in wheelchairs. They believed that we were advocating that every FmHA assisted housing project with wheelchair accessible housing units was to have the types of

services offered under their congregate housing program. (See p. 18). The purpose of our assessment is not to require that services be offered similar to the congregate housing program. Rather, we were advocating that some Department of HHS and Education funds allocated to States be directed to help some people in wheelchairs living in FmHA and HUD assisted housing projects who need certain services.

Department of Education officials emphasized that Education and HHS can try to persuade, but cannot require, State and local governments to spend the funds for some specific purpose, such as personal care needed by persons in wheelchairs to live in accessible housing units. The officials added that setting priorities is a function of States. We recognize that States have the final decision, within broad Federal guidelines, on how Education and HHS funds will be spent. However, as pointed out by Education and HHS officials, the role of State and local governments does not preclude these Departments from emphasizing funding of services for persons in wheelchairs residing in HUD and FmHA projects.

Some projects had restrictions which denied certain persons admittance

Although HUD and FmHA programs are, by law and Federal regulations, to be open to all eligible handicapped applicants, we noted that 9 of the 49 projects with accessible units had restrictions which denied admission to persons under age 55 or 62 or who required services such as personal attendant care in order to live alone.

Some projects require all tenants to be at least age 55 or 62

Although non-elderly handicapped adults are generally entitled to the same rights and privileges as elderly persons under HUD and FmHA housing programs, 3 of the 49 elderly projects with accessible units had established admission policies that did not admit persons under age 62 and one project did not allow persons under 55. These four HUD projects had a total of 61 accessible units of which 14 were occupied by people in wheelchairs.

Several project managers told us that one of the main reasons for these limitations is because certain sponsors believe that elderly persons should not be housed with younger persons because of their different lifestyles.

We discussed these restrictions with HUD's Assistant General Counsel for Low-Rent Housing and Agriculture's Deputy Director, Community Development Division, Office of General Counsel. They told us that this practice is prohibited by the various laws which authorize persons with handicaps to be eligible program participants.

Some projects require all tenants to live independently

Most of the projects require all tenants, including those in wheelchairs, to be able to live without depending on project management for providing any personal services, such as housekeeping or personal attendant care. However, four HUD and one FmHA project required all tenants to live completely independent because the sponsors believed that if a tenant needed assistance, the tenant should live elsewhere, for example, in a nursing home.

The two officials from the HUD and Department of Agriculture Offices of General Counsel told us that if disabled persons are eligible program participants and are able to secure their own special services, the project sponsors cannot legally bar them from their projects as long as the disabled persons can perform the obligations of tenants.

A special problem arises when people in wheelchairs need another person to live with them to perform various personal care services because almost all of the accessible units are one-bedroom units. Under certain circumstances, people in wheelchairs might need a two-bedroom unit to house themselves and another person who assists them but none is available. For example, one project manager said she would allow someone to live with a disabled person but if the assistant is not a spouse, they would need a two-bedroom unit and the project had no two-bedroom units designed for people in wheelchairs.

FmHA program officials believe that the section 515 program is legislatively mandated to serve people who can live independently. However, the question as to who is able to live independently is difficult to answer. These officials expressed the opinion that people who need special services such as personal attendant care probably belong in an institutional setting and not in FmHA's projects. However, representatives of national organizations which

serve people who use wheelchairs told us they believe some people in wheelchairs who need certain services will be able to function effectively in FmHA's projects.

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FmHA program officials informed us that in October 1980, FmHA published regulations which should help correct some of the deficiencies we noted. The regulations provide, in part, that occupancy of housing specifically for people who are elderly or are handicapped is limited solely to those persons. The regulations also authorize, but not require, project sponsors to maintain separate waiting lists of persons with handicaps for the housing units designed for the needs of persons with handicaps.

These FmHA regulations are an improvement; however, they may be confusing to project managers because the regulations appear to lump elderly and handicapped persons together and do not specify that people with handicaps should be housed in units that were designed for that particular handicap.

CONCLUSIONS

We believe accessible units should be occupied to the greatest extent possible by people for whom the units were designed because accessible housing units have special features designed for the needs of people in wheelchairs. The overall occupancy rate currently achieved at HUD and FmHA projects could be improved if HUD and FmHA required project sponsors to insure that accessible units are occupied by people in wheelchairs to the greatest extent possible and to establish effective outreach programs to obtain such persons. The absence of such requirements has permitted project managers to determine policy matters on a project-by-project basis, including the extent people in wheelchairs are housed in accessible units. As a result, people in wheelchairs may be unaware that accessible units and rental assistance are available, and accessible units are being occupied by people not in wheelchairs.

In addition, people in wheelchairs face other obstacles which prevent them from living in HUD and FmHA assisted accessible units. These include, among other things,

--restrictions which deny certain persons admittance because of their age or ability to live independently and

--services needed by some people in wheelchairs are not available at some projects.

A rigid policy of denying access to all adult disabled persons under age 55 or 62 is not permitted by law. Also, project sponsors cannot legally bar disabled persons, who are able to secure their own special services, from their projects as long as the disabled persons can perform the obligations of tenants.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SECRETARIES OF HUD,
HHS, AGRICULTURE, AND EDUCATION

To help insure that accessible housing units are used by the persons for whom they were designed, we recommend that the Secretaries of HUD and Agriculture:

- Require project managers to give persons who use wheelchairs priority for the accessible units. One way of accomplishing this is to require project managers to maintain separate waiting lists for the accessible units and give people in wheelchairs priority regardless of when they apply for admission.
- Establish procedures for project managers to use to advertise the availability of accessible units and rental assistance, including contacting public and private organizations serving people in wheelchairs, to obtain greater participation of people who use wheelchairs.
- Identify those elderly projects which do not admit non-elderly disabled persons or which require persons to live totally independent and notify the project sponsors that the restrictions must be removed.

