

**2007 Comprehensive Needs
Assessment for the Oregon
Office of Vocational
Rehabilitation Services:
Final Report**

December 21, 2007

Submitted to:

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I. Introduction

Purpose of the Needs Assessment

The Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) is responsible for the administration and operation of Oregon's general vocational rehabilitation program. OVRs contracted with Program and Policy Insight, LLC (PPI), to conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (detailed analysis, information, and recommendations) related to the vocational rehabilitation needs of Oregonians with disabilities.

PPI worked with OVRs staff, as well as with members of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to develop a framework and activities related to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The SRC is a Governor appointed body that serves as a policy partner with the public vocational rehabilitation program. The SRC has legislated responsibilities that include surveying customer satisfaction, developing an annual report, and participating in the development of the state plan.

OVRs has several ongoing initiatives, including the Competitive Employment Project, aimed to improve services for OVRs consumers. The Competitive Employment Project (CEP) developed a strategic plan, built on the input of a broad base of stakeholders, to increase the employment outcomes of individuals with the most significant disabilities. The results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment are expected to help formulate vocational rehabilitation policy, identify potential changes to services, and inform development of OVRs' 2009 State Plan for services and supports. Where appropriate, this report highlights findings that are similar to those found in other OVRs efforts, including the CEP, to improve outcomes for OVRs consumers.

OVRs Context

The program and policy context within which OVRs operates has important implications for service implementation. OVRs relies on the availability of a variety of other programs from both private and public entities to provide services to its consumers. The service capacity of these partner agencies in turn impacts OVRs effectiveness. OVRs must often forge agreements with much larger state programs that have multiple programs, significantly larger budgets, and involved stakeholders. Additionally, OVRs is funded on a formula basis, not a demand basis, and has seen limited increases in funding over the past two decades.

Programmatically, OVRs funding precludes the provision of ongoing services, and OVRs must partner with other agencies for these services. Supported employment services, for example, require the availability of ongoing support services, yet partner agencies often lack the capacity to support all individuals who might benefit from supported employment. Additionally, OVRs staff communicated significant issues around consumer access to medical services, including mental health and alcohol and drug treatment. Lack of access to these, and similar, services may limit the effectiveness of OVRs program offerings.

Report Structure

The report includes this introduction; the six sections listed below that describe the activities and results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment; and several appendices, including copies of all data collection instruments.

- Methodology
- Barriers and Service Provision: Overall Population
- Barriers and Service Provision: Selected Target Populations
- Other Supports for Effective Service Provision
- Target Population Estimates
- Key Recommendations

II. Methodology

Key Research Questions

The following key research questions guided the data collection, analysis, and reporting efforts for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment activities:

- Consumer Needs and Barriers: What are the primary barriers to employment for OVRs consumers, and/or what are their service needs?
- OVRs Service Provision: How can OVRs services best support consumer efforts to achieve positive employment outcomes?
- Target Population Estimates: What does the OVRs target population look like?

A more detailed description of study methodology, including more detailed description of various survey sample populations, is provided in Appendix A.

Data Collection Methods

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment was informed by multiple data sources, including a mixed mode survey of current OVRs consumers, a web-based survey of OVRs staff, semi-guided telephone interviews with other key stakeholders, and analysis of selected documents and existing disability prevalence data. PPI staff, in collaboration with OVRs staff and SRC members, developed the survey instruments. The structure and content of several other states' needs assessment activities and related reports (especially the states of Massachusetts¹, Maryland², Rhode Island³ and Arizona⁴) informed the survey's methodology and related instrument development. Instruments used in data collection activities are included in Appendices B, C, and D.

Data Descriptions

Consumer Survey

The current OVRs consumer survey yielded 371 completed surveys, reflecting an 80% response rate. The respondent sample was randomly selected from the current OVRs customer population. As such, we expected the final sample distribution to approximate the distribution of current OVRs customers across multiple demographic categories.

¹ Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Research, Evaluation and Development Department.. (2006). *MRC Needs Survey*.

² The Human Services Research Institute for the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services. (2004). *Employment For All: Statewide Needs Assessment Related to the Unmet Needs of Maryland Citizens with Disabilities*.

³ The State of Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitational Services, & The State Rehabilitation Council. (2005). *Needs Assessment Report: Vocational Rehabilitation Needs of Rhode Islanders with Disabilities*.

⁴ The Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration. (2002-03). *Statewide Needs Assessment*.

We compared the distribution of the survey sample with the distribution for the overall OVRs consumer population, using population statistics reported in the 2006 SRC Annual Report. The survey sample did not differ from the overall population in any significant way, increasing our confidence in generalizing the findings of the consumer survey to the overall OVRs consumer population. The comparison also shows that selected groups of interest, including racial/ethnic minorities and youth in transition, do not appear to be under-represented in the survey sample. A detailed description of the consumer survey population can be found in Appendix A.

It is important to note that the telephone survey implemented for this assessment was conducted with current OVRs consumers, who are already connected to OVRs services. It did not capture the challenges faced by currently un-served or underserved consumers who may face these or other barriers to OVRs access. However, other data collection methods solicited feedback from OVRs staff, as well as key stakeholders who work with or on behalf of OVRs-eligible individuals.

Staff Survey

The survey of current OVRs staff members yielded 166 complete responses and 16 incomplete responses, reflecting a 73% response rate.⁵ The initial survey request was sent to all OVRs staff members, including branch managers, counselors, counselor specialists, office specialists, human service assistants, business managers, field technicians (in the field), support staff (in DHS building), management, and professional staff. Counselors were the largest group of respondents, followed by Human service assistants, then other staff categories.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with 50 respondents. The sample was purposively selected from a larger list of key stakeholders maintained by OVRs to obtain a sample representing multiple interests/categories, including Employers; Stakeholders with knowledge of Most Significant Disabilities; Schools Districts/Post-secondary Education/Stakeholders with knowledge of needs of Youth; Other Partners/Allied Programs/Advocates; Stakeholder with knowledge of Selected Disabilities (TBI, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Psychiatric Disabilities, and Developmental Disabilities); SRC Members; and OVRs Administration.

Analysis and Reporting

The data collection methods yielded complementary data from multiple sources. This data was used to develop a broad picture of the needs of Oregonians with disabilities, to identify special needs of selected consumer subgroups, and to highlight unmet needs and/or gaps in service provision. Our analyses relied on appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data, as described below.

⁵ Data from incomplete surveys are included in the analytic data set, where available, and reported in the findings.

Consumer and Staff Surveys

The consumer and staff surveys provided primarily quantitative data, from which we produced basic descriptive statistics, including frequencies and cross-tabulations. Selected open-ended questions were coded and aggregated and/or used as a source of supplemental qualitative information. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were reviewed to identify key findings, common responses and themes, and variations between respondent groups or sub-groups. Where applicable, we reported statistical significance for cross-tabulations based on the results of Fisher's exact tests for 2 x 2 tables.

Stakeholder Interviews

The semi-guided interviews resulted in rich qualitative data from multiple stakeholders. Responses to interview questions (specific and across each category) were analyzed and synthesized across respondents and each stakeholder group to identify common-themed findings and/or variations among groups. The findings were used to corroborate and/or supplement consumer and staff survey findings and extant data analyses. Findings were also used to highlight unique information or perspectives not captured by other data collection methods, including areas for additional investigation.

Extant Data

Using the 2006 American Community Survey and the 2006 Oregon Population Survey, we identified and aggregated relevant descriptive statistics on the estimated prevalence of prospective consumers, including incidence and/or rate of persons with disabilities, incidence and/or rates of persons with disabilities who are unemployed, and incidence and/or rates of persons without disabilities who are employed. Relevant statistics were reported for the State of Oregon, OVRs service areas, and selected target populations. We also relied on selected sources from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Oregon Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to supplement and/or generate estimates for selected OVRs target populations. Several OVRs documents, including internal training documents⁶ and documents related to the Competitive Employment Project⁷ were reviewed and used to inform and contextualize our findings.

Synthesis across Multiple Data Sources

An important piece of the analysis involved synthesis of our findings from multiple data sources to identify key needs, issues, trends, problems, and recommendations. Where relevant, we compared the findings across analyses to identify common themes and variations across data sources.

⁶ Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. (2007). *Training Needs Assessment*.

⁷ Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. (2006). *A Blueprint for Change: Competitive Employment Project for Persons with Disabilities*.

III. Barriers and Service Provision: Overall Population

This section describes perceptions about consumer barriers to employment and related service provisions, drawing on data from the consumer and staff surveys as well as stakeholder interviews. In addition to identifying employment barriers or service needs, this section also discusses accessibility, availability and adequacy of related OVRs services.

OVRs Consumers Overall

Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

To understand common service needs for persons with disabilities seeking employment, OVRs consumers and staff were asked to select the issues that serve as barriers to employment for these individuals. The percentage of consumers and staff that identified various issues as barriers to employment is detailed in Exhibit 3.1.

Exhibit 3.1				
Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals				
<i>Data Sources: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=371) and OVRs Staff Survey (n=177)</i>				
	Percent of OVRs Consumers who Identified Item as a Barrier		Percent of OVRs Staff who Identified Item as a Barrier	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	58%	215	91%	161
Not having enough education or training	55%	203	91%	161
Not enough jobs available	44%	165	56%	100
Negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	40%	150	88%	155
Mental health issues	36%	133	93%	164
Other health issues	33%	124	81%	143
Inadequate job search skills	30%	112	92%	163
Other transportation issues	29%	109	81%	143
Inadequate disability accommodations	28%	105	86%	152
Negative impact of income on your benefits	23%	87	82%	145
Disability-related transportation issues	22%	83	93%	164
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	22%	82	66%	116
Housing issues	17%	64	80%	142
Language barriers are a problem	12%	44	74%	131
Substance abuse issues	10%	38	88%	156
Child care issues	7%	25	78%	138

The differences and similarities in responses provided insight into perceptions of service needs. Related findings include the following:

- Two barriers, related to insufficient job skills and/or education, were identified as barriers to employment by a majority of OVRs consumers. These items were also cited as barriers by

91% of OVRS staff members, suggesting that OVRS efforts to facilitate access to education and training are critical from both the consumer and counselor perspective. “Not enough jobs available” was identified as a barrier by the third-greatest number of consumers (44%).

- “Disability-related transportation issues,” “Mental health issues,” and “Inadequate job-search skills” were cited as barriers by the greatest number of OVRS staff members. In contrast, these items were cited as barriers to employment by less than 40% of OVRS consumers.
- The majority of OVRS staff identified all issues as barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. For 13 of the 16 survey’s listed barriers, at least 75% of OVRS staff members considered the item a barrier to employment.

The potential barriers to employment presented in the survey are generally accepted barriers in the workforce development and/or disability fields. It is not surprising then that a majority of these issues were identified as barriers by staff members. The discrepancy in the number of barriers that the majority of staff versus the majority of consumers identified may reflect staff’s experience with a broad range of clients and issues. In contrast, consumers’ identification of barriers was limited to their own circumstances and experience, and the resulting list of barriers for each consumer was therefore likely to be more concise.

OVRS consumers and staff were also asked to identify the most significant barrier to achieving employment goals. As shown in Exhibit 3.2, no one barrier was cited by a majority of consumers, indicating that perceptions of key barriers varied considerably among consumers.

Related findings included:

- “Other health issues” was cited by 24% of respondents as their primary barriers to employment. This was the largest proportion of consumers citing any one barrier. Only 33% of respondents cited this issue as a barrier (Exhibit 3.1), suggesting that for the majority of consumers who identified this issue as a barrier, the barrier was considered the primary barrier to achieving employment goals.
- Stakeholders with knowledge of selected disabilities offered more detail on possible challenges related to these other health issues identified by consumers. They suggested that individuals with the most significant disabilities (e.g., Traumatic Brain Injury) face substantial barriers related to maintaining access on-going medical treatment. This barrier is often related to participation in other publicly-funded programs and

Exhibit 3.2		
Most Significant Barrier to Achieving Employment Goals		
<i>Data Source: OVRS Consumer Survey (n=365)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Other health issues	24%	89
Not having enough education or training	14%	51
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	9%	35
Not enough jobs available	7%	28
Anything else preventing employment goals	7%	25
Don’t know	6%	24
Mental health issues	6%	23
Transportation issues	5%	18
Inadequate job search skills	4%	15
Criminal background	3%	13
Negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	3%	12
Negative impact of income on your benefits	2%	9
Lack of motivation	2%	9
Language barriers are a problem	2%	9
No barriers	2%	8
Child care issues	1%	3
Substance abuse issues	1%	2
Housing issues	1%	2
Note: Data reflect an open-ended question structure. Similar responses were coded and aggregated.		

not a direct OVRs service; however, it relies heavily on adequate connection between service providers to access existing capacity. This finding is aligned with the Benefits Planning issue area identified by the Competitive Employment Project.

- “Not enough education or training” was cited by 14% of respondents, and “Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of job skills” was cited by nearly 10% of respondents as primary barriers to employment. This aligns with consumer identification of all employment barriers (Exhibit 3.1), where “Not having enough education or training” and “Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of job skills” were both cited by a majority of consumers.

OVRs staff members were asked to identify the top three barriers to employment for OVRs consumers; results are presented in Exhibit 3.3. Related findings included:

- “Mental health issues” was identified as a top barrier to employment by a majority of staff, reflecting the earlier finding that this barrier is perceived as a key barrier by staff.
- Less than a majority of staff identified all other issues in the

Exhibit 3.3		
Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=173)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Mental health issues	60%	104
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	40%	70
Employers’ negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	30%	52

top three barriers to employment. This indicated a lack of consensus on primary barriers outside of “Mental health issues.” However, a lack of job skills and negative employers’ perceptions were also each identified by a substantial percentage of OVRs staff.

Analysis of open-ended staff responses identified additional primary barriers, including:

- Insufficient access to supportive programs
- Lack of health insurance or benefits
- Insufficient consumer motivation

Addressing access to supportive programs and health insurance may require stronger or enhanced partnerships with allied programs. However, access to supportive programs beyond the responsibility of OVRs services, including healthcare, depends in large part on the existing capacity of related service providers. Where supportive services are available, OVRs should develop connections with supportive service agencies to improve access to these services.

Stakeholder feedback across several stakeholder groups, including SRC members, OVRs administration and stakeholders familiar with disability-specific needs, suggested that staff support for consumer motivation may require additional staff training on upfront case management strategies and tools, such as those that OVRs has incorporated through the Enhancing Employment Program. This finding is also aligned with the recent OVRs 2007 Training Needs Assessment, which indicated that Motivation Intervention Strategies is one of the top two Counseling-specific needs reported by OVRs staff.

Additionally, stakeholder feedback was aligned with some of the findings from the consumer and staff surveys:

- All stakeholder groups noted that employers' negative perceptions about persons with disabilities act as a key barrier to employment.
- Most groups also noted that transportation issues and negative impact on benefits often serve as barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. While these issues were also identified by OVRs consumers, it was by less than one-third of respondents.

Stakeholders provided additional feedback on consumer barriers to employment:

- SRC and OVRs administration stakeholders described fragmented service systems as a key barrier to employment.
- Stakeholders across groups cited consumer and employer lack of awareness of disability-related accommodations as a critical barrier. In particular, stakeholder representatives for significant or specific disabilities suggested that non-physical accommodations, such as flexible scheduling and frequent breaks, are appropriate for some consumer groups (e.g., individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and mental health impairments) but that OVRs is not as effective at facilitating these types of accommodations.
- Employer and OVRs administration feedback stressed the importance of finding an appropriate match between OVRs consumers' skills sets and interests and the employment position. This feedback suggests that improved comprehensive assessment and interest inventories could contribute to a better long-term employment match for OVRs consumers.

Accessibility of Services

The consumer survey yielded information on challenges to accessibility experienced by OVRs current consumers, as shown in Exhibit 3.4 and described below:

- For all potential challenges to accessibility, more than 75% of consumers indicated that they have not experienced the item. From the consumer's perspective, OVRs appears to be successfully facilitating access to services.
- Certain scheduling or staffing barriers experienced by a minority of consumers, such as "Difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor" or "Difficulties working with OVRs staff," may reflect limited OVRs staffing capacity. Possible strategies, including streamlining the scheduling process or utilizing support staff more effectively, may address this issue.

Exhibit 3.4				
Challenges to Accessibility Experienced by OVRs Consumers				
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=370)</i>				
	Experienced as a Challenge		Not Experienced as a Challenge	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
Difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor	23%	86	76%	282
Other challenges or barriers have made it difficult	20%	73	79%	293
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	18%	66	73%	269
Difficulties working with OVRs staff	14%	52	84%	309
Difficulties completing the application	14%	50	84%	311
Public transportation has made it difficult to access OVRs	11%	42	86%	318
Physical location of the OVRs office made it difficult to access	11%	40	88%	324
Language barriers have made it difficult	6%	23	93%	345
Inadequate disability-related accommodations made it difficult	6%	22	92%	341

OVRs staff identified a wide range of challenges to OVRs accessibility, suggesting little consensus on the top three barriers to OVRs consumer access. The top three challenges by the greatest percentages of OVRs staff are noted in Exhibit 3.5.

Exhibit 3.5		
Top Three Challenges to Accessibility		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=168)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Other (specified)	54%	90
Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation	38%	64
Language barriers	30%	50

Open-end staff responses related to “other” challenges to accessibility identified the following key issues:

- Lack of awareness of available resources and services by consumers and other agencies
- Challenges to OVRs sharing office-space
- Difficulties getting to an OVRs office

These responses echoed stakeholder feedback regarding office accessibility. OVRs administration and SRC stakeholders noted additional needs to improve program access, including:

- More culturally-appropriate outreach for minorities, including deaf consumers
- Better outreach to and linkages with youth and education providers to connect them with OVRs services
- Improved signage for OVRs offices, particularly since the reorganization of DHS that incorporated OVRs under its umbrella

Staff and stakeholder responses are aligned with selected issue areas identified by the Competitive Employment Project, including 1) Culturally Competent Employment Supports and Services and 2) Transportation.

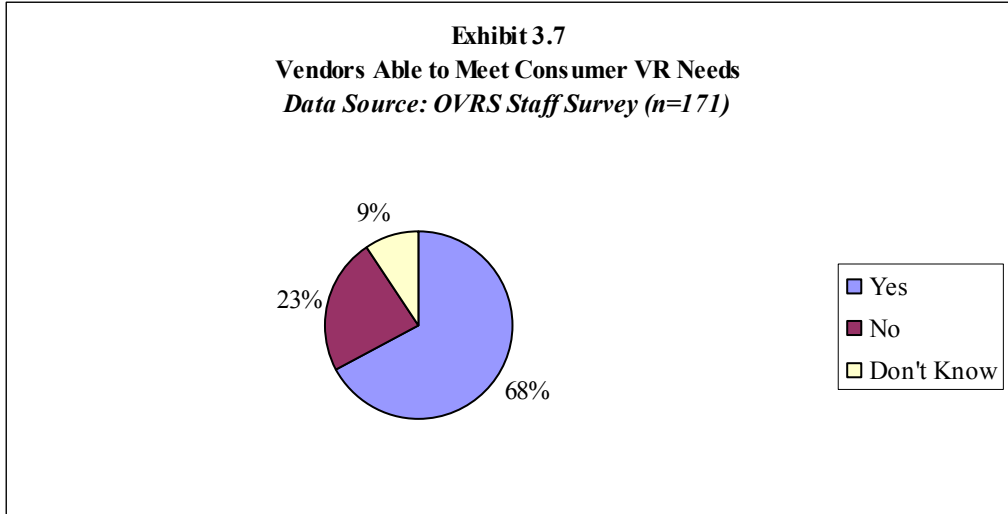
Availability of Services

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment gathered information primarily from OVRs staff and stakeholders on the perceived availability of services, as shown in Exhibit 3.6, and described below:

- The majority of staff members believed that “Job search” (92%), “Job training” (79%), and “Other education services” (73%) are readily available. These results suggested that OVRs offers services that can address the key barriers to employment noted by a majority of consumers, including lack of education or training and insufficient job skills.
- 80% of staff indicated that assistance related to disability-related accommodations, specifically in the form of “Assistive technology,” is readily available.
- To a lesser extent, other supportive services directly related to documented consumer barriers were selected as considered readily available, including “Substance abuse treatment” (43%), “Mental health treatment” (43%), and “Medical treatment” (37%).
- “Other health issues” was one of the key barriers to employment cited by the largest number of consumers (30%). While “Health Insurance services” are not directly aligned with this barrier, it is appropriate to note that only 11% of staff indicated that services related to health insurance are readily available. Furthermore, several stakeholders noted that health insurance poses a major challenge for individuals with the most significant disabilities, especially as it relates to the impact of employment on other benefits. Insufficient access and receipt of health insurance is an underlying systems issue that impacts OVRs effectiveness. Based on this systems issue, OVRs may wish to enhance services that facilitate access to health insurance advocates or providers.

Exhibit 3.6		
OVRs Services “Readily Available”		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=169)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Job search services	92%	155
Assistive technology	80%	136
Job training services	79%	134
Other education services	73%	123
Vehicle modification assistance	68%	115
Other transportation assistance	67%	113
Benefit planning assistance	60%	101
Substance abuse treatment	43%	73
Mental health treatment	43%	72
Medical treatment	37%	62
Personal care attendants	22%	37
Other (specified)	18%	31
Income assistance	14%	24
Housing	14%	23
Health insurance	11%	19
Don’t Know	5%	9

OVRs staff members were asked to consider the ability of vendors to meet consumers’ vocational rehabilitation needs. As shown in Exhibit 3.7, 68% of staff members indicated that vendors are able to meet consumer vocational rehabilitation needs.



Among the small number of OVRs staff (23%) who indicated that vendors are not able to meet consumers’ vocational, the following reasons (shown with others in Exhibit 3.8) were provided:

- 71% noted a low quality of vendor services.
- 68% noted not enough vendors available in the area.

Exhibit 3.8 Why Vendors Unable to Meet VR Service Needs <i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=41)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Low quality of vendor services	71%	29
Not enough vendors available in area	68%	28
No vendors in the area	41%	17
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors	39%	16
Other (specified)	29%	12
Note: Question only asked of respondents who indicated that vendors are unable to meet consumers’ VR needs.		

These findings suggest that there may be localized areas that require additional efforts to improve the quality or availability of vendors.

