

Consumer Experience Survey

2020 Annual Results

Covering General VR, Youth in Transition and Older Individuals who are Blind

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Prepared for: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation



Market Decisions Research
75 Washington Ave, Suite 2C
Portland, ME 04101
www.marketdecisions.com
(207) 767-6440

Table of Contents

- ❑ Methodology
- ❑ Core Metrics
- ❑ General VR
- ❑ Youth in Transition
- ❑ Older Individuals who are Blind
- ❑ COVID-19
- ❑ Conclusions





Methods



Sampling – Who We Talked To

- Market Decisions Research (MDR) completed a total of 1,428 surveys in 2020.
 - General VR Consumers: 1,119
 - Youth in Transition Consumers: 221
 - Older Individuals who are Blind Consumers: 88
- These surveys were done with consumers with cases open during September 2020 to August 2020, or with cases closed within that time frame.
- Cases were further stratified by case benchmarks indicated by NV VR/OIB Program.
 - In service IPE to 6 Months
 - In Service 6 to 12 Months
 - In Service 18+ Months
 - Closed Cases

Data Collection During COVID-19

- Data collection was conducted from January to December 2020 but underwent changes:
 - Trimester 1 data collection ended early in April due to COVID and a VR service pause.
 - Data collection resumed in August,
 - Remaining annual data collection combined into a single trimester
- All data was collected in two different modes
 - By telephone from MDR's data collection facility, and
 - A new online survey module using email addresses from VR's sample file.
- The overall response rate was 43%.
- Results are weighted to reflect population characteristics (age, gender, etc.).
- Results accurately reflect the views of your three service populations.



Core Metrics Summary



What are the VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics?

The core metrics are the broad measures of the VR consumer experience.

- Key measures of the consumer experience that can be compared across concept, across groups, and trended year to year.
- Allow comparison of results across VR agencies using similar metrics.
- Some are domains, which are calculated by combining several questions.
- Others are individual questions.
- Nevada has 11 core metrics
 - 6 Domains and 5 key questions.

See “VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics Description” PowerPoint for a more detailed description.

Calculation of the VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics

The consumer experience core metrics all use a common 0 to 100 scale.

- The most positive result is bound to 100.
- The least positive result is bound to 0.
- Each metric is the average of all scores.

The higher the score the more satisfied the consumer or the more positively they view their experience.

- A score of 100 would represent an extremely positive experience among VR consumers.
- A score of zero would imply an extremely negative experience.

What are the VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics?

- **Overall Satisfaction and Expectations:** A global measure of the consumer experience with Nevada VR/OIB Program.
- **Experience with Services Provided by VR:** This measure focuses on the services provided by the VR or OIB program and the range of services available in each program.
- **Experience with Staff and Counselors:** Consumer's experience working and interacting with Nevada VR/OIB Program staff and their counselors.
- **Communications with VR Staff:** This measure also looks at consumer's interactions with staff but is focused specifically on communications between the consumer and staff. That this is separate from other experiences with staff underscores the importance of communications in the way that consumers rate their experience with Nevada VR/OIB Program.
- **Consumer Control and Involvement:** How consumers perceive their involvement in the process and control over the choices and goals.
- **Outcomes and Meeting Goals:** How well consumers perceive the services provided by Nevada VR/OIB Program help them meet their goals.

What are the VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics?

- Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the Nevada VR/OIB Program for help? (recommendation)
- Did you experience any problems with Nevada VR/OIB Program or the services provided to you?
- The ease of the application process.
- The accessibility of the Nevada VR/OIB Program office for someone with your type of disability.

Nevada VR/OIB Consumer Experience Core Metrics

| Domain | Overall | General VR | Youth in Transition | Older Individuals who are Blind |
|---|---------|------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Overall Satisfaction and Expectations | 74 | 72 | 78 | 85 |
| Experience with Services Provided by VR | 76 | 74 | 79 | 87 |
| Experience with Staff and Counselors | 86 | 85 | 87 | 90 |
| Communications with Staff | 75 | 73 | 77 | 84 |
| Customer Control and Involvement | 78 | 77 | 80 | 85 |
| Outcomes and Meeting Goals | 78 | 76 | 83 | 85 |
| Ease of the application process for VR services | 76 | 77 | 75 | 69 |
| Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability | 89 | 89 | 89 | 81 |
| Satisfaction with current employment | 78 | 77 | 82 | |
| Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes) | 90% | 88% | 94% | 99% |
| Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no) | 75% | 72% | 81% | 88% |



General VR



Trends to Watch

Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- **VR consumers are positive overall but continue to praise their experience with VR staff and counselors.**
- The percentage reporting problems declined further, despite potential challenges during the pandemic.
- Compared to the North and South, **Rural** consumers continue to report a more positive with:
 - Getting questions answered and communication with VR staff and counselors,
 - Services they receive and how promptly they are provided,
 - Helpfulness of staff, and
 - Experiencing fewer problems.
- Those **in-service IPE to 6 months** are more positive about:
 - VR staff understand their individual needs and situation,
 - Their counselor is easy to contact,
 - VR services have helped or will help them become financially independent, and
 - VR service helped or will help them reach their job goal.