To help insure that federally funded health and welfare services are available to people in wheelchairs living in HUD and FmHA projects, we recommend that the Secretaries of HUD, HHS, Agriculture, and Education work with State and local social service and welfare organizations to coordinate housing with the other services people in wheelchairs need.

AGENCY COMMENTS

We obtained official oral comments from HUD. The Department of Education, HHS, and FmHA chose either to not comment on the report or requested that their oral comments not be treated as official agency positions.

HUD generally agreed with our recommendations and has taken certain actions since we began our audit to correct

these problems. They pointed out that HUD's proposed regulations relating to nondiscrimination based on handicaps pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides additional guidance to project managers. The proposed regulations require that project managers make every reasonable effort to encourage occupancy of accessible units by a qualified person with a handicap who requires the accessibility features of the unit.

HUD officials told us that low occupancy of accessible units by people in wheelchairs has been a problem area at HUD for a long time and needs to be resolved. They told us they planned to use our report to support program changes they believe are needed.

CHAPTER 3

PROBLEMS IN SETTING AND

ACHIEVING PRODUCTION GOALS FOR

ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

Neither HUD nor FmHA has made an analysis to determine the extent that a market exists for accessible units. Nevertheless, they have established specific percentage goals for constructing such units in elderly and family housing projects. HUD and FmHA have no (1) studies to support the use of these percentage goals for constructing accessible units, (2) reliable statistics on the number of people in wheelchairs in the United States and the characteristics of such persons, and (3) data on the demand for accessible units in the market areas served by their projects.

While HUD and FmHA are currently requiring project sponsors to implement the 10-percent elderly housing wheelchair construction goal, they are not requiring sponsors to fully comply with the 5-percent family housing goal. Only about 42 percent of the 55 HUD and FmHA projects in Arizona, Florida, and southern California included in our review had complied with the goal. This occurred because HUD and FmHA field officials either were not aware of the goal or adequate guidelines implementing the goal such as type of unit, (accessible or other) have not been communicated to them.

While the present goal of constructing accessible units for 5 percent of the units in every family project may not be appropriate, there is a need to strengthen the implementation of goals that are established on the basis of housing needs of people in wheelchairs.

While HUD and FmHA have had problems in the past in getting project sponsors to construct the number of accessible units required by the 10-percent goal primarily because their field office officials were unaware of the goal, currently this goal is being achieved.

ACCESSIBLE HOUSING GOALS

The specific percentages used for the 5- and 10-percent goals and applying these goals uniformly to housing projects in all parts of the United States may not be appropriate. The HUD and FmHA officials we spoke to were unable to provide us with studies which supported the use of these percentages for the goals.

Although the 10-percent goal for establishing accessible units has been in effect for about 10 years for most HUD and FmHA programs, these agencies still lack vital information on people in wheelchairs such as their

- total number in the United States,
- geographic location,
- age and income,
- rent paid, and
- need for housing and other services.

HUD and FmHA program officials agreed with our assessment that they need to gather nationwide housing related data for people who use wheelchairs. The HUD and FmHA officials said the data could be used to establish and evaluate policies relating to housing people in wheelchairs.

Prior to 1978, HUD did not attempt to gather personal and housing related data concerning people with disabilities in the United States. Instead, HUD based its policies on the experiences of various States and other nations which already had existing programs for housing the disabled.

Since 1978, HUD has initiated three attempts to obtain statistical data concerning the Nation's disabled population. While various information about the disabled population of the United States has been gathered, HUD has collected no data or information specifically relating to people who use wheelchairs or their need for housing.

HUD decided to collect data on the Nation's disabled population and their housing needs by adding a Housing Modification Supplement to the 1978 HUD-Census Annual Housing Survey. The Annual Housing Survey is one of HUD's most important sources of housing data and HUD uses the data to evaluate, target, and monitor its programs. Although the draft version of the Housing Modification Supplement did contain a question concerning whether the respondent was in a wheelchair, this question was deleted from the final document. We asked several HUD officials why the question was deleted but they were unable to tell us the reason. The deletion resulted in a lost opportunity to obtain various data relating to people in wheelchairs such as age, income, household size, etc.

HUD also gathered data on the housing needs of people with disabilities from the 1978 Census-Social Security Administration Disability Survey. This survey provides data on economic, social, and health characteristics of both disabled and nondisabled persons. HUD added several questions to the 1978 survey but did not ask for data relating specifically to people in wheelchairs.

Also, in 1978, HUD obtained information on people with disabilities from the 1976 Census Survey of Income and Education. This survey gathers information on income, public assistance, and disabilities. However, the survey contains virtually no housing data, and the data that is available does not show information on people in wheelchairs.

The Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, has information on certain characteristics of people who use wheelchairs in the United States; however, the information is available only on a national basis. Appendix III shows the number, income, age and living arrangements of people in wheelchairs.

HUD AND FmHA REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO HOUSING FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Besides the minimum property standards relating to construction quality, sponsors of new HUD and FmHA elderly rental housing projects must build at least 10 percent of the units specifically for people in wheelchairs. Sponsors of new HUD family housing projects financed with section 8 or public housing funds must construct at least 5 percent of the units for the handicapped.

In addition, HUD and the Department of Agriculture are developing regulations concerning nondiscrimination against persons with handicaps which will generally require that 5 percent of the units in federally assisted family rental housing projects be accessible to or adaptable for the physically handicapped.

