

NCI State of the Workforce Survey Video Transcript

Good afternoon, everyone. Before I begin, I would like to thank you for taking the time to be present.

I am Carol Batangan-Rivera. From the outcomes and Compliance Branch—the outcomes section of the Developmental Disabilities Division.

Today, I will provide an overview of the National Core Indicator State... of the Workforce or SOTW Survey (formally known as the Staff Stability Survey), share some data, and provide information about the current survey cycle.

Let me go ahead and share my screen. Sorry.

So, we're here... the direct support workers will be referred to as "direct support professionals" throughout the presentation.

DSPs play a critical role within the service system.

The DSP's support people to experience the quality of life they desire, help people to develop skills, provide prescribed supports (based on the ISP and IPs) support people in learning and trying new things, support... during service delivery, ensure people are at their optimal health, and provide supports to ensure health and safety.

Lastly... direct support workers help with the upkeep of the person's home to ensure it is clean, safe, and hazard-free.

Direct support workers, you know, we know... before COVID-19, we faced a crisis of a lack of direct support workers in our workforce.

But due to COVID, that challenge has also increased.

The crisis includes the demand for home and community-based care services, you know, increased... and the need for quality workforce.

What we'll need to monitor (as things move forward) is... how does the impact of the HCBS Settings Rule impact our workforce?

The crisis also includes... we are competing for the same workers who provide supports to the aging population.

We also look at the crisis in terms of the high vacancy rates / turnover rates.

How it affects service deliveries, staffing ratios, access...

We look at either... also at "what are the extra costs that providers have to incur due to the crisis?"

We look at recruitment costs, onboarding and pre-service training, and any additional costs associated with overtime.

You know, more data is needed for the direct support workforce— you know, for us to collect.

NCI started this staff stability survey back in 2,015.

So, it's still fairly new— in terms of collection of data.

So based on that, you know, we need to use the data to help us assess-- what's happening within the State's direct support workforce?

What changes, challenges, what insights can we gain from potential improvement opportunities?

With the survey, we'll also be able to look at... providers and states who are collecting data and calculating and using indicators to help standardize the way of collecting it.

It creates an opportunity for providers to speak in one unified voice to the state DDD agency through these survey results.

Lastly, it communicates to the state about the experience during COVID-- which is something that, you know, it's very critical in terms of service delivery and moving forward with how things are going.

The state of the workforce survey basically comes down to like these bullet points (yeah).

We understand that DSPs are critical to the service system.

DSPs... are... [have] experienced challenges (such as a high turnover rate and vacancy rate).

The workforce challenges affects provider agencies immensely (yeah).

We see this across the board (throughout our state).

Using the NCI survey...it also provides us an opportunity for providers to communicate in a collective voice to the state (in terms of what is happening within your agency).

This voice is used to make decisions about future of our system.

And again, the data is only as accurate... if all providers... participate.

The data that will be collected through the survey-- it takes a lot of different pieces of information.

We're looking at turnover rate, vacancy rate, direct support professionals... their separations (their reasons why they separate), the length of their employment...

We look at the size of the agencies, what services are being provided, the demographics of the direct support workers, (you know) their age, their gender, their wages, what benefits have been offered... and (I forgot... sorry) dental, vision coverage, retirement... what other benefits to which... other benefits that are being provided by the provider agency.

For example... tuition reimbursement, providing them with flex spending accounts, health incentives, health plans, and what type of recruitment and retention strategies have the agencies provided?

Here, you see a glimpse of the 2020 data from the NCI Staff Stability Survey that was conducted.

And, just highlighting that across states, the average DSP turnover rate was 44%.

State turnover rates average 27 to 80%.

Among the direct support workers who were employed (up until December 31st, 2020), 30% of them had been employed for 12 months or less.

Then we look at... among DSPs who had separated from employment in 2020... 48% have been employed 12 months or less.

And, based on the NCI (you know) data across all service types and agencies, the median hourly wage was \$13.36.

Again, across the states, 22 states included information about the COVID-19-- how it impacted their agencies.

And so, you see here that 33% of the agencies reported having to close their locations or sites.

Forty-seven percent of them had to stop the service delivery of some supports (or temporarily or permanently).

At least 50% reported paying family members to serve as support providers during the pandemic.

And, on the right-hand side, you know, in terms of retaining DSPs during the pandemic-- 38% reported implementing at least one wage bonus for DSPs.

Twenty-six percent reported implementing temporary wage increases, and 25% reported no wage increases or wage... wage bonuses or wage increases that were implemented.

So... all of that is great (yeah). You're hearing what all States are doing. It's a national average.

So, let's take a look at our journey here in Hawaii.

We started participating in this NCI survey in 2016.

And, initially, the providers... we asked that the providers be on a voluntary basis.

So, when we made it voluntary, only 17 out of 35 (at that time) participated in the survey.

So, we had rethink that. And so, in 2016... I'm sorry...in 2018, the Waiver standards were amended to require provider participation... in the NCI survey.