Trends to Watch

Less Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- The **least positive** general VR domain is Overall Satisfaction and Expectations.
- Other less positive domains include:
 - Communications with Staff
 - Experience with Services Provided by VR
 - Outcomes and Meeting Goals
- Fewer consumers would recommend VR now as compared to this time last year.
- General VR consumers consistently experience more problems than any other population.
- Feedback from dissatisfied General VR consumers highlights:
 - Not meeting their goals or getting employment
 - VR services are ineffective
 - Communication issues like counselors not responding to them
 - Challenges due to changing counselors

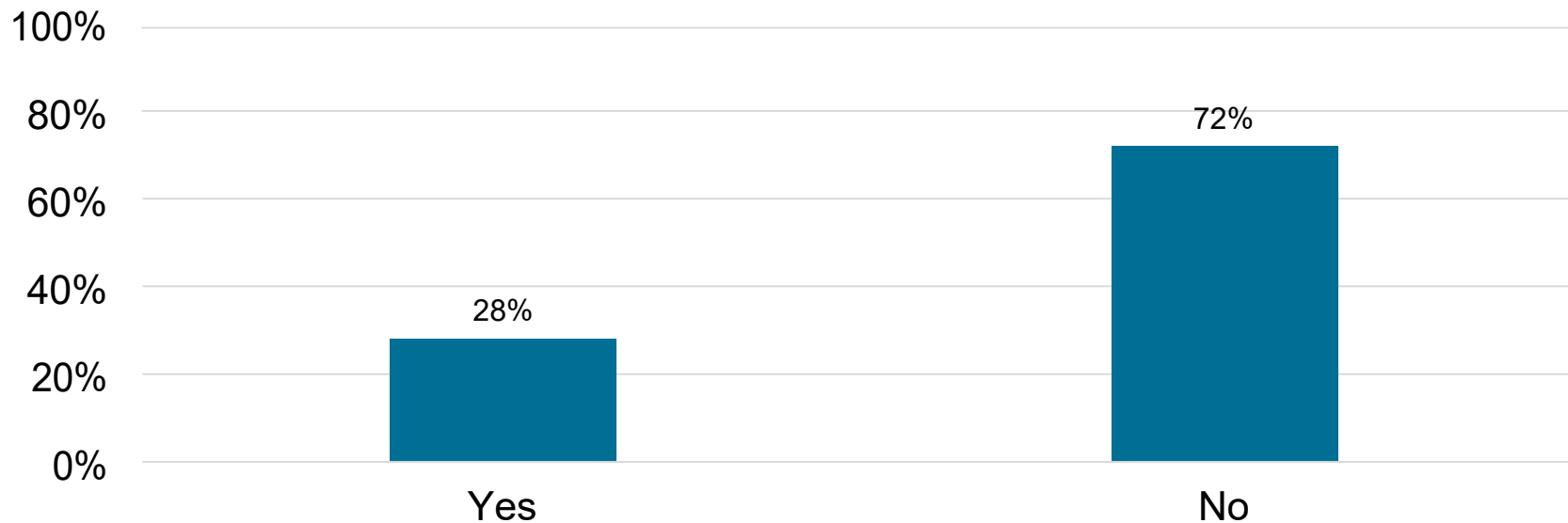
Nevada VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics for General VR - Trends

| Domain | May - July 2019 | Sept - Dec 2019 | Jan - April 2020 | Aug. – Dec. 2020 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Overall Satisfaction and Expectations | 67 | 77 | 75 | 72 |
| Experience with Services Provided by VR | 70 | 77 | 78 | 74 |
| Experience with Staff and Counselors | 83 | 88 | 87 | 85 |
| Communications with Staff | 70 | 75 | 75 | 73 |
| Customer Control and Involvement | 78 | 80 | 79 | 77 |
| Outcomes and Meeting Goals | 76 | 82 | 79 | 76 |
| Ease of the application process for VR services | 77 | 74 | 77 | 77 |
| Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability | 89 | 90 | 90 | 89 |
| Satisfaction with current employment | 79 | 75 | 76 | 79 |
| Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes) | 92 | 92 | 90 | 88 |
| Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no) | 63 | 73 | 73 | 72 |

Problems Experienced

- 28% of consumers reported experiencing a problem with VR or the services they were provided.
 - Of those experiencing a problem, only 26% indicate that Nevada VR worked to resolve the problem.