There are no studies to support using these specific percentages as goals. HUD officials agreed with our assessment that nationwide data should be collected and the goals should be evaluated for appropriateness. FmHA program officials also agreed that nationwide data would be useful for policy decisions, and that they preferred to identify the demand for the accessible units in the immediate areas in which the FmHA project is to be located as part of the market analysis done for each project. The officials said

FmHA could establish procedures to require project sponsors to contact organizations serving people in wheelchairs to get an estimate of demand. However, the officials added that State laws sometimes require a certain percentage of housing units to be built for persons with handicaps and such laws would have to be considered in determining the number of special units to build.

The FmHA officials also pointed out that FmHA's policy is to have its section 515 housing units occupied by people living in the vicinity of the project. Thus, FmHA needs information relating to the people in wheelchairs living in the area near the project and not information for the whole county.

Percentage goal applicable
to HUD and FmHA elderly projects

The 10-percent goal was first applied in 1963 to HUD's section 231 program. The HUD directive establishing the goal stated:

"Fixtures in bathrooms of approximately 10 percent of the living units of each type shall be arranged and space provided to permit a wheelchair to be maneuvered into position for transfer of person to water closet or bathtub, or to use lavatory while seated in a chair."

In October 1966, HUD issued the first MPS for housing for the handicapped. These MPS applied only to elderly projects constructed under FHA-insured programs, and as such included elderly housing projects insured under the section 221 and 236 programs as well as section 231 program. This publication stated:

"Fixtures in bathrooms of at least 10 percent of the living units of each type shall be arranged and space provided to permit access and use by a person in a wheelchair."

The 10-percent provision was first made applicable to the public housing and section 202 programs in May 1970. The provision later applied to new elderly projects constructed under HUD's section 8 program which was authorized by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383).

HUD's current MPS (1973 edition, as revised) contain the same bathroom fixture requirement as the 1966 MPS.

However, these MPS were amended in 1976 to provide that at least one-half of the 10 percent of the units with bathrooms designed for people in wheelchairs shall have kitchen equipment and work and storage space that is accessible to and usable by people in wheelchairs.

The 10-percent provision also applies to FmHA section 515 projects approved since October 1971, the date FmHA adopted HUD's MPS for this program.

Percentage goal applicable to HUD family projects

In November 1977, HUD headquarters notified its field offices that it had established an objective of providing family housing assistance for the handicapped under the section 8 and public housing programs during fiscal year 1978. The notice instructed the field offices, where practicable, to require that at least 5 percent of the units in each newly constructed family housing project, for which contract authority is reserved during fiscal year 1978, be designed specifically for the handicapped. HUD intended that FmHA also comply with this goal whenever HUD's section 8 funds were used with FmHA's section 515 projects. Accordingly, HUD headquarters informed its field office directors to advise the FmHA State offices in their areas of HUD's objective and encourage FmHA to comply with this requirement when developing section 515 housing projects with any section 8 funds transferred for their use.

In November 1978, HUD issued a second notice covering fiscal year 1979 funds which was basically the same as the 1977 notice. The 1978 notice was stronger. It said that field office managers shall advise FmHA that they must comply with the 5-percent goal. In January 1980, HUD issued a third notice continuing the 5-percent policy for fiscal year 1980 funds.

The 5-percent goal as it relates to the section 8 program became a Federal regulation (24 CFR 880.202 (f)) effective November 5, 1979. The regulation states that new section 8 projects for non-elderly families are required, where practicable, to have at least 5 percent of the housing units designed for and accessible to people with physical handicaps. Although HUD has not yet issued a Federal regulation covering the public housing program, the Chief of the Architect and Cost Branch, Division of Multifamily Housing Development, told us the 5-percent goal for public housing was permanent.

Proposed goals applicable to
HUD and FmHA family projects

HUD and the Department of Agriculture are in the process of developing regulations relating to nondiscrimination against the handicapped as required by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112).

HUD's proposed regulations contain a provision requiring that a minimum of 5 percent of all units in new multifamily housing projects shall be accessible units and an additional 2 percent shall be built for people with disabilities but who are not in wheelchairs.

Agriculture's proposed regulations provide that recipients which operate multifamily rental housing projects receiving assistance from the Department shall construct at least 5 percent of the units or one unit, whichever is greater, to be accessible to or adaptable for people with physical handicaps. The proposed regulations allow for an exception if a market survey, approved by Agriculture, shows that a different percentage is appropriate; however, at least one unit in every project shall be for the physically handicapped.

EXTENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE
10-PERCENT ELDERLY HOUSING GOAL

Neither HUD nor FmHA had nationwide statistics by which we could determine overall compliance with the 10-percent goal. To determine the extent of compliance with the 10-percent goal on a test basis, we compared the number of accessible units that were built or planned in 232 HUD and FmHA housing projects with the minimum number of accessible units that should have been built under the goal. The HUD projects were in Arizona, Florida, and southern California and the FmHA projects were in California and Florida. We divided the projects into three time segments--projects approved before 1975, projects approved and completed from January 1975 to January 1980, and projects in the process of construction as of January 1980.

HUD and FmHA were not requiring project sponsors to comply with the 10-percent goal before 1975. Only 4 projects, or about 6 percent, of the 71 HUD and FmHA projects approved before 1975 and applicable to the 10-percent goal had the required minimum number of accessible units. The compliance rate was 3 percent for HUD projects and 20 percent for FmHA projects. Further, 62 of the 71 projects had no

accessible units and 5 had less than the required number of accessible units.

During the 5-year period ended January 1980, the percentage of projects complying with the 10-percent goal improved. Compliance with the goal reached about 66 percent for the 100 projects approved and completed during the period January 1975 to January 1980. The compliance rate was 73 percent for HUD projects and 55 percent for FmHA projects. Twenty of the 100 projects had no accessible units and 14 projects had less than the required number of accessible units.