Adequacy of Services

To gauge OVRs consumer and staff perceptions of the adequacy of OVRs services provision, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment gathered information from OVRs consumers, staff members, and stakeholders on the adequacy of the services provided by OVRs.

OVRs consumers who identified barriers to employment were asked to indicate whether or not they received OVRs services to address those specific barriers. Exhibit 3.9 illustrates consumer responses regarding service receipt for discrete barriers:

- For over half of the specified barrier items, a majority of OVRs consumers indicated that they received OVRs services that helped/are helping to address the barrier. Notably, the vast majority of consumers who indicated barriers related to “Not enough education or training” and “Not enough job skills or wrong kinds of job skills” (58% and 55% respectively) responded that they received services that helped/are helping to address the barriers. This

result suggests that OVRS services adequately address these key barriers identified by consumers.

- For slightly less than half of the barrier items, a majority of OVRS consumers indicated that they did not receive OVRS services to address the barrier. Although several of these items are applicable to overall OVRS consumers, select items, including “Language barriers” and “Help with personal care,” may relate more directly to selected target populations.
- To improve access to supportive services, findings suggest that where supportive service capacity exists, OVRS should continue to strengthen outreach to and partnership with related agencies.

Exhibit 3.9				
Received OVRS Services that are Helping/Helped to Address Barrier				
<i>Data Source: OVRS Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>				
	Received OVRS Services that are Helping/Helped Address Barrier		Did Not Receive OVRS Services that are Helping/Helped Address Barrier	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
Not having enough education or training	73%	83	23%	26
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	72%	79	24%	26
Inadequate job search skills	71%	46	26%	17
Mental health issues	66%	53	33%	26
Disability-related transportation issues	65%	30	33%	15
Not enough jobs available	65%	59	32%	29
Other transportation issues	61%	35	37%	21
Inadequate disability accommodations	57%	33	40%	23
Negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	52%	46	43%	38
Negative impact of income on your benefits	49%	24	47%	23
Substance abuse issues	45%	15	52%	17
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	43%	18	55%	23
Other health issues	42%	30	55%	39
Anything else preventing employment goals	42%	29	55%	38
Housing issues	27%	12	68%	30
Language barriers are a problem	27%	8	67%	20
Child care issues	11%	2	83%	15
Note: Item only asked of consumers who identified item as a barrier to achieving employment goals and who are receiving services or whose case is closed. Total n ranges from 18 to 113.				

As shown in Exhibit 3.10, consumers’ perceptions of the most helpful OVRs services varied widely, and no more than one-third of respondents suggested any specific item as the most helpful OVRs service received.

Exhibit 3.10		
Most Helpful Services Received		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=198)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Job search services	31%	61
Case management support	31%	61
Income assistance	28%	55
Other transportation assistance	25%	50
Other education services	18%	35
Job training services	16%	31
Medical treatment	9%	17
Assistive technology	7%	13
Don't Know	4%	8
Mental health treatment	4%	7
No help received yet	4%	7
Vehicle modification assistance	2%	3
Benefit planning assistance	2%	3
Housing	2%	3

Note: Data reflect an open-ended question structure. Similar responses coded and aggregated. Some respondents provided multiple responses to the question.

- “Job search services” and “Case management support” were identified by the largest consumer groups (31% for both items). Notably, consumers’ positive feedback suggests that OVRs is fulfilling its mission of providing these core services.
- Other helpful services cited by consumers included “Income assistance” (28%), “Other transportation assistance” (25%) and “Other education services” (10%).

OVRs staff members were also asked to indicate whether current OVRs service provision adequately addressed a range of employment barriers. Staff perspective on the adequacy of OVRs services to address identified barriers is shown in Exhibit 3.11:

- For over half of the identified barrier-related items, a majority of OVRs staff indicated that the barrier is adequately addressed by OVRs services. Similar to the consumer feedback, OVRs staff indicated that barriers related to “Not enough education or training”, “Inadequate job search skills” and “Not enough or wrong kinds of job skills” are adequately addressed by OVRs services.
- A majority of OVRs staff also indicated that barriers related to child care, negative impact of working on benefits, and transportation needs were adequately addressed. Interestingly, this finding does not align with two key issue areas identified by the Competitive Employment Project, including: 1) Work Incentives related to specific Programs; and 2) Transportation. However, we recognize that these issues may be more critical for small groups of selected consumer populations, such as rural consumers or consumers with severe disability impairments.
- A majority of OVRs staff indicated that mental health, substance abuse, personal care assistance, housing, employers’ perception, and job availability were not adequately addressed by current service provisions. Services to address many of these barriers, especially mental health and substance abuse issues, are outside the scope of OVRs services. Limited service provider capacity and access issues hinder OVRs ability to connect

consumers with appropriate providers. Given that “Mental health issues” was the barrier cited by the largest number of OVRS staff, it would be appropriate for OVRS to continue seeking additional supports for consumers who face mental health issues, and continue or enhance targeted OVRS training about mental health issues.

Exhibit 3.11				
Adequacy of OVRS Services to Address Barriers				
<i>OVRS Staff Survey (n=varied)</i>				
	Barrier Adequately Addressed		Barrier Not Adequately Addressed	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
Not having enough education or training	89%	143	11%	18
Inadequate job search skills	88%	143	12%	20
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	86%	139	14%	22
Inadequate disability accommodations	80%	121	20%	31
Disability-related transportation issues	74%	122	26%	42
Other transportation issues	61%	87	39%	56
Negative impact of income on your benefits	57%	83	43%	62
Child care issues	56%	77	44%	61
Other health issues	52%	75	48%	68
Mental health issues	49%	80	51%	84
Employers’ negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	47%	73	53%	82
Substance abuse issues	45%	70	55%	86
Language barriers	44%	58	56%	73
Not enough jobs available	41%	41	59%	59
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	36%	42	64%	74
Housing issues	22%	31	78%	111
Note: Item only asked of staff that identified item as a barrier to achieving employment goals. Total n ranges from 18 to 113.				

Stakeholder feedback offers several additional opportunities for improving the adequacy of OVRS services:

- Many stakeholders across groups noted limited follow-up services and described a need for more sustained post-placement follow-up services. They noted the importance of targeted long-term follow-up to connect former OVRS consumers with services to help them upgrade skills and achieve career progression. Although long-term follow-up may be outside of the purview of OVRS services, OVRS may wish to enhance greater connections with programs that provide long-term support.
- More than half of OVRS staff indicated that “Employers’ negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities” was not adequately addressed by current service provision. Similarly, as noted previously, respondents across all stakeholder groups suggested that improved employer and public education around abilities of people with disabilities would more adequately address this service need. This finding is aligned with the key issue area related to Employer Education and Technical Assistance, identified by the Competitive Employment Project.

- Stakeholders across groups, including SRC members and allied program partners, also suggested that more individualized attention and person-centered planning, potentially requiring reduced caseloads or para-professional support, be used to facilitate consumer motivation, progress, and employment.
- Although 88% of OVRs staff felt that “Inadequate job search skills” were adequately addressed, stakeholders across groups noted a need for counselors to incorporate more non-traditional jobs into the OVRs framework, and to improve consumer education on career options to ensure an appropriate employment fit. Employer stakeholders too noted that ensuring the right employment fit for consumers is the best strategy for retention.

Other Suggestions for Change

OVRs consumers were asked to recommend changes to OVRs services to improve their experience with OVRs and help them achieve their employment goals. As illustrated in Exhibit 3.12:

- The greatest percentage of consumer survey respondents (37%) indicated that no changes are needed. As an open-ended response to an unstructured question, this percentage suggests a relatively high indication of satisfaction among current consumers.
- A relatively small group of consumers (14%) recommended changes related to increasing the access to counselors and personalizing the services received from counselors.
- The remaining substantive responses, which ranged from expediting program services to increasing public awareness of OVRs services, were identified by 5% or less of consumers, indicating a lack of consensus on suggested changes.

Exhibit 3.12		
Suggested Changes to OVRs Services		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=354)</i>		
	Percent	Count
No changes needed	37%	130
Increase access to and personalized service from counselors	14%	49
Don't know	12%	43
Other	11%	38
Expedite assessment and job placements services	5%	19
Increase education opportunities	5%	17
Increase financial assistance	5%	16
Improve job search services	5%	16
Increase public awareness of OVRs services	2%	8
Increase collaboration with employers	2%	8
Note: Data reflect an open-ended question structure. Similar responses coded and aggregated.		

Open-ended responses to suggested changes were broad. Responses include staffing changes, training opportunities, increased funding for services, strategies for interacting with consumers, and policy clarifications.

OVRs stakeholders' suggestions for change echoed stakeholder comments regarding consumer barriers and service needs:

- Stakeholders across all groups emphasized a need for more and better marketing of OVRS services, including presentations to local service organizations, to raise awareness of OVRS services among program partners.
- SRC members and OVRS administrators also suggested a need to increase consistency in training and policy guidance to ensure that service strategies are implemented consistently and effectively across staff.
- Stakeholders across all groups also reiterated the need to approach, educate, and involve employers in more meaningful ways to facilitate receptivity to hiring persons with disabilities. This finding is aligned with the Employer Education and Technical Assistance issue area identified by the Competitive Employment Project.

IV. Barriers and Service Provision: Selected Target Populations

Selected Target Populations

This section describes findings related to barriers and service needs for the following selected OVRs consumer populations⁸:

- Individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Individuals from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds
- Youth in transition

Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment made efforts to identify whether the barriers to employment or related service needs are different for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The vast majority of the survey sample (67%) belongs to the most significantly disabled group, followed by significantly disabled and disabled, each at 11% of the sample⁹.

Exhibit 4.1 illustrates the variation in consumer-identified barriers to employment by disability level:

- Similar to the overall population, the three highest-ranking barriers for individuals with the most significant disabilities are “Not enough, or the wrong kinds, of job skills” (59%), “Not enough education or training” (57%), and “Not enough jobs available” (48%), suggesting that individuals with the most significant disabilities face similar types of barriers as the overall population.
- A statistically significant difference between consumers with the most significant disabilities and other consumers was observed for two barrier-related items: “Disability-related personal care” and “Housing issues”. For both of these barriers, a larger number of consumers with the most significant disabilities cited the barrier than did other consumers. However, each of these barriers was identified by fewer than 30% of consumers with the most significant disabilities.

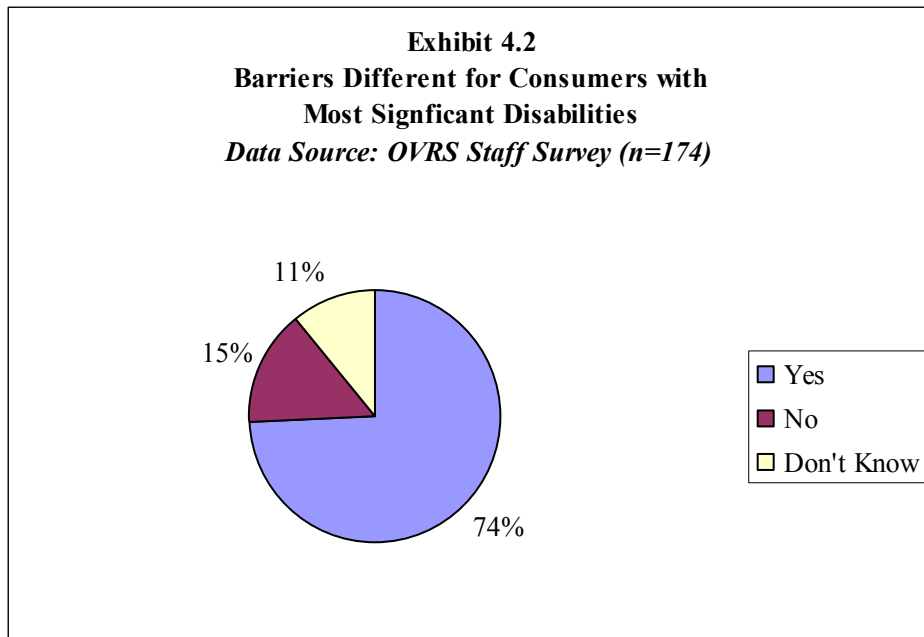
⁸ Where applicable, tests of statistical significance using Fisher’s exact test for 2x2 cross-tabulations were applied. However, for some items, observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency selected cells is less than five; in those cases, tests of statistical significance may not be valid. Specific instances are noted in the tables in this section.

⁹ An additional 10% of the survey sample was assigned to a subgroup for which disability level is Not Completed; respondents from that subgroup are not included in the analysis.

Exhibit 4.1					
Barriers to Employment by Disability Level					
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Most Significant Disability		Other		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Not enough or wrong kinds of job skills	59%	144	56%	46	
Not enough education or training	57%	141	51%	43	
Not enough jobs available	48%	116	39%	32	
Negative employer perceptions	47%	107	37%	30	
Mental health issues	37%	91	35%	29	
Other health issues	35%	87	31%	26	
Inadequate job search skills	33%	80	28%	23	
Anything else	33%	81	32%	27	
Inadequate disability accommodations	32%	74	29%	23	
Other transportation issues	29%	73	26%	22	
Disability-related personal care issues	26%	61	15%	12	*
Disability-related transportation issues	26%	64	15%	13	
Negative impact on benefits	26%	62	18%	15	
Housing issues	20%	50	11%	9	*
Language barriers are a problem	12%	29	11%	9	
Substance abuse issues	12%	29	7%	6	
Child care issues	6%	16	7%	6	

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01
Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 311 to 334.

As illustrated in Exhibit 4.2, 74% of OVRs staff felt that barriers to employment are different for individuals with significant disabilities.



OVRs staff members who indicated that barriers were different for individuals with the most significant disabilities were asked to identify the top three barriers to employment for that group. As shown in Exhibit 4.3, results included the following:

- Similar to the results for the overall population, a majority of OVRs staff identified mental health issues as a top barrier for this consumer group (61%).
- A higher percentage of OVRs staff (50%, compared with 30% for the overall population) identified employers’ perception on employing people with disabilities as a top barrier for individuals with significant disabilities.
- The top three issues identified by staff as barriers to employment for persons with disabilities (i.e., mental health issues, employers’ perceptions, and not having enough or appropriate job skills) were the same top three issues identified by staff as barriers to employment for all persons with disabilities.

Exhibit 4.3 Top Three Barriers for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities <i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=130)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Mental health issues	61%	79
Employers’ negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	50%	65
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	30%	39
Note: Question only asked of respondents who indicated that barriers are different for individuals with the most significant disabilities.		

Some stakeholder groups suggested that while barriers might not differ substantially for individuals with the most significant disabilities as a whole, this group might be more likely to experience multiple or more severe barriers.

Accessibility and Availability of Services

To assess whether challenges to OVRs service accessibility varied for persons with the most significant disabilities, we analyzed consumer responses to accessibility by disability level and by staff identification of barriers to access for persons with significant disabilities.

Exhibit 4.4 presents the challenges to accessibility for individuals with the most significant disabilities and other consumers:

- No items were cited by more than 24% of individuals with the most significant disabilities, suggesting that OVRs is adequately addressing challenges to accessibility for the majority of that group of consumers.
- Only one item related to accessibility challenges, “Completing the IEP,” showed a statistically significant difference between consumers with most significant disabilities and other consumers, suggesting that in general challenges to accessibility are similar for both groups. This challenge was cited by slightly less than one-quarter of the consumer group with the most significant disabilities.

- The largest numbers of OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities cited challenges of scheduling counselor meetings, completing the application, and completing the IEP (although these items were each cited by less than 25% of the group). Stakeholder feedback suggests a need for additional disability-specific training for staff, especially with respect to the challenges faced by individuals with the most significant disabilities. This could facilitate improved consumer perception of working with OVRs among this subgroup. Additional accommodation or assistance in completing the application or IEP may be required.

Exhibit 4.4					
Challenges to Accessibility by Disability Level					
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Most Significant Disability		Other		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings	24%	59	20%	17	
Completing the IEP	23%	53	10%	8	*
Other challenges	22%	53	15%	13	
Completing the application	16%	38	7%	6	
Working with OVRs Staff	15%	35	8%	7	
Public transportation	12%	30	6%	5	
Physical location of office	12%	28	8%	7	
Language barriers	7%	18	4%	3	
Inadequate disability-related accommodations [†]	5%	13	7%	6	†

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01
[†] Observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency selected cells is less than five. Tests of statistical significance may not be valid.
 Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 312 to 333.

Exhibits 4.5 and 4.6 illustrate staff feedback the accessibility of OVRs services for individuals with significant disabilities.

- As shown in Exhibit 4.5, only 38% of OVRs staff members felt that challenges were different for this group, and more than 15% of staff indicated that they did not know whether challenges to accessibility are different for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Among staff that felt that challenges to OVRs accessibility were different for persons with significant disabilities, less than half identified any one barrier to accessibility as a top three barrier for persons with significant disabilities, indicating a lack of consensus around challenges to services accessibility for this group of consumers. The top three challenges cited accessibility included “Public transportation” (44%), “Other” (38%), and “Difficulty in accessing training or education programs” (35%).
- OVRs cited “Public transportation”, “Other challenges”, and “Difficulties accessing training or education programs” as the top three challenges to accessibility for persons with significant disabilities.

Exhibit 4.5
Challenges to Accessibility Different for
Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities
Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=172)

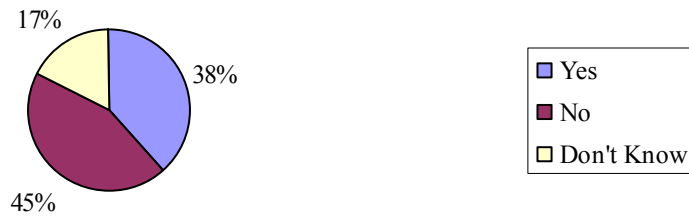


Exhibit 4.6
Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility for
Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities
Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=66)

	Percent	Count
Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation	44%	29
Other (specified)	38%	25
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	35%	23

Note: Question only asked of respondents who indicated that challenges to accessibility are different for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Adequacy of Service Provision

Stakeholders across groups provided additional insight on perceived differences and suggested changes to service provision to address identified challenges. Stakeholders agreed that barriers to employment for persons with significant disabilities were similar to those for persons with disabilities overall. However, stakeholders across most groups suggested that these barriers were compounded due to the significance of the disability and indicated that services may need to be tailored to address needs of this subgroup. More specifically, stakeholders observed the following, related to barriers and service needs for individuals with significant disabilities:

- Public and employer perceptions of significant disabilities were more difficult to combat; in particular, it was more difficult for others to see the cognitive capacity beyond the disability. In addition to a general need for greater public and employer outreach and education, stakeholders suggested a specific need to discuss disability-related accommodations for persons with significant disabilities when promoting OVRs services to employers.
- Individuals with significant disabilities in search of work require creative counselors who seek innovative job development and training approaches. Some partner stakeholders provided positive feedback on situations that allowed a counselor to work on-site at the partner location for at least part of the week. They indicated that for individuals with the most significant disabilities, this approach could lead to more seamless and innovative service provision.

- Stakeholders working with persons with significant disabilities indicated that people with significant disabilities likely required more training, accommodations, and assisted technology. In general, stakeholders indicated that OVRs was successful in providing physical disability-related accommodations and technologies. However, they suggested that some disabilities, such as mental health impairments and TBI, required other types of accommodations (e.g., flexible scheduling and frequent breaks).
- Additionally, several stakeholders indicated that OVRs counselors should help consumers find appropriate jobs that facilitate consumers' capacities. Employers also emphasized the importance of the consumer/job match in promoting job retention.
- Stakeholders working with individuals with significant disabilities indicated that individuals with the most severe impairments may face issues related to work disincentives due to participation in other publicly-funded programs (e.g., Social Security Insurance), especially if they require on-going medical treatment.
- Several stakeholders working with individuals with significant disabilities suggested that Supported Employment and Return-to-Work programs are particularly important for these consumers. Stakeholders varied in their knowledge of current OVRs efforts to support these programs, and most stakeholders suggested that efforts in Oregon to implement these programs are insufficient, especially in comparison with other states.
- Models and resources cited by stakeholders included:
 - Supported Employment and Return-to-Work programs. In general, East Coast states were cited as having had a longer history of providing Supported Employment than West Coast states, and serving as potential resources for Supported Employment model. Utah's Return-to-Work program was cited as an effective model through which good materials are available. Wyoming and New Mexico were also cited as having developed innovative Return-to-Work programs.
 - State of Washington's efforts to maintain employment for persons with development disabilities.
 - University of Massachusetts' Supported Employment Learning Network that studies model programs and evidence-based practices.
 - Oregon Business Leadership Network initiatives were referenced as innovative.

These stakeholder findings are aligned with several priority issue areas identified by the Competitive Employment Project, including 1) Employer Education and Technical Assistance; and 2) Work Incentives related to participation in programs for person with disabilities; and 3) Supported Employment. Stakeholder comments are also aligned with the value of Person-centered planning articulated by the Competitive Employment Project.

Racial/Ethnic Minorities

OVRS is interested in understanding whether perceived barriers or service needs vary for consumers from ethnic, racial, or cultural minority groups. Eighty-six percent of the consumer survey sample was self-described as White/Caucasian, while 12% of the sample was self-described as another racial/ethnic group (Black/African-American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaska Native, Mixed/Other)¹⁰.

Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

Exhibit 4.7 shows the barriers to employment experienced by minority and non-minority consumer groups.

Exhibit 4.7					
Barriers to Employment by Minority Status					
<i>Data Source: OVRS Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Minority		Non-Minority (i.e., White)		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Not enough education or training	62%	28	54%	170	
Not enough or wrong kinds of job skills	60%	27	58%	184	
Not enough jobs available	56%	25	43%	136	
Negative employer perceptions	47%	21	40%	126	
Inadequate job search skills	42%	19	29%	91	
Mental health issues	40%	18	36%	114	
Substance abuse issues [†]	40%	6	28%	32	†
Other transportation issues	40%	18	28%	89	
Disability-related personal care issues	33%	15	20%	65	
Anything else	33%	104	40%	18	
Inadequate disability accommodations	31%	14	28%	90	
Disability-related transportation issues	31%	14	21%	67	
Language barriers are a problem	29%	13	9%	29	**
Other health issues	29%	13	33%	106	
Negative impact on benefits	23%	74	24%	11	
Housing issues	17%	55	16%	7	
Child care issues [†]	7%	3	7%	22	†
<p>* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01</p> <p>† Observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency selected cells is less than five. Tests of statistical significance may not be valid.</p> <p>Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 334 to 362.</p>					

¹⁰ The non-White racial/ethnic groups in the sample are not large enough to examine the sample for all racial/ethnic groups separately. As such, we have divided the sample into Minority and non-Minority for our analysis of consumer survey data. Individuals who responded Don't Know/Refused/NA to the question about racial/ethnic group have not been included in the analysis.

