

IN-HOME SERVICES SURVEY RESULTS

Background

In late 2003, the Department of Human Services, Seniors and People with Disability convened a task force to design a survey regarding the role of personal assistance services (also known as in-home services, or attendant care services) in achieving and maintaining employment for people with disabilities. The two main objectives of the survey were: (1) to evaluate consumer satisfaction with personal assistance services in Oregon, and (2) to find out how to improve the service so that it can better meet the needs of persons with disabilities who are employed. The survey, which was administered in January 2004, included 21 questions covering consumer satisfaction with in-home services and the role of these services in employment.

The state offers a variety of programs for individuals who need personal assistance services. Programs included in the evaluation were State Plan Personal Care (or Basic Plan Services), Developmental Disabilities In-home Supports, Independent Choices, and Spousal Pay Services. Surveys were mailed to 890 randomly selected clients throughout the state of Oregon, and 514 unique responses were received.

For the purposes of the survey, personal assistance services were termed "in-home services," as this term is more familiar to consumers. The two terms are used interchangeably throughout this report.

Findings – Consumer Satisfaction

- Consumers have a high level of satisfaction with the quality of in-home services that they receive, and find that the services that they receive have an appreciable effect on their independence.
- While respondents were satisfied with the quality of their services, they also expressed a need for more assistance: 42% of respondents

indicated that they need additional assistance with their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).

- One in four respondents had some trouble hiring a service provider. The most frequently cited problems were “few available/qualified workers,” “unavailable at the times [the client] needs them,” and “pay is too low for Provider.”
- Only 28% of respondents felt confident that they could readily access backup services. Thirty-three percent of respondents stated that they could not access backup services, and 39% were unsure whether they could access such services.
- Clients feel relatively comfortable with hiring, training, and supervising their service providers.
- In general, clients receiving in-home services rated their service providers and case managers/ workers highly. Clients rated their service providers highest in respectfulness and trustworthiness, and lowest in availability. Case managers/workers were rated highest in courtesy.

Findings – Employment

- Only one-third of respondents stated that they were aware that the state would pay for a service provider while at work. Of those who were not aware, 9% indicated that the availability of such a service would encourage them to seek employment.
- Seventeen percent of respondents were employed. Of those working for an employer, roughly two-thirds receive assistance from managers and/or co-workers with tasks usually done by a service provider.
- Of individuals who were employed at the time of the survey, the vast majority worked part-time. Only 11% of respondents work more than 30 hours per week. However, 40% felt that they could increase the number of hours they work if they received more services.
- Of those who currently use a service provider at work, or have used one in the past, few felt that the people they work(ed) with responded unfavorably to their use of a service provider at work. One in four found it difficult to arrange for a service provider at work.

- The most requested needs for increasing independence among individuals who currently use a service provider at work, or have used one in the past were more “personal”: social activities, recreation, and community involvement. Transportation was also notable.