And so, I would say 2018 was our baseline... yeah-- because we had 45 providers. And 45 providers... you know-- that was great.

Then, all of a sudden, 2020, we are in the midst of COVID.

So, you know, 44% of the provider agencies did participate in the survey.

And, you know, the results of... how COVID impacted the provider agencies-- that's vital information for us to know.

So, moving on, in terms of Hawaii's data (in comparison to the state's national data set in survey cycle 2016 -17) providers... at that time, 1,272 staff were employed as direct support workers.

In terms of the statewide, 33,022 providers, with a total of 253... staff.

And then, as you can see... 2018 - 2020, the numbers pretty much grew in 2018.

And then, in 2020, we see a decline. And, the impact of COVID was primarily... a response to that.

In terms of turnover rate for Hawaii, you know, in survey cycles 2016, 18, and 20-- Hawaii's turnover rate was less than the NCI average. And, you know, is that a good thing?

I don't know.

But, that's something that you know we would need to look into.

In terms of hourly wages, we looked at the median hourly wages across all services (rather than looking at the states average). And... just so that everyone understands-- the median is the value that separates the upper half of the data set, and the lower half. So, we're taking up the outliers.

And, you know, and looking... the median can be thought of as being the middle value of all of the information that we are given.

So, that's why we like to look at the median-- versus looking at the mean or the average.

So, it would look like a typical value. So anyway, as you can see... the state's minimum wages for Hawaii at that point in time (for 2016) was \$8.50.

2018 and 20, we were at \$10.10.

NCI uses the average hourly wage (based on the Federal minimum wage)... at \$7.25..

And, that is because... every state has their own criteria or their own minimum wage.

So, to make it where it's... everything is equal, they use the Federal minimum wage.

So, it shows you that-- yeah, in terms of the minimum wages, and the wages that Hawaii... the average for Hawaii was... pretty much, you know, \$12.50 in 2016, \$11.41 in... for the NCI median hourly wage, \$13.77 in 2018, \$12.26 in... for the median (for the NCI), \$14.02 in 2020, and then, you know, slightly lower at \$13.36 for the states NCI median wage.

So, you know, how are data being used? You know, one state is using the data to conduct a deeper examination of... predictors of tenure and turnover rates (yeah).

Some are doing research on it to examine the workforce-- the effects of COVID, and how providers can be supported better in public health emergencies.

Some states are using the data to advocate for... you know, funding and whatnot to assess outcomes of wages.

One state is offering small grants to providers willing to try something new and share their learning.

And then, another state requires providers to complete a survey, and uses the data to monitor their wages and other critical indicators of a workforce stability.

So, those are things that some of the states are using... the data for.

It says "wrap up". But, what I wanted to do was, you know, this is how... the previous slide showed what NCI... the big picture / the overview of what they're looking for... and the information that they get from the NCI data.

So, as we're moving into this survey cycle, I wanted to provide you folks with some guidance... on frequently asked questions from previous survey cycles, and also to let you folks know that the survey is a retrospective review.

So, the survey looks at information from January 1st, 2022 to December 31st, 2022.

So, that one calendar year.

So, in terms of "what is the National Court Indicator State of the Workforce Survey," the survey focuses on individuals... who receive services ages 18 and older (from a direct support worker).

And, you may ask "you know, what is considered to be a DSP or a direct support worker?"

These are the criteria.

First one is... it needs to be a staff working. That's their primary job--to provide support, you know... help with skill development, guidance, personal assistance (such as PAB) at any location or during any activity.

So... not only person... PAB services. It's like CLSI, ADH services, and the like for people who are adults 18 years and older.

The second bullet is for paid staff who spend at least 50% of their hours doing direct support work.

Their primary job and responsibility is that 50% (yeah)-- working with the participant, working with the person.

People with... the third bullet is people with some supervisory responsibilities can be included in... the data set (only if they work more than 50 hours of their time as a direct support worker).

Okay, so what is not considered to be a DSP?

So, this is the list of individuals who are not considered DSPs.

Clinical licensed staff, behavior specialist, technicians or BCBA's, those who provide transportation only (or modifications), people with a contract or someone who is considered a 1099 worker on call or PRN workers, staff hired by a temporary personnel agency, as well as administrative staff or supervisory staff (unless they spend 50% or more of their time during direct support work).

This is just a service array of all the various waiver services that we have: adult residential support, adult day health, CLSG, CLSI, discovery & career planning, individual employment supports, PAB and RESPITE.

You know, if that person is providing the supports (as it was described as a DSP)--

then these would be some of the services that would be applicable-- that you may want to... include in the survey.

Okay, so this one is in regards to supports provided by the DSPs.

Within the NCI, it asks for residential in-home and non-residential.

So, with residential services-- this is for people who provide supports in the home or apartment that is owned or operated by an agency.

So, we're looking at... agency operated homes. You're looking at the various apartments that are available. And then, it also includes Foster Home Services-- which is our adult foster homes.