- Similar to the overall population, the primary barriers cited by more than half of OVRS consumers from a racial/ethnic minority background included “Not enough education or training” (62%), “Not having enough or the wrong kinds of job skills” (58%), and “Not enough jobs available” (56%). These results suggest that the types of barriers faced by minority consumers were not different from the population as a whole.
- A statistically significant difference between minority and non-minority response was shown for only one item, supporting the conclusion that there few differences between minority and non-minority consumers’ perceptions of barriers to employment were observed.
- Significantly more minority consumers cited language issues as a barrier to employment than non-minority consumers, reflecting OVRS staff and stakeholder feedback (described below) that minority consumers face more language barriers. However, only 30% of minority consumers perceive language issues as a barrier.

As shown in Exhibits 4.8 and 4.9, OVRS staff feedback suggested perceived differences in barriers to employment for minority consumers.

- 52% of OVRS staff respondents felt that barriers to employment were different for racial, ethnic, or cultural minority consumers. Notably, more than 20% of staff respondents indicated that they “Don’t know” whether minority consumers faced different barriers to employment.
- 80% of staff felt that “Language barriers” were a top barrier to achieving employment goals. OVRS staff also noted “Not having enough education or training” (43%) and “Not having enough/appropriate job skills” (44%) as the remaining top barriers to employment for minority consumers.

Given that selected results from the consumer survey also related to both language and job skills, it may be appropriate for OVRS to ensure that consumers receive adequate training opportunities via connections to education partners, especially for job-specific language skills.

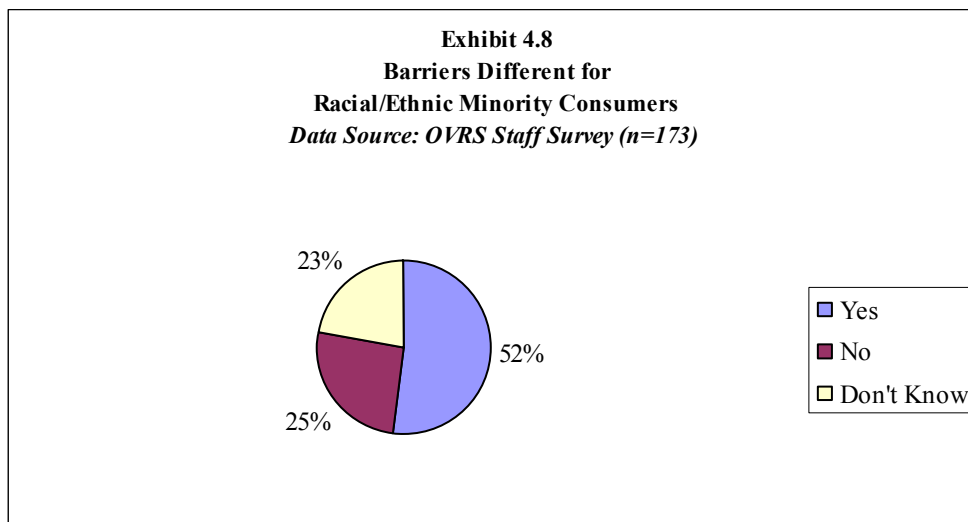


Exhibit 4.9		
Top Barriers for Racial/Ethnic Minority Consumers		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey</i>		
	Percent	Count
Language barriers	80%	73
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	44%	40
Not having enough education or training	43%	40
Note: Question only asked of respondents who indicated that barriers are different for racial/ethnic minorities.		

Accessibility and Availability of Services

To assess whether challenges to OVRs service accessibility varied for minority consumers, we analyzed consumer responses to accessibility by race and staff identification of barriers to access for minority consumers. Exhibit 4.10 illustrates challenges to accessibility by minority status:

- Similar to the overall population, all challenges to accessibility were cited by less than 30% of the minority consumer population, suggesting that OVRs has adequately addressed potential challenges to accessibility for the majority of minority consumers.
- Items cited by the largest numbers of minority consumers include “Other challenges” (29%) and “Difficulties scheduling meetings with counselors” (27%). Very few consumers responded to a prompt to specify other challenges they faced; for those who responded, the challenges ranged widely, from transportation issues to difficulties working with a large and complex system.
- For several items, including “Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings”, “Working with OVRs staff”, “Completing the application”, “Completing the IEP”, and “Other challenges”, youth and non-youth show similar responses.

Exhibit 4.10					
Challenges to Accessibility by Minority Status					
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Minority		Non-Minority (i.e., White)		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Other challenges	29%	13	18%	58	
Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings	27%	12	23%	73	
Completing the IEP	24%	11	17%	54	
Language barriers [†]	20%	9	4%	14	** [†]
Working with OVRs Staff	18%	8	14%	44	
Completing the application	16%	7	13%	41	
Public transportation [†]	11%	5	11%	36	†
Inadequate disability-related accommodations [†]	11%	5	5%	17	†
Physical location of office [†]	9%	4	11%	36	†
* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01					
† Observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency selected cells is less than five. Tests of statistical significance may not be valid.					
Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 329 to 360.					

Exhibits 4.11 and 4.12 present staff feedback on access to services for minority consumers.

- As shown in Exhibit 4.11, 41% of staff did not feel that challenges to accessibility were different for minority consumers compared to OVRs consumers overall. 36% felt that challenges to accessibility were different for minority consumers, and 23% of staff respondents indicated that they “Don’t know” about the differences for minority consumers.

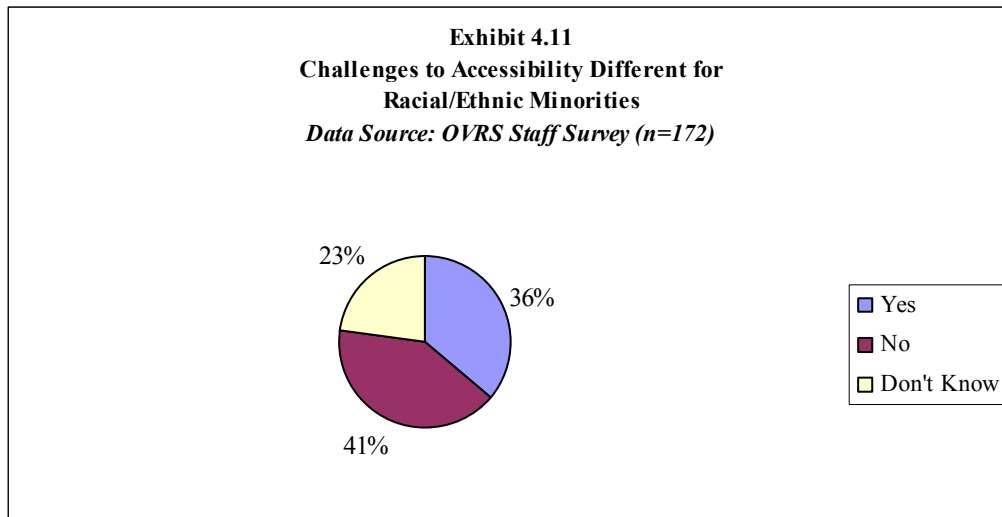


Exhibit 4.12 identifies staff members’ (who indicated that the challenges are different for racial/ethnic minorities) perceived top three challenges to accessibility for minority consumers:

- 87% of staff respondents felt that “Language barriers” were a primary challenge to accessibility for minority consumers, reflecting the earlier finding that language barriers were, in fact, more of an issue for minority consumers.
- Also cited in the top three were “Other” challenges to accessibility (47%) and “Difficulties completing the application” (40%). Other challenges cited by staff included issues of OVRs cultural competency, cultural barriers to communication, and distrust of service agencies.

Exhibit 4.12
Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility for Racial/Ethnic Minorities
Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=62)

	Percent	Count
Language barriers	87%	54
Other (specified)	47%	29
Difficulties completing the application	40%	25
Note: Question asked of respondents who indicated that challenges to accessibility are different for racial/ethnic minorities.		

Adequacy of Service Provision

Stakeholder input provided important feedback on the adequacy of services provision for minority consumers and related suggestions for change. Stakeholders provided the following input regarding service provision for minorities with disabilities:

- OVRS administration and SRC stakeholders suggested that minority consumers faced compounded barriers to employment: their racial, ethnic, or cultural background, coupled with their disability, may lead to greater discrimination.
- Stakeholders across groups indicated that OVRS service provision may not sufficiently implement cultural sensitivity and awareness when dealing with persons of racial/ethnic or cultural minorities. Moreover, cultural differences regarding disabilities and work expectations had not been fully explored by the agency and might have had significant implications on consumers' motivation to seek services or employment. This feedback echoed OVRS' staff's open-ended responses to service access, which suggested that OVRS cultural competency, cultural barriers to communication, and distrust of service agencies posed access challenges for minority consumers. Stakeholders and staff feedback indicated a need for targeted training to increase cultural literacy and awareness.
- Minority consumers, including individuals with hearing impairments, may have had language barriers that were not adequately addressed by OVRS staff. This feedback aligned with staff survey results where the vast majority of respondents cited language barriers as a critical and unique barrier to employment for minority consumers. Similar to general cultural differences, this suggests a need for targeted training or outreach efforts to increase non-English or non-spoken language proficiency across OVRS staff.

Findings and recommendations to bilingual and culturally competent services are aligned with the priority issue of Culturally Competent Employment Supports and Services identified by the Competitive Employment Project.

Youth in Transition

OVRS is interested in understanding if perceived barriers or service needs vary for youth transitioning from High School. Approximately 9% of the consumer survey sample was between the at least 18 and less than 20; the remainder of the sample (91%) was 20 and over.

Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

Exhibit 4.13 presents the barriers to employment cited by youth. None of the barriers were cited by a majority of youth consumers, suggesting that it may be more challenging to determine how to focus efforts on addressing youth barriers to employment. In addition:

- Unlike the other selected target populations, the top two barriers to employment cited by youth differed somewhat from the overall population. The top two barriers (cited by the largest percentage of youth consumers) were “Not enough jobs available” (44%) and “Other transportation issues” (34%). Similar to the overall population, “Not enough or wrong kinds of job skills” (29%) and “Inadequate job search skills” (28%) were also cited as top barriers (ranked third and fourth, respectively).

For eight barrier-related items, a statistically significant difference between youth and non-youth consumers was noted:

- “Not having enough education or training”

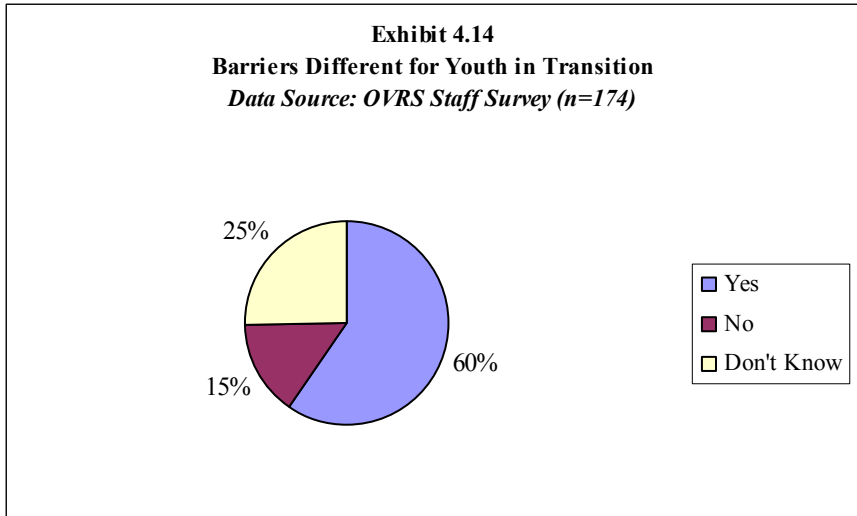
- “Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills”
- “Negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities”
- “Inadequate disability accommodations”
- “Disability-related personal care”
- “Mental health issues”
- “Other health issues”
- “Housing issues”

For all of these items, a smaller percentage of youth than non-youth cited these items as barriers, suggesting that youth perceive fewer barriers to employment than non-youth consumers.

Exhibit 4.13					
Barriers to Employment by Youth Status					
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Youth (age<20)		Non-Youth (age≥20)		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Not enough jobs available	44%	14	46%	151	
Other transportation issues	34%	11	29%	98	
Not enough or wrong kinds of job skills	29%	9	62%	206	**
Inadequate job search skills	28%	9	32%	103	
Not enough education or training	19%	6	59%	197	**
Anything else	19%	6	35%	118	
Disability-related transportation issues	13%	4	23%	79	
Other health issues	13%	4	36%	120	*
Negative impact on benefits	13%	4	25%	83	
Language barriers are a problem [†]	9%	3	12%	41	†
Negative employer perceptions	9%	3	47%	147	**
Disability-related personal care issues	7%	2	25%	80	*
Mental health issues	6%	2	39%	131	**
Child care issues [†]	6%	2	7%	23	†
Inadequate disability accommodations	3%	1	33%	104	**
Substance abuse issues [†]	3%	1	11%	37	†
Housing issues	3%	1	19%	63	*

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01
[†] Observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency selected cells is less than five. Tests of statistical significance may not be valid.
 Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 342 to 370.

As shown in Exhibit 4.14, 60% of staff felt that barriers to employment were different for youth in transition than for people with disabilities in general. Similar to other subgroup results, 25% of staff members were unable to respond to a question about whether barriers were different for youth.



As shown in Exhibit 4.15, staff respondents indicated that barriers were different for youth in transition:

- “Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills” (75%) and “Inadequate job search skills” (66%) were reported by staff respondents as the top barriers to employment for youth in transition.
- Nearly half of staff respondents identified “Not having enough education or training” (49%) as a barrier for this group.

Exhibit 4.15 Top 3 Barriers for Youth in Transition <i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=104)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills	75%	78
Inadequate job search skills	66%	69
Not having enough education or training	49%	51
Note: Question only asked of respondents who indicated that barriers are different for youth in transition.		

Although these barriers were also identified by OVRs youth consumers, survey results suggest that OVRs staff greater skill- and education-related barriers than youth. This may simply reflect a larger pattern of fewer youth

consumers identifying barriers to employment, as evidenced across barriers. However, this discrepancy may also stem from youth’s lack of awareness of realistic workplace expectations, or conversely, counselor limitations in identifying non-traditional workplace skills and related employer demand. The finding suggests that it may be appropriate to use more programmatic efforts to connect youth in transition to skill-building programs.

In addition, although “Other transportation issues” was one of the top barriers to employment cited by youth (Exhibit 4.13), only 19% of staff identified this issue as a Top 3 barrier for youth consumers. Several OVRs administration and SRC stakeholders noted that transportation is a particular challenge for youth who may not have access to their own vehicles and may instead rely on limited or non-existent public transportation systems. Youth and stakeholder responses suggest that youth transition programs may need to focus additional efforts on assisting youth to identify transportation options or otherwise accessible employment opportunities.

Accessibility and Availability of Services

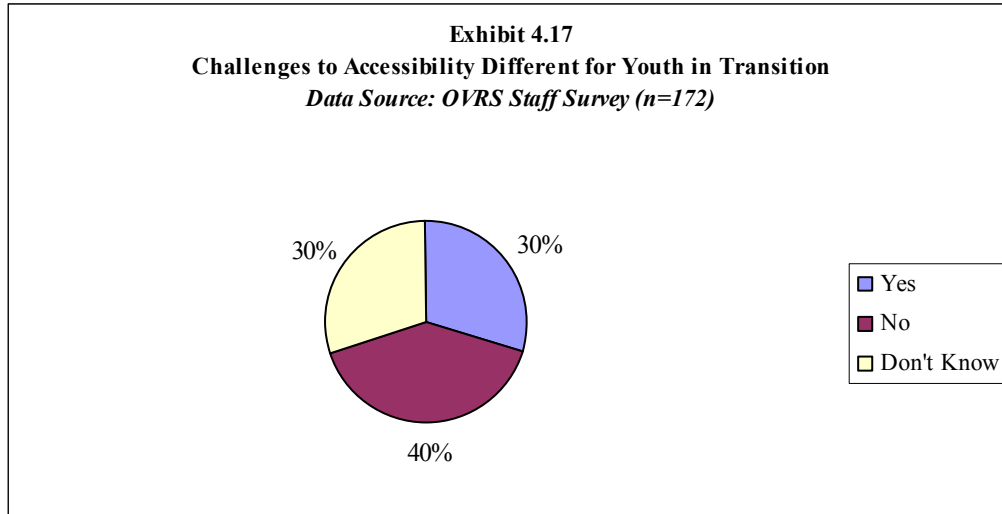
To assess whether challenges to OVRs service accessibility varied for youth in transition, we analyzed consumer responses to accessibility and staff identification of barriers to access for youth in transition.

Exhibit 4.16 presents consumer feedback related to this issue:

- No challenges to accessibility were cited by a majority of youth consumers, indicating that the majority of youth were satisfied with the accessibility of OVRs services.
- “Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings” was cited most frequently by youth consumers (31%), suggesting that OVRs may need to identify alternative methods of communication with youth consumers.
- For selected items, including “Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings”, “Completing the IEP”, and “Other challenges”, youth and non-youth show similar responses.

Exhibit 4.16					
Challenges to Accessibility by Youth Status					
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=varied)</i>					
	Youth (age<20)		Non-Youth (age≥20)		Significance
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
Difficulties scheduling counselor meetings	31%	10	23%	76	
Completing the application [†]	19%	6	13%	44	†
Completing the IEP	16%	5	20%	61	
Physical location of office [†]	7%	2	11%	38	†
Language barriers [†]	6%	2	6%	21	†
Other challenges	6%	2	21%	71	
Public transportation [†]	3%	1	13%	41	†
Inadequate disability-related accommodations [†]	0%	0	7%	22	†
Working with OVRs Staff [†]	0%	0	16%	52	** †
* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01					
† Observed frequency in selected cells is zero, or expected frequency in selected cells is less than five. Tests of statistical significance may not be valid.					
Note: Don't Know/Refused/NA responses excluded from analysis. Total n varies from 335 to 368.					

As shown in Exhibit 4.17, 40% of staff did not feel that challenges to OVRs accessibility were different for youth in transition than for other the persons with disabilities in general. Thirty percent felt that service access challenges were different, and 30% indicated that they did not know the extent to which challenges differ for youth.



Among OVRs staff members who indicated that challenges to accessibility were different for youth in transition, Exhibit 4.18 identifies their cited top three challenges to accessibility:

- The majority of staff who felt that challenges to OVRs accessibility were different for youth in transition cited “Other challenges” as a top three challenge to access (66%). Open-ended descriptions of “Other challenges” included lack of general maturity (affecting motivation and follow-through), poor systems coordination between OVRs and education partners, lack of awareness of OVRs services, and lack of familial support to pursue OVRs offerings.
- No other challenge was cited by a majority of staff as a top three barrier to accessibility.
- 40% of staff members noted limited access to public transportation as a challenge to accessibility for this group. In contrast, only 3% of youth respondents cited public transportation as a challenge to accessing OVRs services.

Exhibit 4.18		
Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility for Youth in Transition		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=53)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Other (specified)	66%	35
Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation	40%	21
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	30%	16
Note: Item only asked of respondents who indicated that challenges to accessibility are different for youth in transition.		

Adequacy of Service Provision

Stakeholder feedback regarding barriers to employment for youth with disabilities in transition from high school echoed selected staff perceptions and provided suggestions for facilitating more comprehensive service provision for youth in transition:

- OVRS administration, SRC members, and stakeholders working with youth cited youth work ethic as a barrier to employment. They indicated that although youth consumers might be work-focused, they might not be career-minded, which could hamper career growth and progression. Continued focus on identification of long-term career goals and implementation of related steps during OVRS job development could increase career-orientation among youth.
- These stakeholders also identified systemic differences between the education system and the vocational rehabilitation system. Stakeholders suggested several repercussions of the limited collaboration between these agencies:
 - Eligibility is not well-aligned between these two systems, and both systems are reluctant to contribute resources until the other system has expended all of its resources. This sentiment was reiterated during discussions of OVRS partnerships, and it was suggested that improved, joint policy guidance regarding resource planning and responsibility, as well as overall education about available services, could enhance service delivery across agencies.
 - Education staff members are not always fully aware of availability or accessibility of OVRS services. Improved outreach to education agencies could increase access to youth in transition.
 - Youth in transition with disabilities need more proactive planning to maintain momentum from a structured school environment to the workforce. Stakeholders familiar with youth suggested that OVRS and education agencies need enhanced partnerships to bridge the transition and prevent youth from falling through cracks in the service delivery system.

Findings related to youth in transition are aligned with the objectives of the Youth and Family Supports issue area identified by the Competitive Employment Project.

V. Other Supports for Effective Service Provision

In addition to gathering feedback on primary barriers and related service needs, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment solicited input on other supports for effective service provision. In particular, stakeholders provided feedback on the quality of OVRS partnerships and suggested improvements of existing partnerships or new collaborations. In addition, data from both the OVRS staff survey and stakeholder interview suggested staff support improvements.

Partnerships

Several stakeholders noted OVRS' success in partnerships, and the strength of OVRS partnerships was also noted by Competitive Employment Project documents. Stakeholders recognized partnerships as especially important given the relatively small OVRS staff size. Several stakeholders noted the strength of local partnerships, including examples of effective collaborations between local OVRS counselors and partner agencies.