As of January 1980, HUD and FmHA elderly projects in the process of construction generally were complying with the 10-percent goal. Fifty-five, or about 90 percent, of the 61 projects in the process of construction as of January 1980 were in compliance with the 10-percent goal. About 98 percent of the HUD projects and 71 percent of the FmHA projects were in compliance. Only two projects had no accessible units and four other projects had a total of only nine accessible units less than required by the goal.

EXTENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH
THE 5-PERCENT FAMILY
HOUSING GOAL

The HUD Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices were not requiring project sponsors to comply with the 5-percent goal because HUD field officials were uncertain about how to implement the policy. In addition, HUD intended that FmHA adopt the 5-percent goal, but FmHA's California and Florida State Offices were not following the goal because the responsible HUD field offices did not inform them of the policy.

To determine the extent of compliance with the 5-percent goal on a test basis, we analyzed the number of accessible units constructed or planned for 13 HUD public housing projects and 26 section 8 assisted projects in Arizona, Florida, and southern California. HUD approved all of these projects between October 1977 and January 1980.

Only 17 of the 39 HUD family housing projects, or 44 percent, had the minimum number of accessible units required. Twenty-one projects had no accessible units and 1 had only one accessible unit less than required.

Although FmHA family projects were not subject to the 5-percent goal, we reviewed the extent that accessible

units were being constructed in FmHA's projects during the time HUD's goal was effective. During this period, FmHA's California and Florida State Offices approved 16 family projects. Only six projects, or about 38 percent, were in compliance with the goal, and 10 had no accessible units.

REASONS FOR NONCOMPLIANCE

During our review, we asked officials in HUD's Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices and FmHA's California and Florida State Offices why they were not fully enforcing the 5- and 10-percent goals. Their responses follow.

Ten percent goal

HUD's Deputy Director for Development and the Chief Architect of the Housing Division in its Jacksonville Area Office informed us that the area office began requiring sponsors of elderly housing projects to comply with the 10-percent goal in about 1974 when they became aware of HUD's minimum property standards (1973 edition) which contained the goal. The Chief Architect said the Jacksonville Area Office was aware of the goal before 1974, but the goal was not treated as a requirement until the minimum property standards were issued. The officials told us that waivers are not granted and if an elderly project contained less than the number of required accessible units, it was an oversight.

HUD's Chief Architect of the Housing Division in its Los Angeles Area Office informed us that the area office began to implement the 10-percent goal in 1974 when it received the minimum property standards (1973 edition). The Acting Executive Assistant to the Area Manager informed us that before this time the area office was not enforcing the 10-percent goal.

FmHA's Architect in its California State Office told us that they adopted the 10-percent goal in 1974. Neither the Architect nor the Rural Housing Specialist in FmHA's Florida State Office knew when the 10-percent policy was adopted.

Five percent goal

HUD's Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices were not requiring project sponsors to follow the goal because the offices were uncertain about how to implement the goal. FmHA's California and Florida State Offices were not following

the goal at the start of our review in January 1980 because HUD had not notified FmHA or its two State Offices of the goal.

The first two HUD notices concerning the 5-percent goal sent to the field merely informed the HUD field personnel that there was a 5-percent goal but did not provide them adequate guidance on how to implement the goal. We believe the most confusing part of the notices was the provision saying the goal was applicable "where practicable," and consequently, the field offices did not know under what conditions they should require sponsors to comply.

HUD's Jacksonville Area Office had problems concerning how to implement the 5-percent goal and the Acting Director of the Housing Division wrote to HUD headquarters in June 1979 to get an interpretation of the November 1978 notice. The memorandum asked several questions, including what housing programs with section 8 subsidies were included in the 5 percent handicapped requirements and what type of unit should be considered a handicapped unit. The memorandum also gave possible answers to the questions asked. The office wanted to know if headquarters agreed with the possible answers or whether changes were necessary.

In August 1979, the Director, Office of Multifamily Housing Development, at HUD headquarters responded saying it is not possible to reply to the June memorandum by agreeing with the answers to the specific questions and that no guidelines had been issued. HUD's August memorandum also appeared to minimize the importance of the 5-percent goal because the memorandum stated that "The notice referenced contained nine pages of instructions on use of funds and only a short paragraph on housing for the handicapped." The memorandum did emphasize that the 5-percent goal was to be followed "where practicable" and only the field office manager can determine if it is practicable. As a result, the Acting Director of the Housing Division at the Jacksonville Area Office believed that they could not require developers of family projects to comply with the 5-percent goal.

HUD's area offices in California and Florida had not notified the corresponding FmHA State offices of the 5-percent goal as of the start of our review in January 1980. After we brought this matter to the attention of agency officials, HUD's Jacksonville Office notified FmHA's Florida State office of the 5-percent goal on March 10, 1980. The Chief of Rural Housing at FmHA's California State Office told us that they had not been notified of the 5-percent goal as of July 16, 1980, but the office has not had any section 515

projects approved which used HUD's fiscal year 1980 section 8 funds and thus there was no need for HUD to notify them.

FmHA's State Office Director in California and its Chief of Rural Housing in Florida told us that they will implement the 5-percent provision in the future. However, in April 1980, FmHA's Director of Multifamily Housing told us that HUD did not notify FmHA headquarters of this requirement and that FmHA would have to study the matter further before deciding whether to follow the 5-percent goal. However, Agriculture is in the process of developing regulations relating to nondiscrimination against the handicapped which has a provision requiring that 5-percent of the rental units in multifamily projects, or one unit--whichever is greater--be accessible to or adaptable for the physically handicapped.

ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBLE UNITS COULD HAVE BEEN BUILT

To assess the affect of noncompliance with the 5-and 10-percent goals, we compared the minimum number of accessible units that could have been constructed under the two goals with the number of such units actually constructed or planned to arrive at the additional accessible units that could have been built. Our comparison included the 232 elderly projects and the 55 family projects which were subject to the 5- or 10-percent goals and located within the jurisdiction of HUD's Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices or FmHA's California and Florida State Offices.

While no reliable data exists to demonstrate the need for additional accessible units, we estimate that an additional 1,251 accessible units would have been constructed in the 232 elderly projects if the 10-percent goal had been fully implemented. The section 236 program had the largest number of additional wheelchair units (807) that should have been constructed. This program had only 1 project with accessible units out of the total 44 section 236 projects included in our review. The section 202 program had more accessible units constructed than was required by the goal; however, all the other programs had less accessible units than required.

We estimate that an additional 108 accessible units would have been constructed in the 55 HUD and FmHA family housing projects included in our review if the 5-percent goal had been fully implemented.

MOST ACCESSIBLE UNITS
HAD ONE BEDROOM

The 10-percent goal was the only HUD and FmHA goal for developing housing units for persons in wheelchairs until November 1977 when the Secretary of HUD established the 5-percent goal for new public housing and section 8 family housing projects. Thus, almost all of the accessible units completed and occupied at the time of our review in January 1980 were one-bedroom units located in elderly housing projects, while a critical need exists for such units in a variety of sizes in family projects, according to HUD officials.

There were 924 accessible units in the 93 elderly projects with accessible units that we visited or that returned our questionnaires. About 96 percent of the 924 units had one or no bedrooms which are the usual sizes for elderly units. Only about 4 percent of the units had two bedrooms. Thus, almost all of the accessible units included in our review would be available for only people in wheelchairs with one or two members in the family.

In a May 1977 news conference before the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, the Secretary of HUD announced several decisions concerning HUD's commitment to Americans with disabilities. The Secretary announced HUD's plans to establish the 5-percent goal and stated that it would be HUD's first major commitment to the non-elderly disabled.

As in the elderly projects, most of the accessible units in family projects contain only one bedroom. Prior to HUD's January 1980 notice concerning the 5-percent policy, there was no criteria available to HUD field offices that required project sponsors to build different size bedroom units for people with handicaps. This January 1980 notice did point out that units for persons with handicaps should reflect the same distribution as the total units in the project. For example, in a 100 unit project comprised of 40 two-bedroom units and 60 three-bedroom units, a total of 5 units would be designed for the handicapped. Two of the 5 units would be two-bedroom units and 3 of the units would be three-bedroom units.

There were 21 family housing projects with accessible units included in our review. We noted that 115, or 79 percent, of the total 145 accessible units had one bedroom. There were 27 units that had two bedrooms and 3 units that had three bedrooms. If HUD and FmHA implement the

instructions in HUD's January 1980 notice, there will be an increase in accessible units with two or more bedrooms in the future. Thus, more people in wheelchairs who are members of moderate sized families will be able to occupy an accessible unit.

CONCLUSIONS

Although HUD and FmHA have established percentage goals for developing accessible units, they have no reliable statistics on the number of people using wheelchairs in the United States or on the characteristics of such persons, for example, their geographic location, age, income, family size, and need for federally subsidized housing. Also, they have no information to determine if a market exists for accessible units in the area serviced by the housing projects they support. HUD and FmHA need to have such information to determine if a market exists for accessible units and whether policies relating to housing the handicapped adequately respond to such a market. In addition, nationwide goals do not take into account the need and demand for accessible units in different localities.

Also, we believe that the problems in getting project sponsors to fully comply with the 5-percent goal are due mainly because adequate implementing guidelines have not been effectively communicated to the field offices. While we recognize that the present accessible housing goals are not supported by studies and may not be appropriate, there is a need to strengthen the implementation of whatever goals a market analysis for accessible units indicates is needed in family housing projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SECRETARIES OF HUD AND AGRICULTURE

To establish effective policies relating to the need and demand of housing for people in wheelchairs and to assure that all of the accessible housing units called for by HUD and FmHA goals be constructed, we recommend that the Secretaries of HUD and Agriculture take the following actions.

- Require that the Annual Housing Survey be used periodically to gather data relating to people in wheelchairs, such as the total number in the United States and their geographic location, age, income, family size, and need for federally subsidized housing.

- Eliminate the nationwide 5- and 10-percent goals and establish geographical (e.g., local or regional) goals for constructing accessible units in family and elderly projects.
- In approving projects, determine whether the geographical goals as established are realistic by doing a market analysis of the demand for accessible units at each project.
- Establish adequate criteria for project sponsors to use to implement the goal for constructing accessible units in family projects. Such criteria should include guidance on the type of unit (accessible or other), number of bedrooms in the unit, and under what circumstances exceptions will be allowed.

AGENCY COMMENTS

HUD agreed with our recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

NEED TO HAVE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

COMPILE DATA ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND

OCCUPANCY OF ACCESSIBLE UNITS

Neither HUD nor FmHA have definitive information on the total number and location of accessible units built under their housing programs, on the number of these units occupied by people in wheelchairs, or on characteristics such as the age, income, family size, and rent paid by the people in wheelchairs being housed.

Without such information, the agencies are at a disadvantage, as noted in previous chapters, in establishing policies relating to housing people who use wheelchairs and in evaluating the effectiveness with which such policies have been implemented. Specifically, the agencies are unable to determine nationwide the extent to which such units are being occupied by people in wheelchairs as intended and whether sponsors are complying with the percentage goals for constructing accessible units. There is a need for HUD and FmHA to have existing management information systems keep track of the number, location, and occupancy of the accessible units constructed and the types of persons occupying these units so that nationwide problems can be identified and corrective action taken.