There are maybe a handful out there who are not [meeting] that requirement of that 1099 (or contracted subcontractor).

So, those individuals will be included in this sample size.

In-home services-- we're looking at providing supports in a home or apartment that is not owned or operated by an agency.

And, these services may include PAB... services, and it could also include CHORE. But, you know, in terms of the definition of what that means (in terms of direct support)-- you would think that that person would be working one-on-one with the person.

So, you know, they say CHORE is one of them, but I would really look at how the service is being delivered.

Non-residential services provided... can include the day program (anywhere within the community), the CLSI, CLSG....

In this service, you could include employment or vocational services-- such as discovery and career planning or... EIS.

Okay. And, that's to help people look for work, job coaching, or employment support.

So, next steps... yeah.

You know, each provider will have access to the portal using a unique link via email.

One email per provider... yeah. So... Just wanted to make that clear-- because last time there were... some providers provided two emails, but we only need one.

In the event an email bounces back, I will reach out to provider agencies (through CRB)... to get that corrected.

When a provider contacts me to say that they are not eligible for the survey,

I will ask (based on what the criteria says on slide number 17), and if they meet that criteria, then they will no longer need to continue with the survey, and... that would be at the end... for that provider.

One of the other [things] is that information submitted is confidential.

The State cannot see how individual provider agencies respond to each question.

We can only see the status of the survey— which means that you opened up the document, you started, and you finished. That's all we can see.

With that said, periodic reminders will be emailed to request the provider agency to either open it, start it, or resume the survey.

As the deadline approaches, and (you know) you may get more frequent reminders to complete the surveys.

So, you know, just be aware of that.

The deadline to complete all surveys will be June 30th, 2023.

And, just for your information, the national report was released today, and you folks had a link dropped into the chat box— so you can see the results of that report.

Hawaii did not participate in the 2021.

But, it's interesting to see how other states did (and fare).

So... last thing I wanted to share with you folks was that this year providers will have the ability to download their responses— so that you have a copy of what you submitted, yeah.

In the past, you just submitted, finished, and that was it.

But NCI has... taken a lot of thought about allowing you folks to see what you had submitted.

Any questions?

[No Audio]

No questions guys?

Moderator: Hi Carol...

Carol: Yes.

Moderator: Okay? So... any questions on the floor? We are now open for a Q and A.

And, that is Carol talking to us about the NCI State of the workforce for this year that we've been doing.

So... any questions?

So, Carol, you said the deadline is on June 30th... 2023.

So, do we have like a quota (or kinda like) for the survey that we need to...

[No Audio]

Carol: There is no quota, but based on the Waiver Standards, if you are eligible to complete the survey, the expectation is that you would do it.... yeah.

So, there is no quota, but the expectation is that if you are... [have] been invited to participate in this survey, that you complete the survey... as soon as you can.

Moderator: Okay. So, there's a question here about "what is the website for the survey?"

Carol: Good question! I will be submitting or sending out an invite on the twenty-first of this month.

That invite will provide you with your unique link... to... the survey.

Moderator: Okay, any more questions on the board?

Carol, how do you get picked for the survey?

Is that a voluntary thing or... how does one get picked for the survey?

Carol: Mmm... providers are picked if they are providing services to our clients (providing direct support services, direct support).

You have a direct support professional working with an individual.

So, that's how you are selected.

Moderator: Hmm, okay. And then, there's another question here: "Who will receive the email on the 21st? Is it anyone who is registered for today's webinar?"

Carol: Good question! Several months ago (back in November), CRB requested that the... identified person from each agency... that each agency identify a person who will be completing the survey.

So, that was back in November. If you need to know who that person is... that's my email address (as well as my phone number).

You can contact me, and I'll provide you who that designated person is.

Moderator: Okay. And, I believe...

Is that our last questions (unless anyone has any more questions)?

So, again, we have Carol's information there for any questions— as well as... she will be providing... queue (through email) the website for the survey.

Okay.

Carol: I just wanted to make one more comment.. is that this year I provided a copy of the tool for everyone to see what type of questions are being asked on the survey.

So, please take a look at that tool. These are questions from NCI-- so it may help you get prepared (in terms of, you know, how you're going to gather your data).

Moderator: Okay. So, there's another question here for you, Carol: "Is this the same survey that is quarterly?"

Carol: Yeah, I knew that was gonna be asked.

No, this is not the same as the quarterly questions.

At least, I don't think the questions are the same.

These are questions that NCI developed... and standardized so that all states can respond to it— so that we can have information... from a common ground.

So, the answer is... it's not the same survey that you complete quarterly.

Moderator: Okay. I hope that answers that question.

I don't see any more questions here.

And yeah, I think that's the last question Carol. So... if you want to do the closing for today.

Carol: Alright. Thank you all for joining and listening in on the Staff Stability Survey.

I'm not accustomed to using the SOTW yet, but... eventually I will. But I thank you all for listening, and if you have any questions about the survey, you have my contact information. Feel free to call me or email me. You guys have a good day! Thank you!