However, stakeholders across groups also suggested that communication with and collaboration across state-level partner agencies could be improved and provided suggestions for enhancing overall partnerships:

- OVRS should develop stronger ties and joint policy guidance with state and local education agencies, including secondary and post-secondary providers. Enhanced partnerships could improve resource efficiency across agencies and streamline services for youth in transition. Stakeholders emphasized this for facilitating access to OVRS service for youth consumers. Additionally, enhanced relationships with community colleges could facilitate stronger ties with employers.
- OVRS should improve communication and partnership strategies across all partners:
 - Partnerships should be formalized through written agreements between agencies.
 - Institutionalizing methods of communication between OVRS and partner agencies would minimize disruption due to staff turnover.
 - Greater partner agency representation on the state rehabilitation council and additional OVRS representation on partner agency boards and task forces would facilitate communication and awareness across agencies.
- OVRS liaisons dedicated to specific agencies or specialized disabilities (e.g., developmental disabilities, autism spectrum) would streamline communication between partners:
 - A dedicated counselor at each local OVRS offices could respond to requests from specific organizations and coordinate with organization staff on specific client needs. This would be further enhanced if local OVRS staff could obtain access to OVRS computerized client records through non-OVRS computers on-site at partner agencies.

In the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, multiple stakeholders expressed that they had very little or no connection with OVRS and that they felt unable to comment on many of the needs assessment questions. Furthermore, information for multiple employer contacts was outdated or the respondent did not respond to our contact efforts. The minority and employer stakeholder

groups appeared to have the weakest relationships with OVRs and familiarity with OVRs consumers. These findings suggest the following recommendations:

- OVRs needs to develop and formalize partnerships with groups representing minorities.
- OVRs needs to devote additional efforts to educate employers on OVRs services and persons with disabilities and/or assist relevant partners (e.g., workforce partners) in related efforts. This finding is aligned with priorities articulated in the Competitive Employment Project related to Employer Education and Technical Assistance.

OVRs may need to devote additional efforts to cultivating and maintaining employer relationships. It is clear that current employer relationships are not yielding high visibility for OVRs services. However, we recognize that OVRs relies heavily on external job developers and that it may not be appropriate to invest substantial resources in developing employer relationships. It might be a more efficient use of resources to focus on deepening relationships with local workforce partners and other employer representation agencies (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Investment Boards).

Staff Support

In the OVRs staff survey, staff identified top support changes to improve OVRs service delivery. The changes were categorized according to staff-focused and consumer-focused changes, as shown in Exhibits 5.1 and 5.2, respectively:

Exhibit 5.1 Top 3 Staff-Focused Staff Support Changes <i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=165)</i>		
	Percent	Count
Less paperwork	46%	76
Other (specified)	38%	62
Smaller caseload	35%	57

- Among staff-focused changes, no single suggested change was selected by a majority of OVRs staff, indicating a lack of consensus around proposed changes.
- However, the top three changes cited were noted by a considerable percentage of respondents: “Less paperwork” (46%), “Other” (38%), and “Smaller caseload” (35%).

Exhibit 5.2 Top 3 Consumer-Focused Staff Support Changes <i>Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=155)</i>		
	Percent	Count
More time to provide job development services to your consumers	56%	87
Other (specified)	46%	71
More time to provide job coaching services to your consumers	39%	60

- A majority of staff cited “More time to provide job development services to consumers” (56%) in the top three consumer-focused staff-support changes. This supports the need for improved training to help staff identify and develop a good “fit” between consumers and jobs, facilitating job placement and retention.
- “More time to provide job coaching services” and better job development skills were also identified by a considerable percentage of respondents (39% and 35%). These changes

would also improve counselors' facilitation of appropriate matches between consumers and job positions.

Stakeholders additionally suggested what they believed would improve OVRS service delivery:

- Although most stakeholders felt that OVRS has done a relatively good job in providing continuing education opportunities for staff, they noted specific training needs in certain areas:
 - Counselors in rural areas may have a more difficult time attaining Masters Degrees or additional education because of limited distance learning options. OVRS-developed distance learning courses would respond to this challenge.
 - Beyond general continuing education opportunities, additional training is needed in targeted areas, including developmental disabilities; traumatic brain injury; non-physical asset needs; vocational strategies (e.g., person-centered counseling and understanding attitudes on employability across disability types); and communication strategies related to mental health and substance abuse issues.
- Improved communication and policy guidance would enhance consistency in policy implementation and service delivery.
- Creating para-professional positions to assume much of the administrative case management functions would enable OVRS counselors to cost-effectively provide more intensive counseling to consumers. This suggestion has the potential to address challenges related to scheduling meetings with counselors, which was cited as a top challenge by consumer survey respondents.
- Service delivery strategies, including person-centered planning and supported employment, could be better incorporated into service provision for general or target populations:
 - Person-centered planning was cited across stakeholder groups as an effective method of developing more tailored, responsive services to consumers. By focusing on consumer input and guidance, this method would also facilitate development of “good-fit” placements.
 - Supported employment, in particular, was identified by several stakeholder groups, including those familiar with persons with significant disabilities, as one of the most successful models of service delivery for this group.

Several of these findings are aligned with the value of Person-centered planning that was articulated by the Competitive Employment Project.

Additional Suggestions for Change

Stakeholders identified additional opportunities for improvement, citing several model programs and modifications to improve service delivery:

- A majority of stakeholders agreed that greater employer and public education on the abilities of people with disabilities is critical to creating job opportunities and career ladders. This echoed consumer and staff feedback on barriers to employment. Achieving improved public and employer awareness will require enhanced OVRs marketing and communication strategies, including regular OVRs presentations at partner agencies and employer associations.
- Although many stakeholders noted a dearth of evidence-based programs and minimal national dissemination of model strategies, they identified several successful models to assist in the benefits process, including the Dartmouth Individual Placement and Support Program, the Youth Transition Program, and Disability Navigators. Moreover, stakeholders emphasized the benefit of identifying and implementing evidence-based models to improve OVRs services, suggesting that additional research on best practices and program models could improve OVRs service design.
- Many stakeholders noted limited follow-up services and suggested a need for more sustained, creative post-placement follow-up:
 - Sustained post-placement follow-up was cited as critical for specific disabilities, including TBI, autism spectrum disorder, development disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities.
 - Enhanced assistance in the early weeks of placement may be critical to solving immediate challenges that might otherwise derail long-term employment.
 - Targeted long-term follow-up is critical to helping former OVRs consumers access additional resources to upgrade skills and achieve career progression.
 - Although long-term follow-up may be outside of the purview of OVRs services, OVRs may wish to enhance greater connections with programs that can provide long-term support.

VI. Target Population Estimates

Primary Data Sources

The 2006 American Community Survey (2006 ACS) and the 2006 Oregon Population Survey (2006 OPS)¹¹ are the primary data sources for target population estimates within Oregon and the OVRS service areas. These data sources offer employment statistics and functional measures of disability by disability response, thus providing a picture of the prevalence of disability and the employment gap between Oregonians with and without disabilities. The 2006 ACS includes county-specific data only for counties with populations greater than 65,000, therefore, branch office service area estimates were generated using 2006 OPS data only.

These data sources are they are likely to be a good source of data for analysis and comparisons across service areas in future needs assessment or evaluation activities. Our methods were inspired by a recent study at the University of California's Disability Statistics Center, which included a focus on the difference in employment rates between persons with and without disabilities.¹²

There are advantages and disadvantages to each data source:

- ACS data and relevant tabulations are easily accessed, even for county-specific data. In addition, the ACS data may be a good source for comparing Oregon trends with other states or the nation as a whole. However, as stated earlier, county-specific data is currently limited; in 2008, the ACS will be conducted with counties as small as 20,000
- In contrast, relevant tabulations of the OPS data were limited, requiring more complex data analysis activities, and it is not clear whether it would be appropriate to compare OPS results with other data sources (e.g., with other states' ACS results). However, OPS data included data for all counties, providing an opportunity to aggregate those data and generate target population estimates by branch office.

Where applicable, we used data reported in the 2006 SRC Annual Report for generating estimates about the percentage of target consumer populations served by OVRS.¹³ We also turned to other selected federal and state sources, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Oregon Department of Education, for generating estimates about selected target populations.

¹¹ The All Oregonians data set was used and weighted to yield characteristics for Oregon's total household population. In the All Oregonian data set, survey respondents served as proxy respondents for other household members.

¹² LaPlante, M., & Kaye, H.S. (2005). *The Employment and Health Status of Californians with Disabilities*. University of California Disability Statistics Center Institute for Health and Aging. San Francisco, CA.

¹³ Oregon State Rehabilitation Council. (2006). *2006 Annual Report*.

Disability Measures

Both the 2006 OPS and the 2006 ACS included data related to multiple disability measures. For the purpose of these analyses, we have chosen to present data from selected disability measures. Items included in these analyses¹⁴ are listed below:

- Employment Disability: Difficulty working at a job or business (OPS and ACS¹⁵).
- Any Disability (ACS only): Any one of multiple disability-related conditions, difficulties or limitations, including Sensory Disability, Physical Disability, Mental Disability, Self-care Disability, Go-outside-home Limitation, or Employment Limitation¹⁶.

These disability measures were fairly broad and limited by the fact that they do not yield information about the severity of the disability. However, they provide information from which we can draw inferences about the size of various populations, the employment gap between those populations and individuals without disabilities, and target population estimates. It should be noted that estimates related to Employment Disability measure from the two data sources yield slightly different results. We present multiple measures to provide a range of estimates. In subsequent analyses, we turn to both data sources to answer related questions for sub-group populations.

2006 ACS and 2006 OPS data presented in this report were limited to persons aged 16 to 64 in the state of Oregon and weighted to yield estimates for the entire state. “Don’t know/refused” responses were not included in the analyses.

State of Oregon

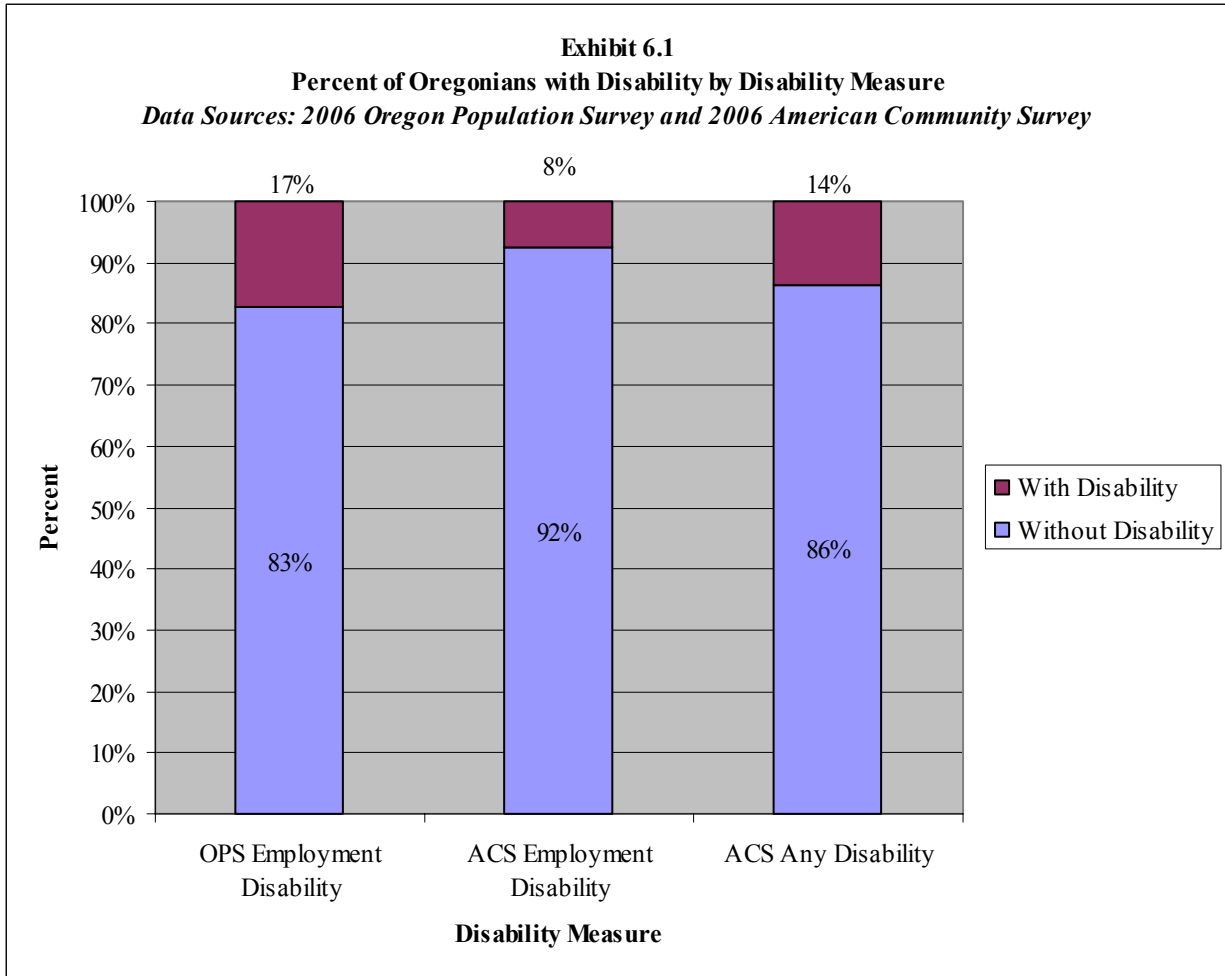
Exhibit 6.1 illustrates the overall prevalence of disability within the State of Oregon using the OPS and ACS Employment Disability measures and the ACS Any Disability.

These results indicate that between 8% and 17% of Oregonians are affected by an Employment Disability. Furthermore, ACS data suggest that at least 14% of Oregonians experience a disability of some type.

¹⁴ We have presented only selected disability measures that are most likely to yield relevant target population estimates. Estimates for additional disability measures are presented in Appendix E.

¹⁵ Items from OPS and ACS are similar in content and wording. 2006 OPS data were recoded so that individuals with the disability and without the disability could be reported (as opposed to with the disability and without any disability, which is how the data are presented in aggregate OPS tables), yielding aggregate results analogous to the presentation of the 2006 ACS measures.

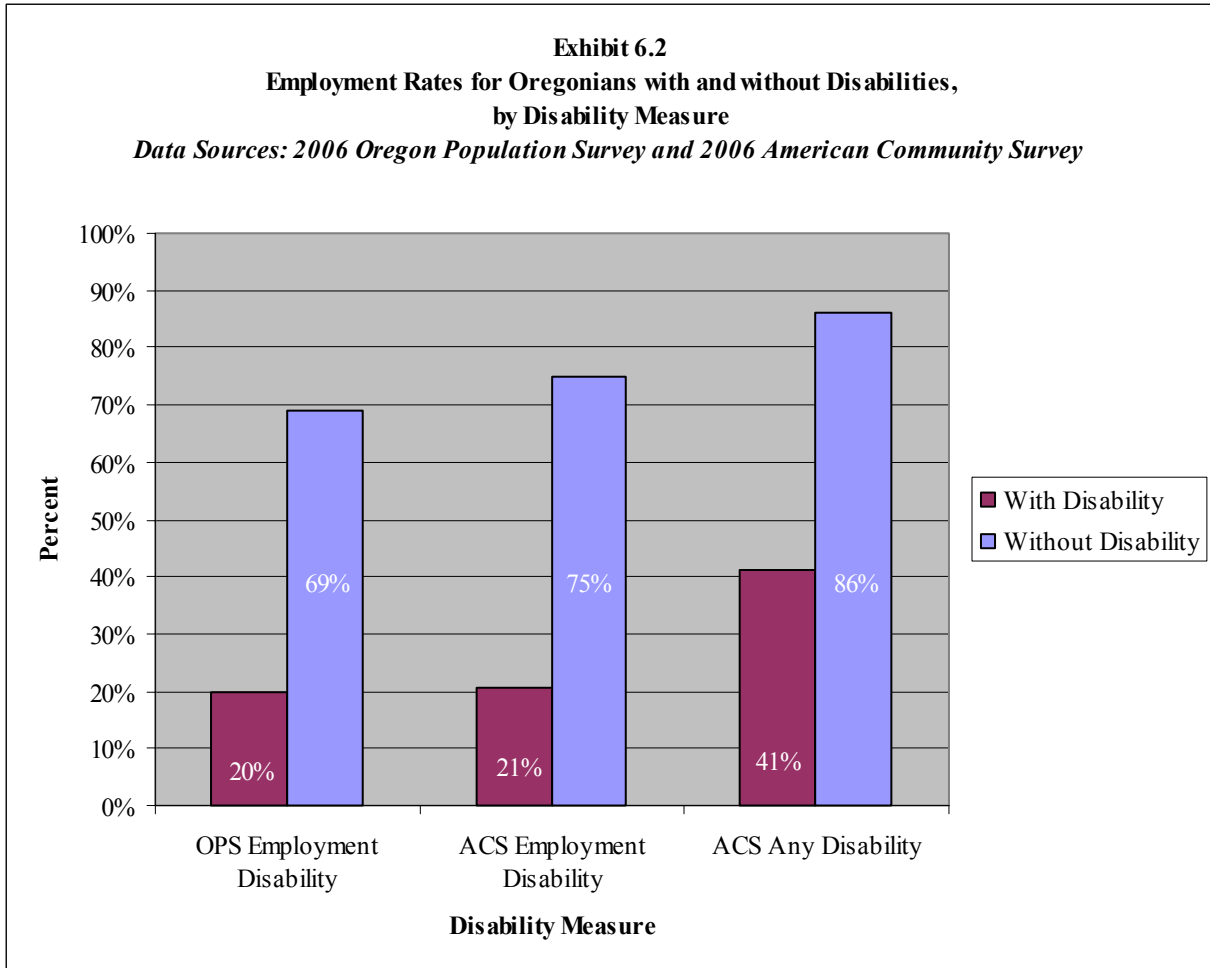
¹⁶ See Appendix E for a more detailed description of these disability measures.



These data are important for understanding the relative magnitude of the affected population for these disability measures. However, OVRs’s goal of helping Oregonians with disabilities obtain competitive employment, suggests that target population estimates should reflect:

- The number and percent of persons with disabilities who are employed.
- The number and percent of persons without disabilities who are employed.
- The percent of persons with disabilities who would need to enter employment in order to “close the employment gap” between persons with and without disabilities.

Exhibit 6.2 provides a picture of the difference between employment rates of Oregonians with and without disabilities, illustrating that approximately 20% to 21% of Oregonians with an Employment Disability are employed, compared with 69% to 75% of Oregonians without an Employment Disability. The employment rate is substantially higher for Oregonians with any Disability, potentially because more individuals in that group experience a disability without being negatively affected by employment limitations.



Using population and employment rate data, we generated a range of estimates for the OVRs target consumer population of the number of individuals with disabilities who would need to become employed in order for individuals with disabilities to show the same employment rate as individuals without disabilities. The formulas we used are:

- (i) Employment Gap Percentage = Employment Rate for Persons with Disability – Employment Rate for Persons without Disability
- (ii) Target Population = Employment Gap Percentage x Number of Individuals with Disability.

A range of target population estimates and relevant data for various disability measures, based on the above formula, is provided in Exhibit 6.3. The target population estimates suggest that the target population may be as large as 110,000, reflecting the estimate for individuals with an Employment Disability.

Exhibit 6.3						
OVRs Target Population Estimates by Disability Measure						
<i>Data Sources: 2006 Oregon Population Survey and 2006 American Community Survey</i>						
	Overall Population Estimates¹⁷		Employment Rate			
	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability	Employment Gap	Estimated Target Population
OPS Employment Disability	221,716	1,054,163	20%	69%	49%	109,195
ACS Employment Disability	185,292	2,254,975	21%	75%	54%	100,616
ACS Any Disability	336,337	2,103,930	41%	86%	34%	115,611

We believe that Employment Disability is likely to be a more appropriate measure for generating target population estimates because it includes only those individuals for whom employment prospects are negatively affected by their disability¹⁸. Given this assumption, these results suggest that the OVRs target consumer population may be as high as 110,000.

However, these estimates may represent the high end of the range because the formula assumes closure of the employment gap, which may be an unrealistic objective, as suggested by some disability literature.¹⁹ The target population estimates would be lower if a larger percentage of persons with disabilities, compared to those without disabilities, were out of the labor force by choice, or if a percentage of unemployed persons with disabilities did not require or want the services from OVRs.

In addition, these disability measures did not provide any indication of the severity of the disability; we might expect that individuals whose disabilities are less severe may have fewer needs for OVRs services, which would suggest that the target population estimate might be lower. Exhibits 6.3 and 6.4 provide an overall picture of the percentage of consumers OVRs serves relative to multiple potential consumer groups in Oregon, including:

- Consumers served by OVRs, as a percentage of All Oregonians
- Consumers served by OVRs, as a percentage of Oregonians with an Employment Disability
- Consumers served by OVRs, as a percentage of the estimated target population

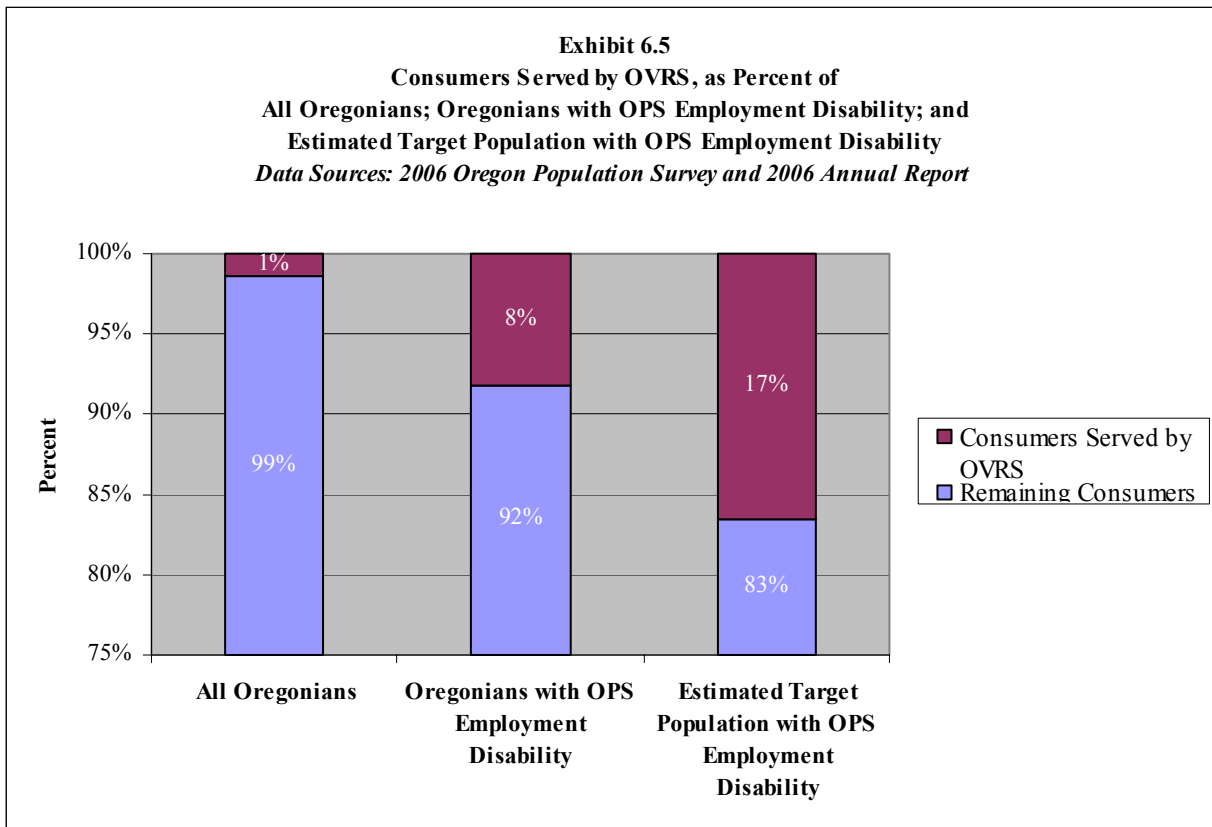
¹⁷ Sample is weighted to estimate the total population of Oregon. The OPS go-outside-home and OPS employment disability measures in the All Oregonians data set include a substantial number of “Don’t know/refused” responses (35.5% of the data set), yielding an overall weighted population estimate lower than the other disability measures. These analyses were repeated for the affected measures using the weighted respondent-only data set for individuals aged 16 to 64, resulting in slightly higher target population estimates for the OPS employment disability and OPS go-outside-home limitation (120,119 and 72,520, respectively).