HUD and FmHA program officials told us that they believe there is a need to have management information systems cover the production and occupancy of wheelchair accessible units. FmHA officials also told us that while they do not have information at the present time on the total number of accessible units under the section 515 program or on the characteristics of the persons occupying the accessible units, FmHA will begin getting certain production and occupancy information by about August 1981 from its multifamily housing information status tracking and retrieval system which is under development.

HUD AND FmHA HAVE NO SYSTEMS FOR IDENTIFYING WHICH PROJECTS HAVE ACCESSIBLE UNITS

HUD and FmHA do not have management information data which identifies which of their housing projects have units designed for persons in wheelchairs. As a result, officials at the HUD and FmHA field offices we visited did not know which projects had accessible units or how many accessible units were in the projects located within their jurisdiction. Such information also was not available at HUD and FmHA headquarters.

Some architectural plans showing accessible units were available at the HUD and FmHA field offices we visited, but plans sometimes were unavailable because they were sent to storage and a few plans we examined were not always in agreement with what was actually constructed.

In addition to using such a system to monitor compliance with the 5- and 10-percent goals for developing accessible units, the system could also be used to help accessible housing outreach efforts.

As discussed on page 16, representatives of national organizations serving the handicapped informed us they would like to cooperate with HUD and FmHA in helping people in wheelchairs apply for the accessible units. In order for such cooperation to materialize, the organizations would need to know the following:

- name and location of the project,
- number of accessible units and bedroom size,
- types of services available,
- when the units would be available for occupancy, and
- amount of monthly rent.

To be effective, management information data would have to be compiled on the above items, and HUD and FmHA would have to disseminate this information to public and private organizations which serve wheelchair persons.

Present HUD and FmHA reports for most housing programs contain some of the information needed for an effective management information system for accessible units. The two agencies could modify existing reports to gather the data needed but not now collected.

HUD AND FmHA DO NOT MONITOR THE OCCUPANCY OF ACCESSIBLE UNITS

HUD and FmHA do not collect data on who occupies accessible units they assist. Consequently, the two agencies do not know what percentage of the accessible units constructed are occupied by persons in wheelchairs, persons with other handicaps, or persons with no handicaps.

We attempted to obtain data on the occupancy of accessible units at HUD headquarters and at its Los Angeles and Jacksonville Area Offices and at FmHA headquarters and

its California and Florida State offices. However, such data was not available. To obtain data on who is occupying accessible units, it is necessary to contact the individual housing projects.

Information relating to who is occupying accessible units is needed to determine how successful HUD and FmHA have been in providing housing for people who use wheelchairs. If certain projects have a low percentage of people in wheelchairs in the accessible units, HUD and FmHA officials could examine the reasons for this situation and take action to increase the number of people in wheelchairs in the projects. However, such management actions are not available alternatives if agency officials are not aware that problems exist.

CONCLUSIONS

The absence of information on the number, location, and occupancy of HUD and FmHA assisted accessible units could contribute to the low percentage rate of people in wheelchairs occupying accessible units. Also, if information concerning the availability of accessible units was compiled and disseminated to public and private organizations serving people in wheelchairs, more people in wheelchairs may be applying for accessible units in HUD and FmHA assisted housing projects.

Without such basic information, HUD and FmHA are unable to monitor accessible housing activities to achieve production and occupancy goals or identify nationwide problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SECRETARIES OF HUD AND AGRICULTURE

In order for HUD and FmHA to have adequate information on which to establish and implement policies concerning the production and occupancy of accessible units, we recommend that the Secretaries of HUD and Agriculture:

- Have the management information systems compile data on the number of accessible units constructed and the number and characteristics such as the age, income, family size, and rent paid by the people in wheelchairs living in assisted units.
- Periodically compile directories of projects with assisted accessible housing units which contain information on location, number of bedrooms, rental costs, services available, and availability for

occupancy and disseminate the directories to organizations serving people who use wheelchairs so they can assist people seeking this type of housing.

AGENCY COMMENTS

HUD agreed with our recommendations.

DESCRIPTION OF HUD AND FmHA HOUSING ACTIVITIES
AND PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN OUR REVIEW

A brief description of HUD and FmHA housing activities and programs included in our review follows. All of these programs provide some housing units specially designed for people who use wheelchairs.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HUD was established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act (Public Law 89-174) in 1965. HUD is the principal Federal agency responsible for programs concerned with housing needs and improving and developing the Nation's communities.

In the housing area, HUD administers subsidized or unsubsidized programs that provide either direct loans or Federal mortgage insurance for the construction or rehabilitation of single family or multifamily housing units. HUD also provides rent subsidies to low-income persons who cannot afford standard private housing. The program's principal purpose is to provide decent, safe, and sanitary shelter and a choice of living places.

HUD's field operations are carried out through a number of regional, area, and insuring offices.

Section 8 program

The section 8 program (42 U.S.C. 1437f), established by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383), provides subsidized rental housing to low and very low income individuals or families. Under this program, the tenants pay between 15 and 25 percent of their incomes toward the total apartment rent. HUD pays the difference.

The program is currently the major means of providing federally subsidized housing to households with incomes too low to obtain decent housing in the private market. Under the section 8 existing housing program, HUD authorizes public housing agencies (PHAs) to enter into contracts with owners of existing housing for a specified number of units to be leased by eligible households. Also, HUD sometimes

contracts directly with developers of new or substantially rehabilitated housing that lease housing units to eligible families.

Generally those families with incomes no higher than 80 percent of median income for the area in which they live, adjusted for household size, are eligible for section 8 program assistance. Thirty percent of the units leased under the program must be rented initially by households of very low income, defined as earning no more than 50 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size.