¹⁸ Results for Any Disability are presented here for context, and because the Any Disability measure is used in subsequent analyses for selected target population.

¹⁹ LaPlante, M. & Kaye, H.S. (2005).

The 2006 SRC Annual Report indicated that the 18,104 consumers were served by OVRS during the 12-month period from October 2005 through September 2006. These analyses indicate that found that OVRS served approximately 1% of all Oregonians; 8% of all Oregonians who are affected by an OPS Employment Disability; and 17% of the target population affected by an OPS Employment Disability.

Exhibit 6.4 Consumers Served as Percentage of: All Oregonians; Oregonians with OPS Employment Disability; and Estimated Target Population for State of Oregon <i>Data Sources: 2006 Oregon Population Survey and 2006 SRC Annual Report</i>							
	Consumers Served by OVRS	All Oregonians		Oregonians with OPS Employment Disability		Estimated Target Population	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
All Consumers	18,104	1%	1,275,879	8%	221,716	109,195	17%



OVRS Service Areas

As stated earlier, the 2006 ACS population estimates were based on survey data collected only from counties larger than 65,000; as such, relevant population estimates are only available for 15 out of 36 Oregon counties. For the purposes of generating comparable target population estimates by OVRS service area, we relied on data from the 2006 OPS²⁰. We limited this analysis to an examination of the Employment Disability Measure, which is likely to provide the upper range of the target consumer population by branch office. Similar to the analysis for the state of Oregon, the population included individuals age 16 to 64. The counties served by various branch offices of interested are presented in Exhibit 6.6.

Exhibit 6.6	
Branch Office by County Served	
<i>Data Source: Office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services</i>	
Branch Office	Counties Served
East, North and Central Portland Branch Offices	Multnomah
Washington	Washington; Tillamook; Clatsop; Columbia
Clackamas	Clackamas
Marion/North Salem ²¹	Marion; Polk; Yamhill
Linn/Benton/Lincoln	Linn; Benton; Lincoln
Lane	Lane
Roseburg	Douglas; Coos; Curry
Medford	Josephine; Jackson; Klamath; Lake
Bend/Hood River	Deschutes; Crook; Jefferson; Wheeler; Gilliam; Sherman; Wasco; Hood River
Eastern Oregon	Umatilla; Union; Wallowa; Baker; Grant; Harney; Malheur; Morrow

As shown in Exhibit 6.7, the percent of the population within each branch office area experiencing a disability varies by branch office. Employment rates for individuals with an employment disability also varied by branch office service area, as shown in Exhibit 6.8. Marion/North Salem and Bend/Hood River faced the lowest employment rates for persons with an employment disability, while Roseburg, which evidenced the highest percentage of persons with an employment disability, also showed the highest employment rates for this group.

²⁰ Note that the sampling frame for the OPS was a selection of eight regions. As such, the sample may not be representative, potentially affecting the validity of the resulting population estimates, especially for branch office service areas comprising a small number of counties.

²¹ Programmatically, Marion County is split between the Marion and North Salem branch offices. For the purposes of data analysis and presentation, however, the Marion and North Salem branch offices have been combined.

Exhibit 6.7
Percent of Oregonians with OPS Employment Disability by Branch Office Service Area
Data Source: 2006 Oregon Population Survey

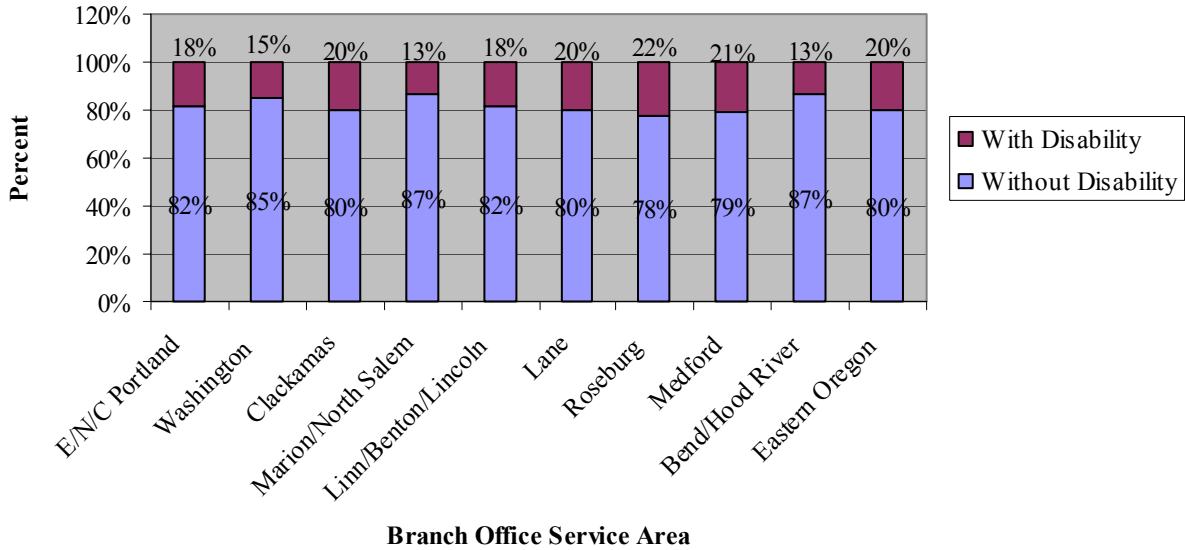
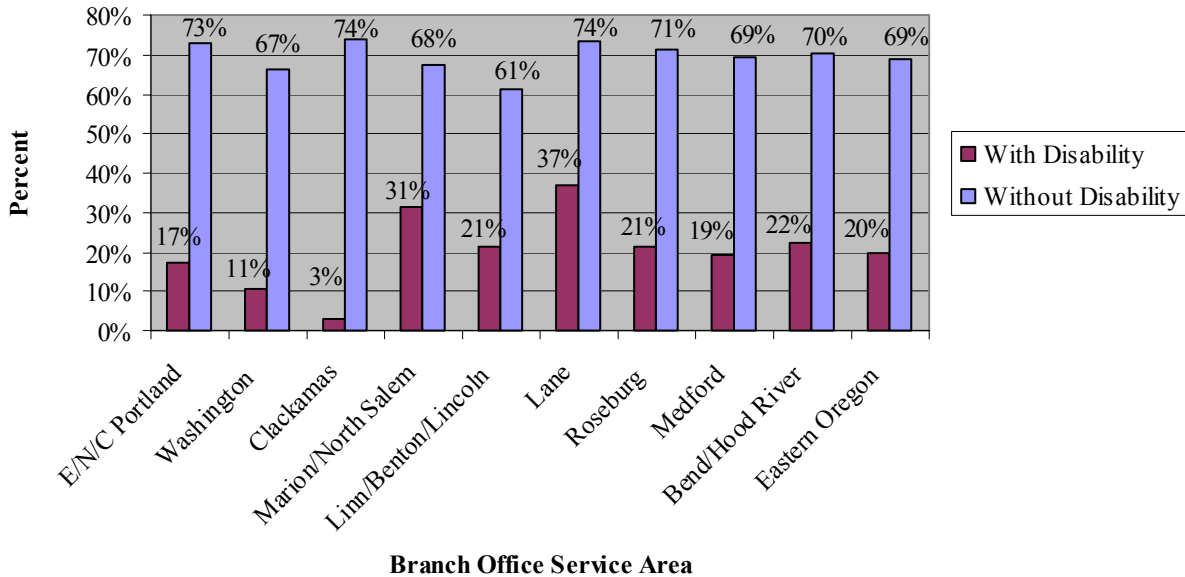


Exhibit 6.8
Employment Rates for Persons with and without OPS Employment Disability
by Branch Office Area
Data Source: 2006 Oregon Population Survey



Employment gap and target population estimates by branch office service areas are shown in Exhibit 6.9. The branch office service area facing the highest employment gap was Clackamas, with a 71% difference between the employment rate of individuals with and without an employment limitation. Marion/North Salem faced the lowest employment gap for this disability measure, at 36%.

A variety of factors influence regional employment opportunities. These figures should not be interpreted as an indicator of success (or lack thereof) for various branch offices. Rather, the findings provide an overall picture of the employment gaps faced by branch office service areas and contribute to the subsequent estimate of the target consumer population by branch office service area. Moreover, these data provide important information on prospective OVRs consumers and overall distribution of the target population that may be important to consider in future discussion regarding staff allocation or distribution. These findings suggest that the availability of services in selected branch office service areas, including Clackamas and Washington, may need additional exploration.

Exhibit 6.9						
OVRs Target Population Estimates by Branch Office Service Area						
<i>Data Sources: 2006 Oregon Population Survey</i>						
	Overall Population Estimates²²		Employment Rate		Employment Gap	Target Population Estimate
	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability		
East, North, Central Portland	51,405	233,260	17%	73%	55%	28,434
Washington	29,270	160,691	11%	67%	56%	16,364
Clackamas	17,412	71,086	3%	74%	71%	12,388
Marion/North Salem	20,154	131,465	31%	68%	36%	7,275
Linn/Benton/Lincoln	15,399	70,032	21%	61%	40%	6,225
Lane	24,271	96,597	37%	74%	37%	8,870
Roseburg	17,589	60,953	21%	71%	50%	8,779
Medford	22,109	85,316	19%	69%	50%	11,068
Bend/Hood River	11,399	74,240	22%	70%	48%	5,485
Eastern Oregon	12,004	48,193	20%	69%	49%	5,921

Prospective Consumer Estimates: Selected OVRs Target Populations

As part of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, we identified and/or generated estimates for selected OVRs target populations, including racial/ethnic minorities, youth in transition, youth who experience autism spectrum disorder, individuals with psychiatric disorders, and individuals with traumatic brain injuries. Where available, we chose to report data from the 2006 ACS for selected target populations, in part due to the relative accessibility of relevant cross-tabulations. Where relevant data was not available, we turned to other sources.

²² Overall weighted population estimates for branch office service areas do not sum to state population totals because 1) as stated earlier, there are a substantial number of missing values for the employment variable; and 2) there are a substantial number of missing values for the county variable.

Racial and/or Ethnic Minorities

Using data from the 2006 ACS Any Disability measure for the state of Oregon population (aged 16 to 64) we generated population estimates, employment rates, the employment gap, and target population estimates for various racial/ethnic groups. The Any Disability measure may overestimate the underlying number of individuals with a disability, because it is not limited to individuals whose employment is affected by a disability-related condition. However, these data provide the most accessible estimates for selected racial/ethnic groups. Final target population estimates for this measure may be less affected by using this measure because the estimation process limits the target population to individuals who are not employed and only reflects the number of individuals necessary to close the employment gap.

Based on the data shown in Exhibit 6.10, Blacks/African-Americans experienced the largest employment gap, as well as the lowest employment rate for persons with disabilities. The employment rate for Blacks/African-Americans with disabilities was substantially lower than that of Whites and the employment gap was substantially higher. American Indian/Native Alaskans also showed a slightly lower employment rate for persons with disabilities than Whites but a slightly lower employment gap. All other minority racial/ethnic groups showed a higher employment rate for persons with disabilities and a lower employment gap than Whites. These findings suggest that efforts should be made to improve employment outcomes for African-Americans/Blacks, potentially by targeting OVRS services or educating staff about the challenges faced by this group. Differences cited between the majority racial/ethnic group, Whites, and other groups have not been tested for statistical significance.

Exhibit 6.10						
Target Population Estimates by Racial/Ethnic Group						
<i>Data Source: 2006 American Community Survey</i>						
	Overall Population Estimates²³		Employment Rate		Employment Gap	Estimated Target Population
	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability		
White	294,532	1,816,524	42%	76%	35%	102,548
Black	6,184	33,040	20%	70%	50%	3,108
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	6,154	38,030	36%	69%	33%	2,008
Asian	6,835	88,099	50%	69%	19%	1,313
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	458	5,753	56%	68%	12%	55
Other²⁴	7,608	75,575	51%	75%	24%	1,797
Hispanic	21,783	213,067	48%	74%	26%	5,708

²³ Overall weighted population estimates for branch office service areas do not sum to state population totals because 1) as stated earlier, there are a substantial number of missing values for the employment variable; and 2) there are a substantial number of missing values for the county variable.

²⁴ Some other race, reported alone. We have not reported on individuals who reported more than one race.

Exhibit 6.11 provides the number of consumers from selected racial/ethnic groups served by OVRS, as well as estimates related to consumers from various racial/ethnic groups as a percentage of:

- All Oregonians from the selected racial/ethnic group
- Oregonians from the selected racial/ethnic group with Any Disability
- Estimated target population for the selected racial/ethnic group

The results from these analyses indicate that the percent of consumers served, as a percentage of the estimated target population, varies substantially for racial/ethnic groups, from approximately 10% (Asians) to 52% (Hispanics). Multiple racial/ethnic minority groups²⁵, including Blacks, American Indian/Native Alaskans, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics, are served in higher proportions (relative to the total estimated target population for the racial/ethnic group) than Whites. Asians are served in the lowest percentages (relative to target population estimates for Asians), and are served in lower proportions than Whites.

These results indicate that OVRS has made adequate efforts to ensure that most racial/ethnic minority groups receive services equitably in comparison with non-minorities (i.e., Whites). However, they also suggest that Asians may be underserved in comparison with other racial/ethnic minority groups.

Exhibit 6.11²⁶								
Consumers in Various Racial/Ethnic Groups Served by OVRS, as Percentage of: All Oregonians; Oregonians with ACS Any Disability in Group; and Estimated Target Population for Group								
<i>Data Source: 2006 American Community Survey and 2006 SRC Annual Report</i>								
	Consumers in Group Served by OVRS		All Oregonians in Group		Oregonians in Group with ACS Any Disability		Estimated Target Population for Group	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	
White	16,537	0.8%	2,111,056	5.6%	294,532	16.1%	102,548	
Black	800	2.0%	39,224	12.9%	6,184	25.7%	3,108	
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	618	1.4%	44,184	10.0%	6,154	30.8%	2,008	
Asian²⁷	134	0.1%	94,934	2.0%	6,835	10.2%	1,313	
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander²⁸	14	0.2%	6,211	3.1%	458	25.5%	55	
Hispanic	2,987	1.3%	234,850	13.7%	21,783	52.3%	5,708	

²⁵ Differences between the various racial/ethnic groups have not been tested for statistical significance.

²⁶ Race/ethnicity categories may not be wholly analogous between the two data sources, due to apparent data collection discrepancies.

²⁷ Aggregates the following ethnicity categories from the 2006 SRC Annual Report: Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Laotian.

²⁸ Includes the following ethnicity category from the 2006 SRC Annual Report: Hawaiian only.

Youth in Transition

Data from the 2006 ACS also informed our target population estimates for youth in transition. For these estimates, however, we have not reported on employment rates and employment gaps. We expect that employment rates may not be as meaningful given that youth in transition are as likely to be engaged in other activities (e.g., education and training) as employment.

According to the 2006 ACS data, 8% of Oregonian youth aged 16 to 20, or 19,327 individuals, experienced a disability (ACS Any Disability). While not directly comparable, data from the 2006-07 Oregon Department of Education reported that a total of 49,428 students between the ages of 14 and 21 are designated as Special Education students, suggesting a range of prospective youth OVRs consumers between 19,327 and 49,428.²⁹ These estimates use fairly broad disability measures and may overestimate the number of youth who need OVRs services, especially given that the estimated population may include youth who are already employed or enrolled in other employment- or education-related activities.

Exhibit 6.12 provides the number of consumers under aged 20 served by OVRs³⁰, as well as estimates related to youth consumers served by OVRs as a percentage of:

- All Oregon youth
- Oregon youth with ACS Any Disability
- Oregon Special Education students

These analyses suggest that OVRs is serving between 2% and 6% of the youth consumer target population. However, given the potential overestimate of the underlying target population described above, it is likely that OVRs is serving a somewhat larger percentage of the youth consumer target population.

Exhibit 6.12 Youth Consumers Served as Percentage of: All Oregon Youth; Oregon Youth with ACS Any Disability; and Oregon Special Education Students <i>Data Sources: 2006 American Community Survey, 2006 Department of Education Special Education Data and 2006 SRC Annual Report</i>							
	Youth Served by OVRs	All Oregon Youth		Oregonian Youth with ACS Any Disability		Oregon Special Education Students	
	Count	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
All Youth Consumers	1,180	249,873	0.4%	19,327	6.1%	49,428	2.3%

²⁹ Oregon Department of Education. 2006-07 Oregon Special Education Students Ages 14 to 21 by School District and County. Data provided by OVRs staff in October 2007.

³⁰ State Rehabilitation Commission. (2006).

Youth Who Experience Autism Spectrum Disorder

Oregon Department of Education statistics on autism were cited by an OVRS stakeholder interviewed as the best source of target population estimates for youth with autism³¹. These data indicated that on average approximately 1% of students in Oregon are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Using the 2006 ACS for overall population estimates and the Department of Education average, we generated an estimated number of 2,499 youth between the ages of 16 and 20 who experience autism spectrum disorder.

Although we do not have estimates on individuals based on the severity of their disability, at least one stakeholder interviewed for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment suggested that individuals with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder (e.g., individuals with Asperger's Syndrome) may be underserved by OVRS. This stakeholder indicated that individuals with high functioning autism spectrum disorder are more prevalent than those with low functioning autism disorder; although they may achieve job placement easily, they may require additional support for job retention.

Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities

Data reported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services National Health Information Center estimated that 143,986 Oregonians aged 18 or over (5.4%) experienced a serious mental illness during the 12-month reporting period, although the employment status of these individuals was unreported.³²

The 2006 ACS indicated that approximately 6% of Oregonians between the ages of 16 to 64 experienced an ACS Mental Disability (i.e., difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating)³³. The 2006 ACS also indicated that individuals with an ACS mental disability experienced a relatively low employment rate (33%) and high employment gap (40%), yielding a target population of approximately 54,000.

Individuals Who Have Experienced Traumatic Brain Injury

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was cited by an interviewed stakeholder as the best source of data on the prevalence of TBI. The CDC estimated that approximately 40% of those hospitalized with a TBI had at least one unmet need for services 1 year post injury (e.g., improving memory, problem-solving, managing stress and emotions, controlling temper, and improving job skills).³⁴ Statistics for Oregon cited by the CDC indicated that 2,828 individuals

³¹ Oregon Department of Education. 2006-07 Oregon Special Education Students Ages 14 to 21 by School District and County. Data provided by Autism Society of America (Oregon Chapter) staff in October 2007.

³² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Mental Health Services. (2002). *Estimated 12-Month number of persons with serious mental illness, age 18 and older, by State*. Retrieved October, 2007 from: http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases/databases_exe.asp?d1=OR&type=ASMI

³³ See Appendix E for more information about this disability measure.

³⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2006). *Facts About TBI*. Retrieved November, 2007 from: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/FactSheets/Facts_About_TBI.pdf.

were hospitalized for a nonfatal TBI in 1998.³⁵ In addition, based on the State Injury Indicators Report for 1999, 1,686 individuals between the ages of 15 and 64 were hospitalized for TBI in 1999.³⁶ Unfortunately, we have not identified a more recent source of TBI data for the state of Oregon. Based on these data and the CDC's assertion noted above, we suggest that as many as 675 individuals may require OVRS services related to a new TBI injury each year.

However, it should be noted that these estimates do not account for individuals with TBI who required sustained efforts to help maintain employment. Moreover, one stakeholder projected an increased need for services related to TBI in coming years as Oregon military return from Iraq, although it is possible that Veterans Affairs services will provide some of the services related to those injuries. According to one interviewed stakeholder, job retention and supported employment services may be the most important services for helping individuals with TBI achieve their employment goals.

³⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2006b). *National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Overview*. Retrieved November, 2007 from: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Overview.htm>.

³⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1999). *State Injury Indicators Report for 1999*. Retrieved November, 2007 from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/indicators/INTRO-FIRE.pdf>.

VII. Key Recommendations

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment offers a rich source of information on the barriers and service needs of OVRs consumers from the perspective of consumers, staff members, and program stakeholders. This section provides recommendations to inform future service delivery, and is organized according to key report sections.

Most of these recommendations can be addressed through multiple short- and long-term action steps. However, those recommendations that will require substantial investment of resources (e.g., additional staff members) or systems change (e.g., development and coordination of multiple partnerships and systems) are more likely to be effectively addressed via comprehensive long-term strategies.

Barriers and Service Provision: Overall OVRs Consumers

Continue to focus on connecting consumers with opportunities to improve job skills and obtain education/training. A majority of consumers noted insufficient or inadequate job skills and education/training as barriers to achieving employment goals. OVRs services are clearly aligned with these barriers, as the majority of consumers with those barriers noted that they are receiving helpful services to address the barriers. A majority of OVRs staff also indicated that job search and education services are readily available. OVRs should continue its focus on assisting consumers to address these barriers.

Increase employer and public education on the abilities of people with disabilities. The majority of employers, stakeholder respondents across groups, OVRs consumers, and OVRs staff agreed that greater employer and public education on the abilities of people with disabilities is critical to creating job opportunities and career ladders. Stakeholder respondents noted the need for proactive OVRs marketing and communication strategies, such as regular and sustained OVRs presentations at partner agencies and employer associations. Employer stakeholders also encouraged more aggressive outreach to increase employer engagement and participation.

Increase provision of or access to sustained follow-up services. Both stakeholders across groups and staff members noted a need for more sustained post-placement follow-up. Although long-term follow-up may be outside of OVRs responsibility, OVRs may wish to enhance greater connection with programs that can provide long-term support.

Continue efforts to maintain the accessibility and availability of OVRs services. For the overall population, all challenges to accessibility were cited by less than one-quarter of consumer respondents. Although there may be localized areas where vendor services are insufficient, OVRs efforts to make services accessible to OVRs consumers have generally been successful. OVRs should continue to improve service access and vendor availability in target areas.

Improve efforts to ensure connections to other supportive services. For a broad range of supportive services, a majority of consumers (who are receiving or have received services from OVRs) cited that services received have not helped them address that barrier. Access to supportive programs beyond the responsibility of OVRs services depends in large part on the

existing capacity of related service providers. Where supportive services are available, OVRs should continue to develop connections with supportive service agencies to improve access to these services.

Barriers and Service Provision: Selected OVRs Target Populations

Persons with Most Significant Disabilities

Include targeted information about working with persons with significant disabilities during employer outreach. In addition to a general need for greater public and employer outreach and education, stakeholders working with people with significant disabilities also suggest a specific need to discuss abilities of and accommodations for these consumers when promoting OVRs services to employers. In particular, stakeholder feedback stressed the need for OVRs staff to facilitate non-physical accommodations, such as flexible scheduling and frequent breaks, especially for individuals with specific disabilities.

Continue implementation of model programs to serve consumers with significant disabilities, including Supported Employment and/or Return-to-Work programs. Compared to individuals with disabilities overall, OVRs administration, SRC members, and stakeholders working with individuals with significant disabilities indicated that these consumers may require more innovative job development, training approaches, and follow-up services to obtain and maintain employment. Stakeholders familiar with the needs of this group recommended continued implementation of Supported Employment and Return-to-Work programs, as well as person-centered planning, to help individuals with the most significant disabilities achieve their employment goals.

Racial, Ethnic, or Cultural Minority Consumers

Provide culturally responsive services. OVRs administration, SRC members, and stakeholders familiar with minority consumers indicated that OVRs service provision may not sufficiently implement cultural sensitivity and awareness when working with persons of racial, ethnic, or cultural minorities. These stakeholders suggested that OVRs should more fully explore cultural differences regarding disabilities, work expectations, and distrust of service agencies; these differences may significantly affect consumers' motivation to seek services or employment. These findings suggest a need for targeted training across OVRs staff to increase cultural literacy and awareness.

Ensure access to language-appropriate services for ethnic and cultural minorities. Needs assessment findings suggest that there is a group of minority consumers who face language barriers that are not adequately addressed by OVRs services. In addition to ethnic minorities, several administration and SRC stakeholders indicated that hearing-impaired consumers comprise a cultural minority that may face comparable language barriers to employment or services. These language barriers suggest a need for targeted training or partnerships to increase access to non-English or non-spoken language OVRs services, and for some consumers, a need for better access to targeted English language training programs.

Youth in Transition

Continue to build stronger skill-building programs for youth. Consumer survey results revealed that all barriers to employment are cited by less than half of youth respondents. For multiple items, including insufficient job skills and insufficient/inadequate education, youth were significantly less likely to cite items as a barrier than non-youth respondents. This finding may simply reflect a larger pattern of fewer youth consumers identifying barriers to employment, as evidenced across barriers. However, this discrepancy may also stem from youth's lack of experience with realistic workplace expectations, or counselor limitations in identifying non-traditional workplace skills and employer demand. More programmatic efforts to connect youth in transition to skill-building programs and education/training opportunities may be appropriate.

Identify additional opportunities to help youth overcome barriers related to other transportation issues. Youth consumers identified other transportation issues (i.e., non-disability related transportation issues) as one of the primary barriers to achieving their employment goals. However, less than one-quarter of staff members identified this issue as a key barrier for youth consumers. Several stakeholders noted that transportation is a particular challenge for youth who may not have access to their own vehicles and may instead rely on limited or non-existent public transportation systems, suggesting that youth transition programs may need to focus additional efforts on assisting youth to identify transportation options or otherwise accessible employment opportunities.

Multiple Selected Target Populations

Apply recommendations from the overall population to selected target populations, remaining sensitive to potential differences. Findings for the overall populations resulting from the consumer and staff surveys were generally aligned with the findings for selected target populations, especially individuals with the most significant disabilities and racial/ethnic minorities, suggesting that selected recommendations for the overall population were applicable to selected target populations.

Other Strategies to Support Effective Service Provision

Strengthen overall collaboration with all program partners. Although several stakeholders noted that OVRS partners well, other partnership feedback was varied. Effective collaboration with partner agencies is critical to OVRS success, and OVRS administration, SRC members, and allied program representatives suggested specific strategies for improvement, including formalized written agreements, institutionalized communication plans, greater joint representation on boards and task forces, and OVRS liaisons dedicated to specific agencies or specialized disabilities to streamline communication between partners.

Enhance partnerships with supportive service providers. Staff and consumer respondents indicated that select support services (e.g., substance abuse, mental health, medical treatment, and housing) are not readily available. Although access to these services depends on the local capacity of supportive service providers, consumer and staff feedback suggests a need for

enhanced partnerships with these agencies, where available, to ensure that OVRS consumers are aware of and access available support.

Improve partnerships with education agencies at the state and local level. OVRS administration, SRC members, and education-affiliated stakeholders described systemic differences between the education and vocational rehabilitation systems. They noted variance in eligibility criteria, lack of awareness of available services across agencies, and lack of proactive planning to transition youth from the structured school environment into the workforce or post-secondary pursuits. Stakeholders suggested joint policy guidance regarding resource planning and responsibility and improved outreach to education agencies to coordinate services across agencies.

Deepen partnerships with selected stakeholder groups. Multiple stakeholders, including racial and minority representatives and employers, expressed very little or no connection with OVRS and felt unable to comment on many of the survey's questions. OVRS should develop stronger partnerships with groups representing minorities, and devote additional resources, in collaboration with workforce partners, towards employer-education efforts on OVRS services and persons with disabilities. Deepening relationships with local workforce partners and other employer representation agencies could facilitate employer engagement.

Increase staff training in targeted areas. Most stakeholders felt that OVRS is relatively successful with continuing education opportunities for staff, but identified several areas for improvement, including access to distance education for rural OVRS staff, enhanced training on specific models or strategies (such as supported employment model, person-centered counseling, and communication related to mental health and substance abuse) and targeted training on specific disabilities (such as developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injury).

Support staff efforts to conduct job development and build employer relationships. A majority of OVRS staff members indicated that more time for job development services is an important consumer-focused change. Stakeholder and employer feedback also indicated a need for improved training to help staff identify and develop jobs that are appropriate for consumers' abilities and interests. It should be noted, however, that several staff provided strong feedback in the survey suggesting that job development should not be considered one of their job duties. It may be appropriate for OVRS to provide opportunities for self-selected staff to receive additional training related to job development and building employer relationships, or forge stronger connections with existing workforce development partners; these staff could serve as a resource to other OVRS counselors.

Continue to support activities related to key issue areas and values articulated by Competitive Employment Project. Many of the key findings and related recommendations stemming from this Comprehensive Needs Assessment are aligned with priority issue areas and values identified in the Competitive Employment Outcomes Strategic Plan, suggesting that continued support for these activities would be appropriate.

Target Population Estimates

Continue to explore potential need for additional staffing and branch office locations in regions with larger employment gaps and/or employment population estimates. The percent of the population affected by an employment disability, and the related employment rates for these groups, varies considerably by branch office. These data provide important information on the overall distribution of the OVRs target population that should be considered in future staff allocation or resource distribution. It would also be appropriate to explore additional factors that may affect the employment gap experienced by selected branch office service areas and work with partner agencies to address those gaps.

Consider using a range of estimates for funding requests and/or staffing allocations, and continue to pursue sources of data related to disability severity. The analyses conducted during this Needs Assessment confirmed that target population estimates vary substantially by data source and disability measure. It would be appropriate for OVRs to base estimates for funding requests or staffing allocations on a range of estimates, and continue to pursue additional estimates related to disability severity.

Identify and address barriers to employment faced by African-Americans/Blacks. Target population estimates suggest that African-Americans/Black individuals with disabilities in Oregon face a larger employment gap than other racial/ethnic minority groups. Efforts should be made to target improvements in employment outcomes for persons with disabilities who are African-Americans/Black, potentially by targeting OVRs services, providing additional resources to branch offices who serve large numbers of African-American/Black individuals, and/or educating staff about the challenges faced by this group.

Continue to focus efforts on serving racial/ethnic minority and non-minority consumers equitably. Examination of the percent of various racial/ethnic minority groups served by OVRs suggests that OVRs has made adequate efforts to ensure that most racial/ethnic minority groups receive services equitably in comparison with non-minorities (i.e., Whites). However, the results of these analyses also indicate that Asians may be underserved in comparison with other racial/ethnic minority groups and in comparison with non-minorities.

Consider using OPS and ACS employment disability measures in future analyses. Target population estimates were highest for the OPS employment disability measure and OPS data can be aggregated by branch office service area. If resources permit, it would be useful to examine changes in the employment disability measure over time. It might also be useful to use national and state-level statistics for the ACS employment disability measure as benchmarks for relative progress in Oregon.

Future OVRs Needs Assessments

Allow for more upfront planning activities. The expedited timeframe of the Current Needs Assessment required the various assessment activities (consumer survey, staff survey, and stakeholder interviews) to be conducted simultaneously. With a longer timeframe, exploratory

discussions with stakeholders at the start of the project could inform, refine, and improve data collection instruments and processes.

Facilitate greater employer input. This assessment incorporated important feedback from multiple employer stakeholders; however, multiple employer respondents were either unavailable or expressed a concern that they were unfamiliar with OVRs and the needs of persons with disabilities. In future needs assessments, it may be useful to request that relevant OVRs partners, such as job development organizations or Workforce Investment Boards, provide recommendations for employer respondents to increase the likelihood of gathering substantive feedback from employers.

Consider additional outcomes-related evaluation efforts that relate selected services to employment outcomes. The perceptions measured in this assessment provide critical information about needs, gaps, and targeted improvements. However, the design of the assessment did not provide information on the outcomes achieved by OVRs consumers, nor did it associate consumer outcomes with services received. It would be appropriate for OVRs to consider implementing an interim evaluation related to the effectiveness of OVRs services as measured by consumer outcomes. Focusing evaluation activities on specific programmatic efforts would be an efficient use of resources, and has greater potential of yielding more rigorous design and results.

Appendix A: Needs Assessment Methodology

Key Research Questions

The following key research questions guided the data collection, analysis, and reporting efforts for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment:

- Consumer Needs and Barriers: what are the primary employment barriers for OVRs consumers, and/or what are their service needs?
- OVRs Service Provision: how can OVRs services best support consumer efforts to achieve positive employment outcomes?
- Target Population Estimates: what does the OVRs target population look like?

Data Collection Methods

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment was informed by multiple data sources, including a mixed mode survey of current OVRs consumers, a web-based survey of OVRs staff, semi-guided telephone interviews with other key stakeholders, and analysis of selected documents and existing disability prevalence data. The mixed mode survey of current OVRs consumers was conducted primarily by telephone³⁷. To ensure accessibility and disability-related accommodations, a pre-survey letter, sent to the entire sample, introduced the survey and provided instructions for arranging alternative survey accommodations. Approximately 4% of the final respondent sample was surveyed using alternative accommodations, including direct mail response, text telephone (TTY), and telephone interview in Spanish. Exhibit A.1 presents the key features related to primary data collection methods by data source.

	Universe (description)	Universe (#)	Sampling Assumptions	Final Sample (# & response rates)
Current OVRs Consumers	All OVRs consumers 18 years or older with open application as of 10/01/07.	7,864	Random sample Confidence level = 95%; Confidence interval = +-5% No stratification	Sample size=371 Response rate=81% Completion rate=96% Refusal rate=1.5%
Current OVRs Staff	All OVRs staff	227	No sampling; all OVRs staff requested to complete survey.	Respondents=166 Response rate =73%
Other Key Stakeholders	Comprehensive list of all OVRs key stakeholders	Unknown	Purposive sample of key stakeholders	Respondents=50

PPI staff, in collaboration with OVRs and SRC members, developed the survey instruments. The structure and content of other states’ needs assessments and related reports, especially

³⁷ Survey was conducted by Northwest Survey and Data Services using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing technology and methods.

Massachusetts³⁸, Maryland³⁹, Rhode Island⁴⁰ and Arizona⁴¹, informed the methodology and instrument development. Data collection instruments are included in Appendices B, C, and D.

Data Descriptions

Consumer Survey

The current OVRS consumer survey yielded 371 completed surveys. The respondent sample was randomly selected from the current OVRS customer population. As such, we expected the final sample distribution to approximate the distribution of current OVRS customers across multiple demographic categories.

For selected demographic variables, the survey sample was accompanied by the overall OVRS consumer population (based on statistics reported in the 2006 SRC Annual Report). These statistics illustrate the similarities between the composition of the survey sample and the overall consumer population and suggest no reason to suspect response bias. This increased our confidence in generalizing the findings of the consumer survey to the overall OVRS consumer population. Most importantly, the comparison shows that selected groups of interest, including racial/ethnic minorities and youth in transition, are not under-represented in the survey sample.

Exhibit A.2 shows the consumer survey sample distribution in pre-defined age categories. The largest age group was 50 to 59 (25% of the sample), followed closely by 40 to 49 (24%). The smallest age group was 60+, at 7% of the sample.

Exhibit A.2 Consumer Survey Sample by Age Category Data Source: OVRS Consumer Survey (n=371)		
Category	Percent	Count
Under 20	9%	32
20 to 29	17%	64
30 to 39	18%	67
40 to 49	24%	89
50 to 59	25%	93
60+	7%	26
Total	100%	371

In Exhibit A.3, the distribution of age groups in the sample and the overall consumer population differ slightly for some groups, but the survey composition and population are comparable in age distribution; differences between the survey sample and overall population are not statistically significant.

³⁸ State of Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Research, Evaluation & Development Department. (2006). *MRC Needs Survey*.

³⁹ The Human Services Research Institute. (2004). *Employment For All: Statewide Needs Assessment Related to the Unmet Needs of Maryland Citizens with Disabilities*.

⁴⁰ State of Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitational Services. (2005). *Needs Assessment Report: Vocational Rehabilitation Needs of Rhode Islanders with Disabilities*.

⁴¹ Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration. (2003). *Statewide Needs Assessment*.

Exhibit A.3
Comparison of Survey Sample and Population
by Age Categories
Data Sources: OVRs Consumer Survey and
2006 SRC Annual Report

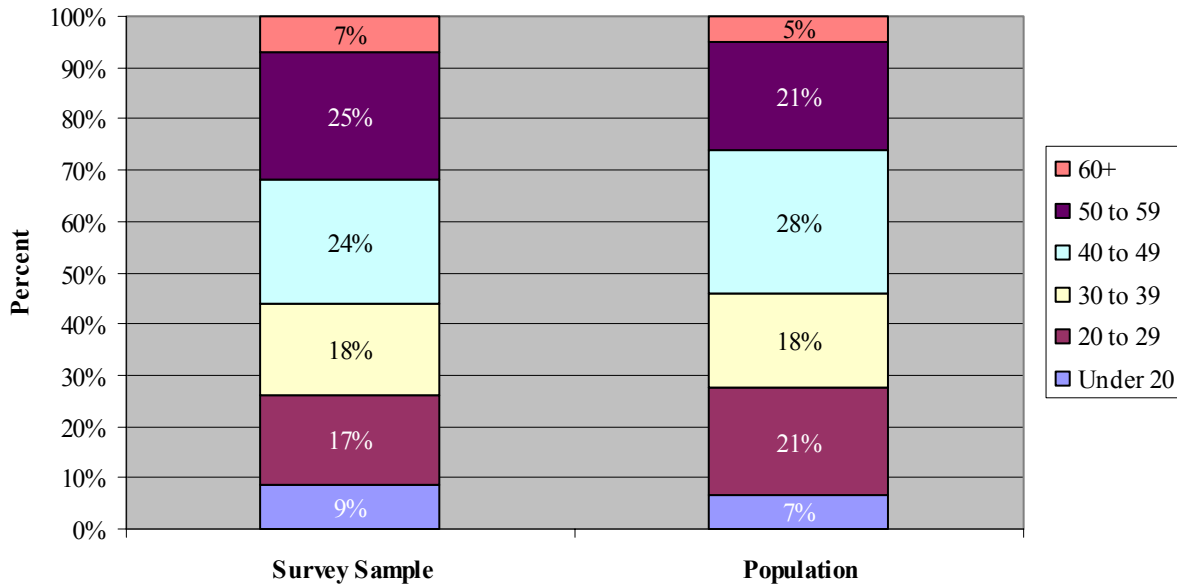


Exhibit A. 4 shows that 53% of the consumer survey sample is female and 47% is male. Exhibit A.5 presents a comparison with the current OVRs consumer population that suggests that there are only slight differences between the two groups with respect to gender. Differences between the survey sample and overall population are not statistically significant.

Category	Percent	Count
Male	47%	173
Female	53%	198
Total	100%	371

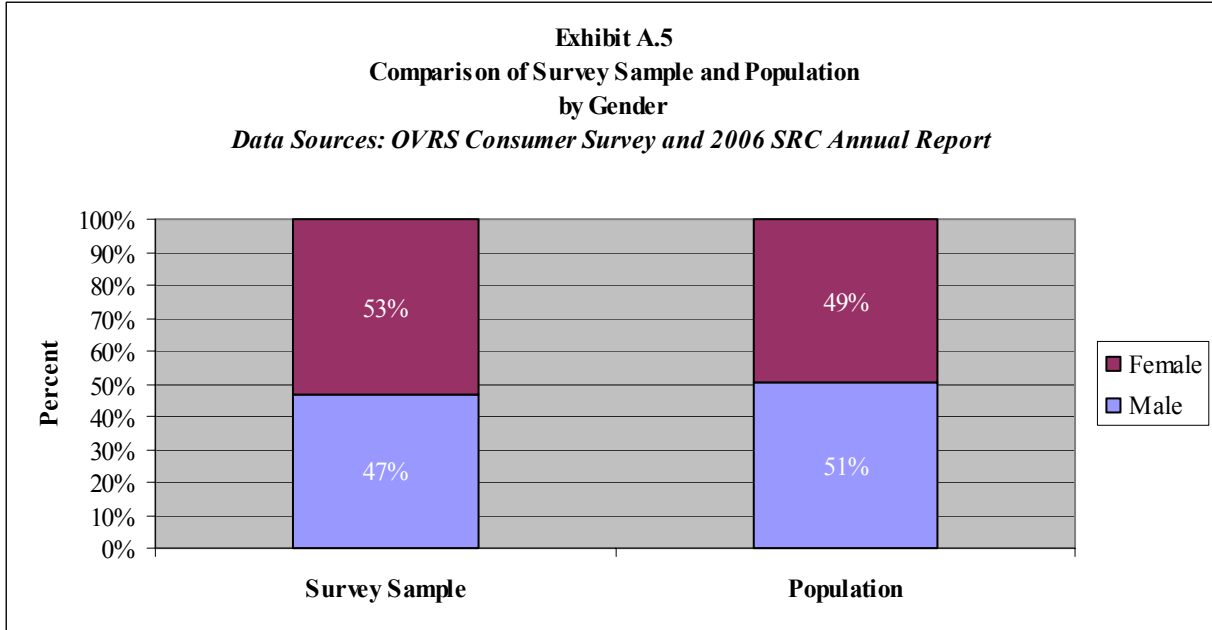


Exhibit A.6 shows the distribution of the consumer survey sample by race/ethnicity. The vast majority of respondents were Caucasian/White, representing 86% of the sample. All other racial and ethnic categories, including African-American/Black, Hispanic, Native American/Alaska Native, and Multiple/Other, each represented less than 5% of the sample.

Exhibit A.6
Consumer Survey Sample by Race/Ethnicity
Data Source: OVRS Consumer Survey (n=371)

Category	Percent	Count
Caucasian/White	86%	318
African-American/Black	2%	7
Hispanic	3%	12
Native American/Alaska Native	4%	15
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	6
Multiple/Other	1%	5
Don't know/No answer/Refused	2%	8
Total	100%	371

While a breakdown of the detailed racial/ethnic categories is not available via the 2006 SRC Annual Report, Exhibit A.7 shows the racial/ethnic distribution for both the sample and the population, using White/non-White as the primary categorizations. The group of non-White respondents in the survey sample was 14%, which is slightly larger than the 9% of non-White consumers reported in the population. Differences between the survey sample and overall population are not statistically significant.