As of September 30, 1980, about 929,100 housing units were occupied by tenants being assisted by the section 8 program.

Public housing program

Pursuant to the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended, HUD conducts a low-rent housing program (42 U.S.C. 1437b) whereby decent, safe, and sanitary rental housing units are made available to low-income families that cannot afford standard private housing. The program is administered at the local level by PHAs. The PHAs have responsibility for planning, acquiring, and managing the low-rent housing projects, subject to applicable laws and contractual relationships with HUD and the local government.

HUD is responsible for administering the Federal Government's participation in the program and for protecting the Government's financial interests. HUD financially assists the PHAs by (1) making loans for developing new housing projects, (2) making annual contributions to PHAs for paying the principal and interest on bonds and notes sold by PHAs to obtain funds for developing the projects, and (3) paying operating subsidies to PHAs.

As of September 30, 1980, about 1.2 million units were available for occupancy under the low-rent public housing program.

Section 202 program

The section 202 program (12 U.S.C. 1701q), introduced as part of the Housing Act of 1959 (Public Law 86-372), provides direct Federal long-term loans for the construction

of housing for the elderly and handicapped. The program was intended to serve elderly and handicapped persons whose incomes were above public housing levels but still insufficient to secure adequate private housing.

From 1959 until it was phased out in favor of other programs--principally the section 236 program--in 1970, the direct loan program provided loans at a 3-percent interest rate to non-profit and limited dividend sponsors.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 reinstated the section 202 program and revised the loan interest rate to approximate the Treasury's cost of borrowing to finance the program. The Housing Authorization Act of 1976 changed the loan interest-rate formula to the average interest rate of all interest-bearing obligations of the United States forming a part of the public debt, plus an amount to cover administrative costs and probable losses.

All projects receiving loans under the revised section 202 program must have at least 20 percent of its units under the section 8 program. Thus, eligible low-income tenants will not pay more than 25 percent of their incomes for rent.

The original section 202 program produced about 45,000 units during its 10 years of operation. Some section 202 projects in process when the section 202 program was being phased out were converted to section 202/236 projects. About 28,300 units were produced under this combined program. As of September 30, 1980, construction for about 71,500 units has been started under the revised section 202 program.

Section 221 program

The section 221 program (12 U.S.C. 17151), which was added to the National Housing Act by the Housing Act of 1954 (Public Law 83-560), is designed to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income families, as well as families displaced by urban renewal or government action.

Under the section 221 (d)(3) and 221 (d)(4) programs, HUD is authorized to insure loans to construct or substantially rehabilitate multifamily rental or cooperative housing projects. Units financed under both programs now qualify for assistance under the section 8 program if they are occupied

by eligible low-income families. Currently, the principal differences between the two programs are that:

--HUD insures 100 percent of project value under section 221 (d)(3) but only 90 percent under 221 (d)(4).

--The 221 (d)(3) program is for non-profit, limited-dividend, or cooperative organizations while the 221 (d)(4) program is for profit-oriented sponsors.

Through September 1980, the section 221 (d)(3) program had insured 353,442 units for about \$5.6 billion and section 221 (d) (4) program had insured 511,709 units for about \$11.4 billion.

Section 231 program

The section 231 program (12 U.S.C. 1715v), which was authorized by the Housing Act of 1959, provides Federal mortgage insurance for rental housing for the elderly and handicapped. The program insures loans made by private lenders to profit and non-profit corporations to build or substantially rehabilitate housing.

The program initially benefited the relatively higher income segment of the elderly population because it was an unsubsidized program. However, some occupants of section 231 projects are now able to get rental assistance through the section 8 program.

Through September 1980, HUD has insured a cumulative total of 65,318 housing units in the amount of about \$1.1 billion.

Section 236 program

The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-448) authorized the section 236 program (12 U.S.C. 1715z-1) under which multifamily rental and cooperative housing units would be provided to low-income families.

Under this program, HUD insures privately financed mortgage loans for constructing or substantially rehabilitating multifamily housing projects and pays, on behalf of

the mortgagors, the mortgage insurance premiums and the interest on the mortgage loans over 1 percent.

Basic rent under the section 236 program is the rent necessary to recover housing operating costs, construction costs, and profit for a limited-dividend project financed under a mortgage with a 1 percent interest rate. The monthly rent for each unit is either the basic rent or an amount equal to 25 percent of the tenant's adjusted monthly income, whichever is greater. However, a tenant cannot be required to pay more than the fair market rent established for the unit.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 authorized a program of subsidies for low-income families who occupy section 236 units and who currently are required to pay a basic rent which exceeds 25 percent of family income.

From its enactment in 1968 until its suspension in 1973, the section 236 program was the Federal Government's major means of providing assistance in the construction of multifamily housing. As of September 30, 1980, HUD had insured a total of about 463,500 units for \$8 billion under this program.

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION

FmHA was established by the Farmers Home Administration Act of 1946 (Public Law 79-731). FmHA administers a variety of grant and loan programs relating to housing and rural development.

FmHA makes direct loans to construct or repair single family or multifamily housing units as well as guarantee loans. FmHA also has a rental assistance program which reduces the rents paid by low-income families living in FmHA-financed rental projects to no more than 25 percent of their adjusted incomes.

FmHA's field operations are carried out through its State, district, and county offices.

Section 515 program

Under the section 515 rural rental housing program (42 U.S.C. 1485) FmHA makes rental or cooperative housing loans to individuals, corporations, partnerships, and public entities to provide rental housing for low- and moderate-income families and the elderly or handicapped. The loan funds can be used to construct new housing, purchase new or existing housing, or repair existing housing for rental purposes. The maximum repayment period is 50 years.