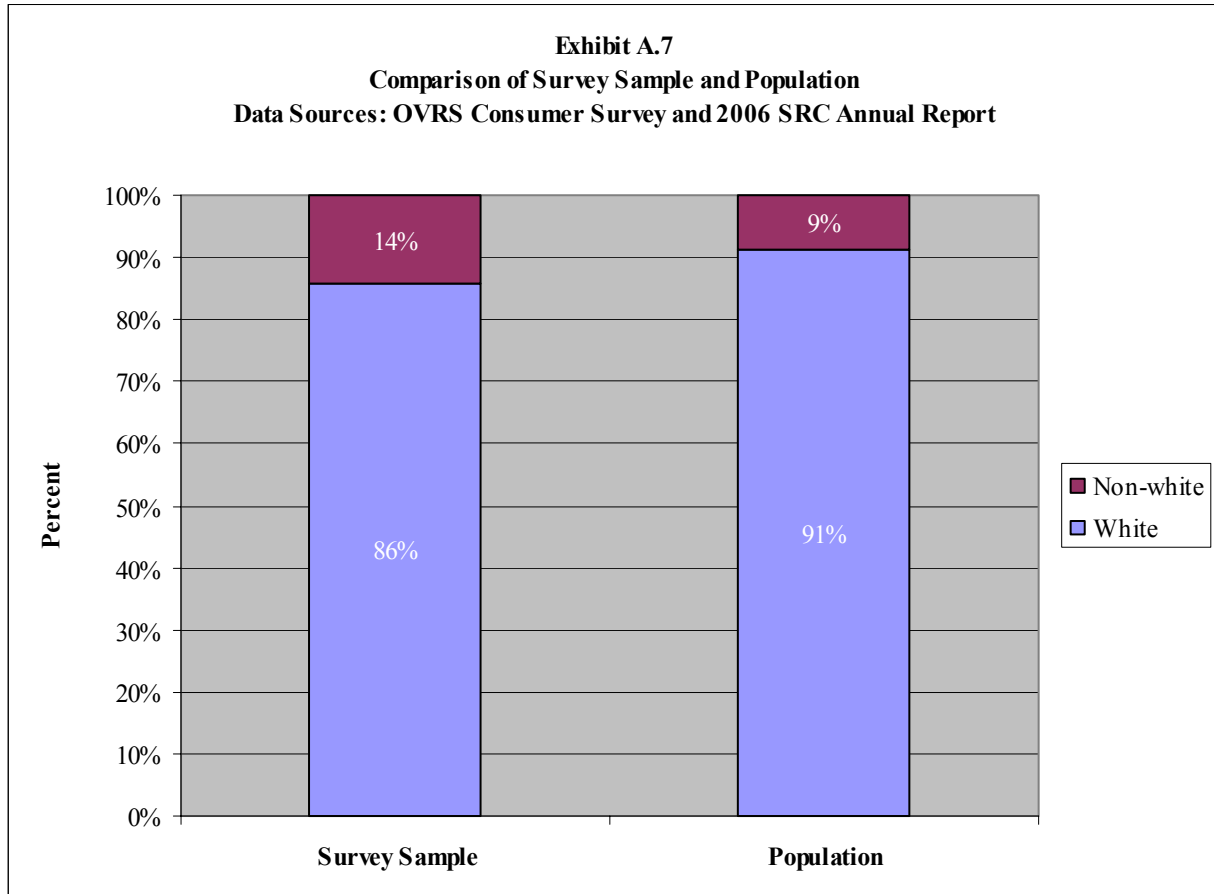


Exhibit A.8 presents a distribution of survey sample respondents by county of residence, grouped to show branch office of residence.⁴² The largest branch office groups included East-North-Central and Marion-North Salem⁴³, each representing 19% of the sample for a combined total of 38%.

Exhibit A.8			
Consumer Survey Sample by Branch Office/County of Residence			
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=371)</i>			
Branch Office	Counties	Percent	Count
East-North-Central	Multnomah	19%	70
Washington	Washington; Tillamook; Clatsop; Columbia	12%	46
Clackamas	Clackamas	8%	31
Marion-North Salem	Marion; Polk; Yamhill	19%	71
Linn-Benton-Lincoln	Linn; Benton; Lincoln	11%	39
Lane	Lane	9%	33
Roseburg	Douglas; Coos; Curry	5%	19
Medford	Josephine; Jackson; Klamath; Lake	6%	24
Bend-Hood River	Deschutes; Crook; Jefferson; Wheeler; Gilliam; Sherman; Wasco; Hood River	4%	15
Eastern Oregon	Umatilla; Union; Wallowa; Baker; Grant; Harney; Malheur; Morrow	6%	23
Total		100%	371

Note: Data taken from county of residence and aggregated by OVRs internal branch office assignments, as shown. Due to overlapping county jurisdictions, Marion and North Salem branch office populations are combined.

Exhibit A.9		
Consumer Survey Sample by Disability Level		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=371)</i>		
Category	Percent	Count
Most Significantly Disabled	67%	250
Significantly Disabled	11%	42
Disabled	12%	43
Not completed	10%	36
Total	100%	371

Exhibit A.9 provides the distribution of the consumer survey sample by disability level (a rating determined by the consumer’s Counselor during the eligibility determination process). Sixty-seven percent of consumer survey respondents were part of the most significantly disabled group.

⁴² Consumers may not receive services from the branch office in their county of residence. However, these data provide a reasonable approximation of the geographic distribution of the consumer sample.

⁴³ We are aware that programmatically, Marion County is split between the Marion and North Salem branch offices. For the purposes of data analysis and presentation, however, the Marion and North Salem branch offices have been combined.

Exhibit A.10 illustrates the distribution of disability impairment across consumer survey respondents. The greatest percentage of consumers cited cognitive impairments (21.3%) followed by other physical impairments (15.8%) and other mental impairments (13.4%).

Exhibit A.11 illustrates that although the distribution of primary disability impairments in the sample and the overall consumer population differed slightly for some groups, the composition of the survey and population were comparable with respect to impairment distribution.

Differences between the survey sample and overall population are not statistically significant.

Exhibit A.10		
Consumer Survey Sample by Disability Impairment		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=367)</i>		
Category	Percent	Count
Blindness	0.5%	2
Cognitive impairments	21.3%	78
Communicative impairments	1.9%	7
Deaf-Blindness	0.3%	1
Deafness, communication auditory	1.3%	5
Deafness, communication visual	1.3%	5
General physical debilitation	7.5%	27
Hearing loss, communication auditory	1.6%	6
Manipulation	2.4%	9
Mobility	4.9%	18
Mobility and manipulation	4.0%	15
Other mental impairments	13.5%	49
Other orthopedic impairments	9.2%	34
Other physical impairments	15.9%	58
Other visual impairments	0.8%	3
Psychosocial impairments	12.1%	45
Respiratory impairments	1.3%	5

Exhibit A.11
Comparison of Survey Sample and Population by Primary Disability Impairment
Data Sources: OVRs Consumer Survey and 2006 SRC Annual Report

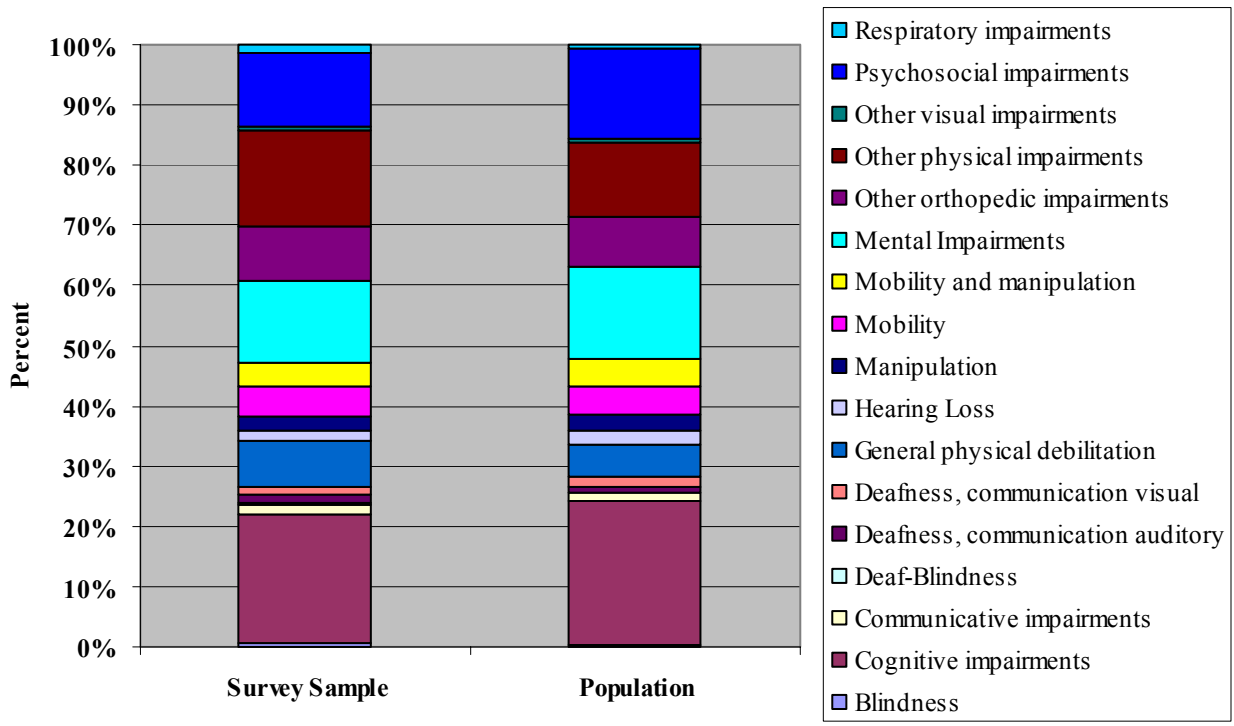


Exhibit A.12		
Consumer Survey Sample by Program Status		
<i>Data Source: OVRs Consumer Survey (n=371)</i>		
Category	Percent	Count
OVRs application complete, but eligibility for services not yet determined	8%	31
Determined eligible, but Individualized Plan for Employment not yet completed	27%	99
Completed IPE, and receiving services	48%	179
Case closed and rehabilitated	2%	6
Case closed for other reasons	4%	13
Other	8%	29
Don't know/no answer/refused	4%	14
Total	100%	371

The consumer survey sample was drawn from all OVRs consumers (age ≥ 18) with an open application as of October 1, 2007. Exhibit A.12 presents the distribution of the sample by program status. Consumers who had completed an IPE and were receiving services were the largest group, representing 48% of the sample. An additional 6% of the sample had received services and had had their cases closed at the time of the survey.

The distribution of the sample across several categories of program status suggests some limitations of the survey, including:

- 35% of survey sample respondents only had experience with the initial stages of OVRs process (i.e., application and/or eligibility determination). This group have may compositionally differed from OVRs consumers receiving services, as it is reasonable to expect that some unknown proportion of the group would be determined ineligible for

services. This does not affect the generalizability of the data to the overall OVRS consumer population; however, it is important to recognize that the sample (and the universe from which the sample is drawn) includes this group.

- On a related note, only a proportion of the survey sample (54%) had experience completing the IEP and received services through OVRS; as such, survey items related to OVRS services were asked only of these individuals. While the findings were generalizable to the overall OVRS population, we were unable to conduct any additional sub-group analysis (e.g., race/ethnicity) due to the small size of that group.

Staff Survey

The survey of current OVRS staff members yielded a sample of 166 complete and 16 incomplete responses.⁴⁴ The initial survey request was sent to all OVRS staff members, including branch managers, counselors, counselor specialists, office specialists, human service assistants, business managers or field technicians (in the field), support staff (in DHS building), and management and professional staff.

Exhibit A.13 presents the distribution of staff survey respondents by job title.

Counselors were the largest group of respondents, representing 48% of the sample. Human service assistants also represented a relatively large group at 20% of the sample. All other categories represented less than 9% of the sample.

Exhibit A.13 Staff Survey Sample by Job Title Data Source: OVRS Staff Survey (n=182)		
Category	Percent	Count
Counselor	48%	87
Human Service Assistant	20%	36
Office Specialist	8%	15
Management and Professional Staff - OVRS administration (in DHS bldg)	7%	13
Branch Manager	6%	11
Counselor Specialist	5%	10
Business Manager or Field Technician (in field)	3%	5
Support Staff - OVRS administration staff (in DHS bldg)	3%	5
Total	100%	182

Exhibit A.14 Staff Survey Sample by Specialization Type Data Source: OVRS Staff Survey (n=182)		
Category	Percent	Count
Youth Transition Program	8%	15
Hearing Impaired	8%	14
Developmental Disabilities	8%	14
Diagnosed Mental Health Issues	5%	10
Other (TBI, Substance Abuse, Criminal Justice)	4%	7
Spinal Cord Injuries	2%	4
Other (Worker's Comp, SSDI)	2%	4
Note: Some respondents reported multiple specialization categories.		

While only 10 survey respondents reported that they are counselor specialists, 24% of respondents indicated that they “Specialize in a specific disability or client target population.” The distribution of specialization categories within the survey sample is shown in Exhibit A.14. OVRS staff groups specializing in the Youth Transition Program and hearing impaired and development disabilities populations were the largest groups, with each group represented by 8% of the sample.

⁴⁴ Data from incomplete surveys are included in the analytic data set, where available, and reported in the findings.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with 50 respondents. The sample was purposively selected from a larger list of key stakeholder maintained by OVRs to obtain a sample representing multiple interests/categories, as shown in Exhibit A.15.

Analysis and Reporting

The data collection methods described yielded complementary data from multiple sources to develop a broad picture of the needs of Oregonians with disabilities, to identify special needs of selected subgroups of consumers, and to highlight unmet needs and/or gaps in service provision. Our analyses relied on appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data, as described below.

Exhibit A.15 Stakeholder Sample by Stakeholder Type Data Source: OVRs Staff Survey (n=182)		
Category	Percent	Count
Employers	16%	8
Stakeholders with knowledge of Most Significant Disabilities	14%	7
School Districts/Post-secondary Education/ Stakeholders with knowledge of needs of Youth	14%	7
Stakeholders with knowledge of Ethnic and/or Racial Minorities	12%	6
Other Partners, Allied Programs and Advocates	12%	6
Stakeholders with knowledge Selected Disabilities (TBI, Autism Spectrum, Developmental Disabilities, and Psychiatric Disorders)	10%	5
Workforce Partners	6%	3
SRC Members	8%	3
OVRs Administration	8%	4

Consumer and Staff Surveys

The consumer and staff surveys provided primarily quantitative data, from which we produced basic descriptive statistics, including frequencies and cross-tabulations. Selected open-ended questions were coded and aggregated, and/or used as a source of supplemental qualitative information. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were reviewed to identify key findings, common responses and themes, and variations between respondent groups or sub-groups. Where applicable, we reported statistical significance for cross-tabulations based on the results of Fisher’s exact test for 2x2 tables.

These statistics informed the broad overview of reported consumer barriers and needs (from multiple perspectives), and helped to inform recommendations related to service provision.

Stakeholder Interviews

The semi-guided interviews resulted in rich qualitative data from multiple stakeholders. Responses to specific interview questions and categories of questions were analyzed and synthesized across each stakeholder group, as well as across all respondents, to identify common-themed findings and/or group variations. The stakeholder interview findings corroborated and/or supplemented findings from the consumer and staff surveys and extant data analyses. They also highlighted unique information/perspectives not captured by other data collection methods (e.g., areas for additional investigation).

Extant Data

We identified selected target population data to identify and aggregate descriptive statistics on the estimated prevalence of prospective consumers (i.e., incidence and/or rate of persons with disabilities, incidence and/or rates of persons with disabilities who are unemployed, and incidence and/or rates of persons without disabilities who are employed). Relevant statistics were reported for the State of Oregon, OVRs service areas, and selected target populations. We also relied on selected sources from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Oregon Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to supplement and/or generate estimates for selected OVRs target populations. With existing OVRs data, we aggregated data on the regional distribution of OVRs staff and branch offices to inform OVRs staffing recommendations. Finally, multiple OVRs documents were reviewed to contextualize and inform our findings.

Synthesis across Multiple Data Sources

It was important, in the analysis, to synthesize our findings from multiple data sources to identify key needs, issues, trends, problems, and recommendations. Where relevant, we compared the findings across relevant analyses to identify common themes and variations across data sources.

Appendix B: Consumer Survey

HELLO

Hello, my name is _____. I am calling on behalf of the Office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services to ask you some questions about your vocational rehabilitation needs and your experience with the Office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services, or OVRS. Your opinion is very important to us and will be kept confidential. It should take about ten minutes to complete and I'd like to start now (if it is a good time for you).

CONTINUE OR RESCHEDULE

SEX

First I would like to ask you some questions about yourself. (This may sound silly I am required to ask everyone...) Are you male or female?

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

YRBORN

In what year were you born?

ENTER ALL FOUR DIGITS

- 996 96 OR MORE

- 997 REFUSED
- 998 DON'T KNOW
- 999 NO ANSWER

RACE

What is your racial or ethnic group?

- 1 CAUCASIAN/WHITE
- 2 AFRICAN-AMERICAN/BLACK
- 3 HISPANIC
- 4 AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE
- 5 ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 6 MIXED OR OTHER - > SPECIFY

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

PRIMARY

What is your primary disability?

PROBE: The primary disability that prevents or has prevented you from obtaining or maintaining employment.

OPEN RESPONSE

STATUS

Now I am going to read you some statements. Please tell me which one best describes your current OVRs program status. (The first one is ..)

PROBE FROM LIST

- 1 OVRs APPLICATION IS COMPLETE, BUT ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES NOT YET DETERMINED
- 2 DETERMINED ELIGIBLE, BUT INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT NOT YET COMPLETED
- 3 COMPLETED AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT AND RECEIVING SERVICES
- 4 CASE IS CLOSED AND REHABILITATED
- 5 CASE IS CLOSED FOR OTHER REASONS
- 6 (OR IS IT) SOMETHING ELSE? - > SPECIFY

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY1

Now I would like to ask you some questions about your experience trying to achieve your employment goals. I will begin by reading a list of possible reasons why people with disabilities might find it difficult to achieve their employment goals. For each one, please tell me whether it has kept you from achieving your employment goals, either now or at any point during the last three to five years.

The first one is ... Not having enough education or training

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED

- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR1 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVR services that helped you or are helping you to address not having enough education or training?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY2

Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years as a result of not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR2 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVR services that helped you or are helping you to address not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY3

Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years as a result of inadequate job search skills?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR3 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVR services that helped you or are helping you to address inadequate job search skills?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY4

Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years as a result of language barriers?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR4 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVR services that helped you or are helping you to address language barriers?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY5

Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years because there were not enough jobs available?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR5 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVRS services that helped you or are helping you to address not enough jobs being available?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY6

What about employers' negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVRS6 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVRS services that helped you or are helping you to address employers' negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY7

What about inadequate disability accommodations?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR7 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Have you received OVR services that helped you or are helping you to address inadequate disability accommodations?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY8

What about lack of help with disability-related personal care?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR8 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Has OVR helped you address the lack of help with disability-related personal care?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY9

What about disability-related transportation issues?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR9 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Has OVR9 helped you address disability-related transportation issues?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY12

What about other transportation issues?

PROBE: Such not having a car or the public transportation is inadequate or non-existent.

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR12 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Has OVR12 helped you address other transportation issues?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY10

What about mental health issues?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR10 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5
Has OVR10 helped you address mental health issues?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY11

What about substance abuse issues?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR11 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5
Has OVR11 helped you address substance abuse issues?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY13

Have any other health issues prevented you from achieving your employment goals (during the last 3 to 5 years)?

- 1 YES -> SPECIFY
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR13 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Has OVRS helped you address the other health issues?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY14

What about child care issues?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVRS14 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

Has OVRS helped you (with this/address child care issues)?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY15

What about housing issues?

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

1 YES

2 NO

7 REFUSED

8 DON'T KNOW

9 NO ANSWER

OVR515 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5
Has OVR5 helped (with this/you address housing issues)?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY17
What about negative impact of income on your benefits?

PROBE: You would lose your benefits because you make too much money at a particular job.

PROBE: Has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR517 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5
Has OVR5 helped you address (this/negative impact of income on your benefits)?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY18

Is there anything else that has prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last 3 to 5 years?

- 1 YES -> SPECIFY
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

OVR18 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5
Has OVR18 helped you address anything else?

- 1 YES -> SPECIFY
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

EMPLOY19

What is the most significant barrier to achieving your employment goals?
OPEN RESPONSE – TYPE EXACT RESPONSE

OVR19 -- ONLY ASK IF STATUS=3, 4, or 5

What were the three most helpful services that you have received from OVR19?
OPEN RESPONSE – TYPE EXACT RESPONSE

ACCESS1

Now I am going to read a list of reasons that persons with disabilities may find it difficult to access OVR19 services. For each of the following items, please tell me whether you have experienced it as a challenge. The first one is ... limited accessibility of the OVR19 via public transportation.

Has limited accessibility of the OVR19 via public transportation made it difficult for you to access OVR19 services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS2

Have other challenges related to the physical location of the OVR19 office made it difficult for you to access OVR19 services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS3

Have inadequate disability-related accommodations made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS4

What about language barriers?

PROBE: Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS5

What about difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor?

PROBE: Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS6

What about other difficulties working with OVRs staff?

PROBE: Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS7

What about difficulties completing the application?

PROBE: Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS8

What about difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment?

PROBE: Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

ACCESS9

Have you had any other challenges or barriers that have made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

- 1 YES -> SPECIFY CHALLENGE
- 2 NO

TYPE EXACT RESPONSE

CHANGE

What changes to OVRs services might improve your experience with OVRs and help you to achieve your employment goals?

OPEN RESPONSE -- TYPE EXACT RESPONSE

END

That is the end of the survey! Your information and feedback is valuable to OVRs and on their behalf, I'd like to thank you. Is there anything else you'd like to add about OVRs or its services?

Have a great (day/evening.)

HANG UP THE PHONE -- TYPE EXACT RESPONSE BELOW

TTY

THE CLIENT WOULD LIKE US TO TALLY TTY/TTD INTERVIEWS AND THOSE THAT REQUIRE EXTRA EFFORT. PLEASE INDICATE SUCH INFORMATION HERE.

WAS THIS A TTD/TTY INTERVIEW?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- 3 OTHER - > SPECIFY WHY

- 7 REFUSED
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 NO ANSWER

INTID

Whew! Good work. Type in your interviewer ID to finish.

TYPE EXACT RESPONSE BELOW

NOQAL

I'm sorry but we can only interview customers of OVRs. Thanks for your time. Good bye.

Appendix C: Staff Survey

Introduction

The Office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services has contracted with Program and Policy Insight to conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment, which will yield comprehensive information about the needs of Oregonians with disabilities. The results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment will be used identify potential improvements to OVRs consumer services and key staff support mechanisms.

You, as an OVRs staff member, are a critical source of information about the needs of current and prospective OVRs consumers. This survey will ask you specific questions about:

- Your responsibilities and degree of specialization
- OVRs consumers' barriers to employment and related OVRs services
- Accessibility and availability of OVRs and vendor services
- Potential changes to OVRs and vendor services
- OVRs staff support

We expect that this survey will take approximately 25-30 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Click "Next" to get started with the survey. If you'd like to leave the survey at any time, just click "Exit this survey". Your answers will be saved. You can access the survey again through the survey link that was sent to you in the original survey e-mail.

[NEW PAGE] Staff Responsibilities: Job Title

QUESTION 1

What is your job title? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

- Branch Manager
- Counselor
- Counselor Specialist
- Office Specialist
- Human Service Assistant
- Business Manager – OVRs Administration (in field)
- Field Technician – OVRs Administration (in field)
- Support Staff -- OVRs Administration Staff (in DHS Building)
- Management and Professional Staff -- OVRs Administration (in DHS Building)
- [OTHER SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] Staff Responsibilities: Specialization

QUESTION 2

Do you specialize in any specific disabilities or client target populations? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

- Yes [GO TO 3]
- No [SKIP TO 4]
- Don't Know [SKIP TO 4]

QUESTION 3

In what disabilities or client populations do you specialize? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – NO CONSTRAINTS]:

- Spinal cord injuries
- Hearing impaired
- Diagnosed mental health issues
- Developmental disabilities
- Youth transition program
- [OTHER SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] All OVRS Consumers: Barriers to Employment and OVRS Services

QUESTION 4

Here is a potential list of possible reasons why OVRS consumers might find it difficult to achieve their **employment goals**. For each potential barrier, please indicate whether you believe that:

- It is a barrier, and OVRS services adequately address the barrier
- It is a barrier, and OVRS services **do not** adequately address the barrier
- It is not a barrier

[MATRIX OF CHOICES/MULTIPLE ANSWERS]:

[ROWS]:

- Not having enough education or training
- Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills
- Inadequate job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' negative perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Inadequate disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues

Child care issues
Housing issues
Negative impact of income on your benefits

[COLUMNS]:

Barrier, adequately addressed by OVRs services
Barrier, NOT adequately addressed by OVRs services
Not a Barrier
Don't Know

[INCLUDE COMMENT BOX]

[NEW PAGE] All OVRs Consumers: Top 3 Barriers

QUESTION 5

What would you say are the **top three barriers** to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers overall? [MULTIPLE CHOICES/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – USE LIST OF BARRIERS FROM Q3 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- ALLOW AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[NEW PAGE] OVRs Consumers with Most Significant Disabilities: Barriers

QUESTION 6

What about OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities? Are the barriers to **achieving employment goals** different from the overall population?

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 7]
No [IF NO, SKIP TO 8]
Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 8]

[NEW PAGE] OVRs Consumers with Most Significant Disabilities: Top 3 Barriers

QUESTION 7

What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for **OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities**? [MULTIPLE CHOICES/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – USE LIST OF BARRIERS FROM Q3 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- ALLOW AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[GO TO 8]

[NEW PAGE] Youth in Transition: Barriers

QUESTION 8

What about for youth in transition? Are the barriers to **achieving employment goals** different from the overall population?

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 9]
No [IF NO, SKIP TO 10]
Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 10]

[NEW PAGE] Youth in Transition: Top 3 Barriers

QUESTION 9

What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for **youth in transition**? [MULTIPLE CHOICES/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – USE LIST OF BARRIERS FROM Q3 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- ALLOW AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[GO TO 10]

[NEW PAGE] Racial/Ethnic Minorities: Barriers

QUESTION 10

What about for OVRS consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities? Are the barriers to **achieving employment goals** different from the overall population?

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 11]
No [IF NO, SKIP TO 12]
Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 12]

[NEW PAGE] Racial/Ethnic Minorities: Top 3 Barriers

QUESTION 11

What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are **racial or ethnic minorities**? [MULTIPLE CHOICES/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – USE LIST OF BARRIERS FROM Q3 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- ALLOW AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[GO TO 12]

[NEW PAGE] Other Barriers to Employment

QUESTION 12

Is there anything else we should know about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals faced by OVRS consumers? [LONG SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] Challenges to Accessibility of OVRS Services

QUESTION 13

What would you say are the **top three reasons** that people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRS services?

[MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

Limited accessibility of the OVRS via public transportation
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRS office
Inadequate disability-related accommodations
Language barriers
Difficulties completing the application
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
Difficulties accessing Plan Services
Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
[OTHER SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] Consumers with Most Significant Disabilities: Accessibility

QUESTION 14

What about for individuals with the **most significant disabilities**? Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRS services different from the general population of people with disabilities? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 15]
No [IF NO, SKIP TO 16]
Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 16]

[NEW PAGE] Consumers with Most Significant Disabilities: Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 15

What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals with the **most significant disabilities** might find it difficult to access OVRS services? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – LIST OF CHALLENGES FROM Q13 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[GO TO 16]

[NEW PAGE] Youth in Transition: Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 16

What about for **youth in transition**? Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRS services different from the general population of people with disabilities? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 17]
No [IF NO, SKIP TO 18]
Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 18]

[NEW PAGE] Youth in Transition: Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 17

What would you say are the top three reasons that **youth in transition** might find it difficult to access OVRs services? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – LIST OF CHALLENGES FROM Q13 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[GO TO 18]

[NEW PAGE] Racial or Ethnic Minorities: Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 18

What about for OVRs consumers who are **racial or ethnic minorities**? Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services different from the general population of people with disabilities? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

Yes [IF YES, GO TO 19]

No [IF NO, SKIP TO 20]

Don't Know [IF DK, SKIP TO 20]

[NEW PAGE] Racial or Ethnic Minorities: Top 3 Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 19

What would you say are the top three reasons that **individuals who are racial or ethnic minorities** might find it difficult to access OVRs services? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – LIST OF CHALLENGES FROM Q13 – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

[NEW PAGE] Other Challenges to Accessibility

QUESTION 20

[NEW PAGE] Is there anything else we should know about why individuals with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? [LONG TEXTBOX]

[NEW PAGE] Availability of Services

QUESTION 21

We would like to know more about what services are readily available to OVRs consumers. By “readily available”, we mean that services are available in the area to individuals with a range of disabilities.

Please indicate which of the following services are readily available to eligible consumers [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS -- INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY]

Job search services

Job training services
Other education services
Assistive technology
Vehicle modification assistance
Other transportation assistance
Income assistance
Medical treatment
Mental health treatment
Substance abuse treatment
Personal care attendants
Health insurance
Housing
Benefit planning assistance
Don't Know
[OTHER SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] Vendor Services

QUESTION 22

In your experience, are vendors able to meet OVRS consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

Yes [SKIP TO 25]
No [SKIP TO 23]
Don't Know [SKIP TO 25]

[NEW PAGE] Vendor Services: Unmet Service Needs

QUESTION 23

What service needs are vendors unable to meet? [LONG SPECIFY]

QUESTION 24

What are the primary reasons that vendors generally unable to meet consumers' service needs? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- NO CONSTRAINTS]

No vendors in the area
Not enough vendors available in area
Low quality of vendor services
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors
[OTHER SPECIFY]

[GO TO 25]

[NEW PAGE] OVRS and Vendor Changes

QUESTION 25

What is the most important change that OVRs could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals? [LONG TEXTBOX]

QUESTION 26

What is the most important change that vendors could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals? [LONG TEXTBOX]

[NEW PAGE] OVRs Staff Support

QUESTION 27

We would like to know about what support you need from OVRs to do your job more effectively. Which **top three** of the following staff-focused changes would enable you to better assist your OVRs consumers? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

- Smaller caseload
- Less paperwork
- Better data management tools
- Better assessment tools
- Additional training
- Job coaching/mentoring
- More administrative support
- More supervisor support
- More interaction with community-based service providers
- [OTHER SPECIFY]

QUESTION 28

Which Top 3 of the following consumer-focused changes would enable you to better assist your OVRs consumers? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/MULTIPLE ANSWERS – INCLUDE OTHER SPECIFY -- AT MOST 3 ANSWERS]

- More time to provide job development services to your consumers
- Better job development skills
- Confidence approaching employers
- More time to provide job coaching services to your consumers
- Better communication with your consumers
- Other [SPECIFY]

[NEW PAGE] Your Survey Experience

QUESTION 29

How long did it take you to complete this survey? [MULTIPLE CHOICE/ONE ANSWER]

- 0-5 minutes

6-10 minutes
11-15 minutes
16-20 minutes
21-25 minutes
26-30 minutes
More than 30 minutes
Don't Know

[END] Thank you very much for completing this survey. The aggregated results will be used to inform the OVRs Comprehensive Needs Assessment. Your perspective as an OVRs staff member is critical to that effort.

Appendix D: Stakeholder Interview Guides

OVRs Stakeholder Telephone Interview Guide

Respondent Name: _____
Respondent Organization: _____
Date of Interview: _____
Interviewer Name: _____
Stakeholder Type(s): _____

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____. I am working with Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services to conduct a needs assessment about the vocational rehabilitation needs of Oregonians with disabilities. I would like to ask you some questions about your perceptions of the employment barriers and service needs for persons with disabilities, and how you think OVRs can increase the employment of jobseekers with disabilities.

First I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your experience with OVRs.

1. Please tell me about your position and role at your agency. How long have you worked in this capacity?
2. Please tell me about your experience working with persons with disabilities and with OVRs. Do you regularly work with persons with disabilities or interact with OVRs?

Now I'd like to ask you about your perception of barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

3. What do you think are the top three barriers to employment encountered by people with disabilities?
4. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think barriers are any different for people with significant disabilities? If so, what are the differences?
5. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think the barriers are any different for people with disabilities from racial, cultural, or ethnic minority groups? If so, what are the differences?
6. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think the barriers are any different for youth with disabilities in transition from High School? If so, what are the differences?
7. Are there any consumers who have difficulty accessing and benefiting from OVRs services?

8. If so, why? (possible probes: location of office, cultural barriers, language barriers, accessibility barriers, takes too long to obtain services)

Now I'd like to ask you about your experience with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and your thoughts on how the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

9. How well does OVRs partner with your agency when serving persons with disabilities? What could be done to improve this partnership?
10. How well do OVRs counselor qualifications, specialization, and communication methods meet the needs of OVRs consumers. What could be done to improve OVRs counselor' ability to meet those needs?
11. Are you aware of model programs or evidence-based practices that help individuals with disabilities successfully achieve employment? If so, what are the model programs or evidence-based practices?
12. What could OVRs do to better help people with disabilities prepare for and meet employer expectations for new workers?
13. What specific kinds of supports and services would help people with disabilities retain their positions?
14. What is the most important thing that can be done to increase the employment of individuals with disabilities?
15. What two things would you want OVRs to change, and why?

Thank you for your time and input. Is there anything else you think we should know about the needs of persons with disabilities or the services provided by OVRs?

OVRs Employer Interview Guide

Respondent Name: _____

Respondent Organization: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Hello, my name is _____. I am working with Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services to conduct a needs assessment about the vocational rehabilitation needs of Oregonians with disabilities. I would like to ask you some questions about your perceptions of the employment barriers and service needs for persons with disabilities, and how you think the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services can increase the employment of jobseekers with disabilities.

First I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your experience with OVRs.

1. Please tell me about your position and role at your agency/company. How long have you worked in this capacity?
2. Please tell me about your experience working with persons with disabilities and with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Do you regularly work with persons with disabilities or interact with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services on behalf of your employees?

Now I'd like to ask you about your perception of barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

3. What are the challenges you face in hiring people with disabilities?

Now I'd like to ask you about your experience with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and your thoughts on how the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

4. How well does the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services partner with employers to facilitate employment for jobseekers with disabilities? What could be done to improve this partnership?
5. What could the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services do better to help people with disabilities prepare for and meet employer expectations for new workers?
6. What specific kinds of assistance would help you retain employees with disabilities?
7. Is there anything else that would make it easier for you to work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services ?

Thank you for your time and input. Is there anything else you think we should know about the employment needs of persons with disabilities or the services provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services?

Appendix E: Additional Target Population Estimates

Both the 2006 OPS and the 2006 ACS included data related to multiple disability measures. This appendix presents data and target population estimates from additional disability measures, accompanied by data and estimates for the measures presented in the main report.

Most items from the two surveys were similar in content and wording⁴⁵. Items included in this appendix are listed below:

- Long-lasting conditions:
 - Sensory disability: blindness, deafness, and severe vision or hearing impairment (OPS and ACS)
 - Physical disability: a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activity such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying (OPS and ACS)
- Condition-related difficulties:
 - Mental limitation: difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating (ACS only)
 - Self-care limitation: difficulty dressing, bathing, or getting around inside the home. (ACS only)
- Other condition-related limitations:
 - Go-outside-home limitation: difficulty going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office. (OPS and ACS)
 - Employment limitation: difficulty working at a job or business. (OPS and ACS)

2006 ACS and 2006 OPS data presented in this appendix were limited to and weighted to yield estimates for persons aged 16 to 64 in the state of Oregon. "Don't know/refused" responses were not included in the analyses.

Exhibit E.1 illustrates the overall prevalence of disability within the State of Oregon using various measures from the 2006 ACS and 2006 OPS.

⁴⁵ 2006 OPS data were recoded so that individuals with the disability and without the disability could be reported (as opposed to with the disability and without any disability, which is how the data are presented in aggregate OPS tables), yielding aggregate results analogous to the presentation of the 2006 ACS measures.

Exhibit E.1
Percent of Oregonians with Disability by Disability Measure
Data Sources: 2006 Oregon Population Survey and 2006 American Community Survey

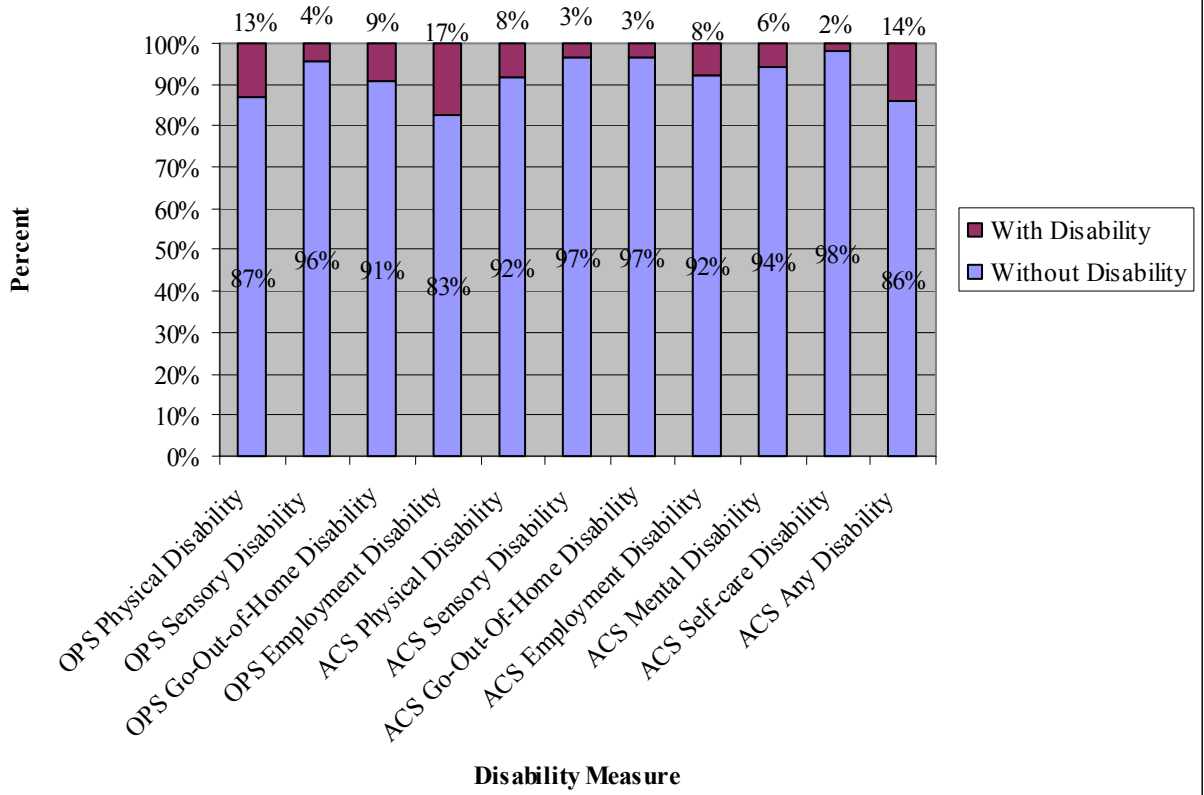
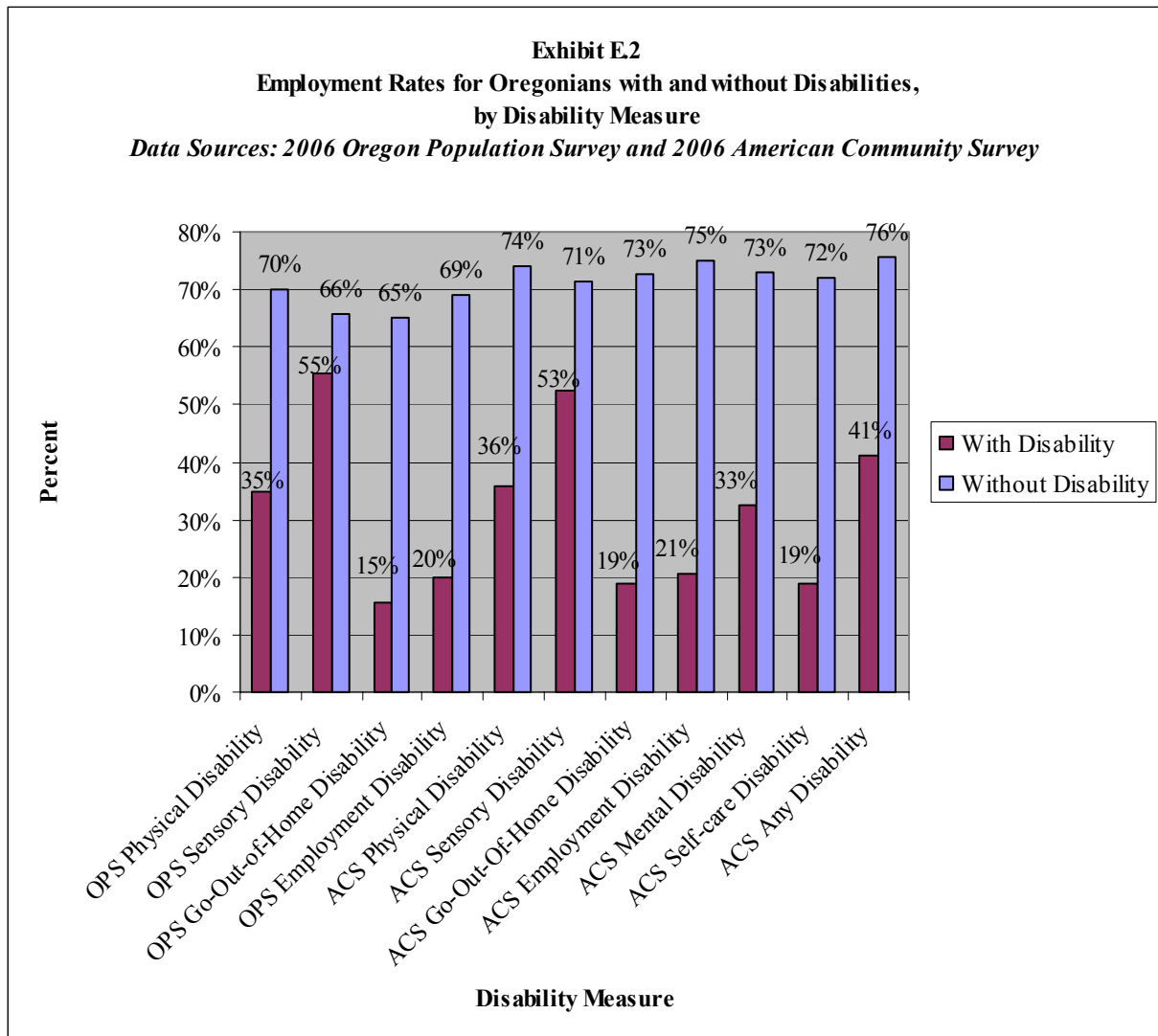


Exhibit E.2 provides a picture of the difference between employment rates of Oregonians with and without disabilities, for multiple OPS and ACS disability measures.



A range of target population estimates and relevant data for multiple disability measures, based on the formula described in the main report, is provided in Exhibit E.3

Exhibit E.3						
OVRs Target Population Estimates by Disability Measure						
<i>Data Sources: 2006 Oregon Population Survey and 2006 American Community Survey</i>						
	Overall Population Estimates⁴⁶		Employment Rate			
	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability	Employment Gap	Target Population Estimate
OPS Physical Disability	308,440	2,053,056	35%	70%	35%	108,364
OPS Sensory Disability	102,583	2,258,912	55%	66%	10%	10,538
OPS Go-Out-of-Home Disability	115,399	1,160,480	15%	65%	50%	57,181
OPS Employment Disability	221,716	1,054,163	20%	69%	49%	109,195
ACS Physical Disability	198,033	2,242,234	36%	74%	38%	75,382
ACS Sensory Disability	76,752	2,363,515	53%	71%	19%	14,525
ACS Go-Out-Of-Home Disability	78,906	2,361,361	19%	73%	54%	42,413
ACS Employment Disability	185,292	2,254,975	21%	75%	54%	100,616
ACS Mental Disability	134,219	2,306,048	33%	73%	41%	54,364
ACS Self-care Disability	53,345	2,386,922	19%	72%	53%	28,250
ACS Any Disability	336,337	2,103,930	41%	86%	34%	115,611

⁴⁶ Sample is weighted to estimate the total population of Oregon. The OPS go-outside-home and OPS employment disability measures in the All Oregonians data set include a substantial number of “Don’t know/refused” responses (35.5% of the data set), yielding an overall weighted population estimate lower than the other disability measures. These analyses were repeated for the affected measures using the weighted respondent-only data set for individuals aged 16 to 64, resulting in slightly higher target population estimates for the OPS employment disability and OPS go-outside-home limitation (120,119 and 72,520, respectively).