Low-income residents of section 515 projects who pay over 25 percent of their income may, if funds are available, be eligible for HUD's section 8 rental assistance payments or FmHA's rental assistance program.

As of September 30, 1980, FmHA had made loans of about \$4.1 billion for about 224,000 housing units under the section 515 program.

AVERAGE AGE, INCOME, AND RENT PAID BY PEOPLEIN WHEELCHAIRS IN PROJECTS WE REVIEWED

As part of our review, we obtained information from project managers on the age, income, and rent paid by 332 people in wheelchairs who were occupying housing units supported by HUD and FmHA in eight States. These units were in elderly projects in Arizona, California, and Florida and in the 82 projects in California, Indiana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas which returned our questionnaires. Of the 332 people in wheelchairs, 230 were living in specialized accessible housing units and 102 were living in regular housing units.

Average person in a wheelchair
is age 66 and is a female

The average age of the people in wheelchairs occupying the units is 66. About 65 percent are age 62 or over and are classified as elderly persons while 35 percent are non-elderly. About 62 percent are female. Although the projects are classified as elderly projects, there is a considerable representation of non-elderly persons in wheelchairs in the specialized units which illustrates many sponsors do allow non-elderly persons with handicaps to occupy the units. In fact, 28, or about 9 percent, of the 321 people in wheelchairs for which age information was available were age 40 or younger.

About 91 percent of the people in wheelchairs lived alone. Those who did live with someone lived with a relative.

Amount and source of income
of people in wheelchairs

Most of the people in wheelchairs are receiving income assistance from the Social Security Administration and have very low annual incomes.

About 69 percent of the people using wheelchairs for which we had income data had annual incomes below \$5,000 and 97 percent had annual incomes of \$10,000 or less. The smallest annual income was \$1,515 while the largest annual income was \$16,309.

In addition to social security, the main sources of income were pensions and interest. Only four persons were working for wages, and the highest total income of one of these persons was \$9,360.

People using wheelchairs
paid low rents

While people in wheelchairs generally had very low incomes, they were paying low rents because most of the projects in which they were living had federally subsidized loans or had rental assistance available for occupants with low incomes.

The average rent for all people in wheelchairs was \$91 per month. The lowest average rent of \$76 per month was paid by tenants in section 8 projects while the highest average rent of \$117 per month was paid by persons in section 236 projects. The highest rent paid by a person in a wheelchair was \$295 for a section 221 unit. One tenant in a section 515 project, who had a very low income, paid no rent.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONSIN THE UNITED STATES WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS

The statistics in this appendix are from the Public Health Service's (Department of Health and Human Services) 1977 Health Interview Survey. However, the information is available only on a national basis.

Number of persons
in wheelchairs

About 3 percent of the U.S. population, or about 7 million persons, have physical disabilities which restrict their mobility and require the use of wheelchairs, crutches, braces, or walkers. Of these persons, an estimated 645,000 are in wheelchairs.

Most persons in wheelchairs
have low incomes

The following compares the annual family incomes of persons who use wheelchairs with those who do not.

<u>Annual family income</u>	<u>In a wheelchair</u>		<u>Not in a wheelchair</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than \$7,000	272,000	49	42,245,000	22
\$7,000-\$14,999	152,000	27	63,157,000	33
\$15,000-\$24,999	87,000	16	54,258,000	28
\$25,000 or more	<u>42,000</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>32,528,000</u>	<u>17</u>
Total (note a)	<u>553,000</u>	100	<u>192,188,000</u>	100

a/Not all persons responded to the question asking for the amount of family income.

The above table shows that people in wheelchairs make up a disproportionate share of the Nation's poor. For example, 49 percent of the people in wheelchairs have annual family incomes of less than \$7,000, while only 22 percent of the persons not in wheelchairs have incomes that low. On the

other hand, only 24 percent of the people in wheelchairs had annual family incomes of \$15,000 or more compared to 45 percent of the persons not in wheelchairs.

Appendix II, page 48, shows that about 97 percent of the people using wheelchairs in the housing units included in our review had annual incomes of \$10,000 or less.

Most persons in wheelchairs are elderly

The following table shows a breakdown of people in wheelchairs and those not in wheelchairs according to various age groups.

<u>Age</u>	<u>In a wheelchair</u>		<u>Not in a wheelchair</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 45	163,000	25	146,367,000	69
45 to 64	148,000	23	43,209,000	21
65 and over	<u>334,000</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>21,932,000</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	<u>645,000</u>	100	<u>211,508,000</u>	100

As the above table shows, elderly persons age 65 or over represent about 52 percent all of persons who use wheelchairs, while elderly persons represent only about 10 percent of those persons who do not use wheelchairs. Also, about 2 percent of all elderly persons use wheelchairs. Appendix II, page 48, shows that the average age of the people using wheelchairs in the units included in our review was 66.

Most persons in wheelchairs live with relatives

The following table shows the various living arrangements of people in wheelchairs and those not in wheelchairs.

APPENDIX III

APPENDIX III

<u>Living arrangement</u>	<u>In a wheelchair</u>		<u>Not in a wheelchair</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Alone	84,000	13	17,077,000	8
With relatives	554,000	86	190,434,000	90
With nonrelatives	<u>7,000</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3,997,000</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	<u>645,000</u>	100	<u>211,508,000</u>	100

As shown above, about 86 percent of the people in wheelchairs live with relatives. Only 13 percent lived alone. Conversely, as stated on page 48, about 91 percent of the people using wheelchairs in the housing units included in our review lived alone. Less than 1 percent of the people in wheelchairs lived with nonrelatives which compares to what we found in our review.

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