**Have you experienced any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you?
(2020 Annual Data)**



Types of Problems Experienced by General VR consumers

| Type of Problem or Issue | % Experiencing | Did VR work to resolve this problem? | |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|-----|
| | | Yes | No |
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 13% | 20% | 80% |
| Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability | 10% | 34% | 66% |
| Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems | 8% | 48% | 52% |
| Counselor was not helpful or supportive | 8% | 25% | 75% |
| Counselor would not listen, dismissed concerns | 7% | 18% | 82% |
| Did not receive employment, VR could not find me a job | 6% | 19% | 81% |
| Didn't receive job search help | 6% | 11% | 89% |

Percentage among those experiencing a problem.



Feedback from General VR Consumers



Consumer Feedback

- Consumers were asked to provide additional feedback when they were not positive in their assessment.
 - Not satisfied with VR
 - VR did not meet expectations
 - Disagreed that VR helped or met their goals, they did not feel welcome, they found something difficult, they did not find VR accessible.
- Feedback was collected throughout the survey in response to 21 questions.
- Consumers could provide more than one response.
- The following table summarizes the most common responses from 697 consumers that provided additional feedback. This is 62% of general VR consumers.

Consumer Feedback

| | % |
|---|------------|
| Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems | 18% |
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 18% |
| Calls, mail not returned for days, weeks, had to wait too long for return call | 13% |
| Better communication needed | 13% |
| Did not receive employment, VR could not find me a job | 12% |
| Covid-19 related problems | 11% |
| Had no control over experience, told me what to do | 10% |



Employment and job satisfaction



Employment

45% of General VR consumers are working.

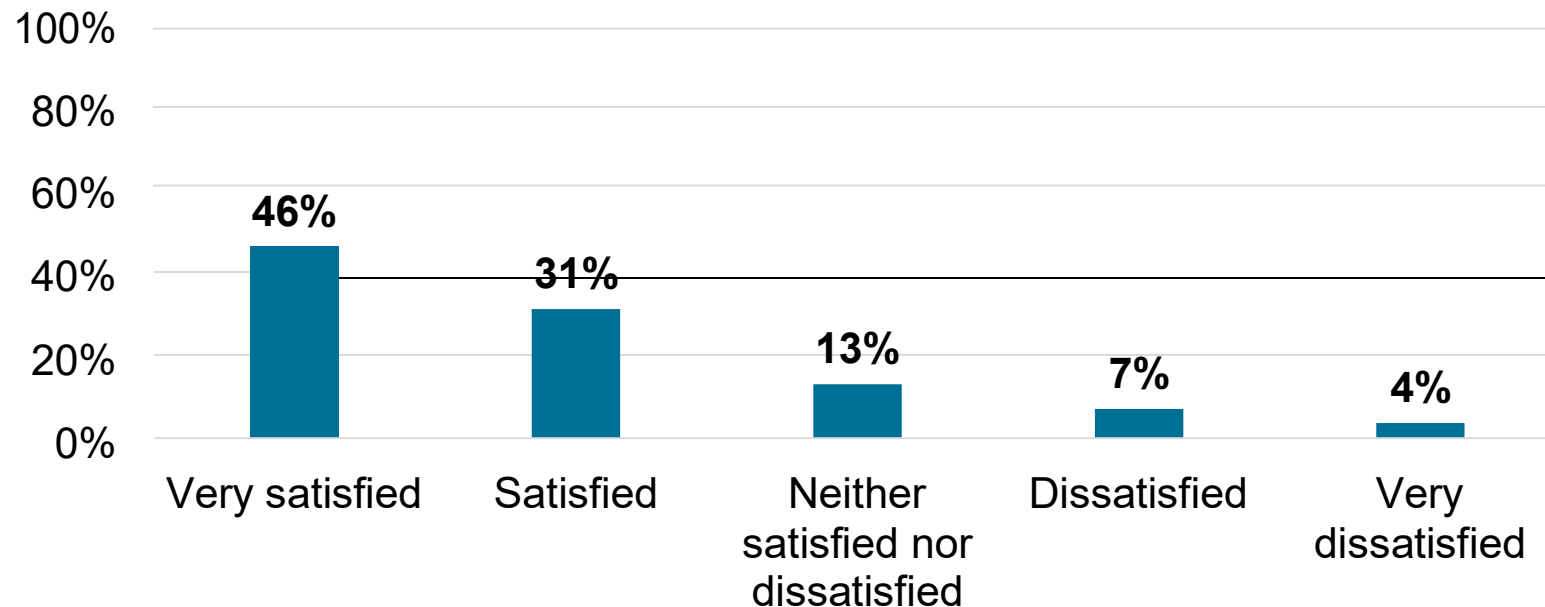
**Finally, these last few questions ask about what you are currently doing. Are you currently...?
(2020 Annual Data)**

| | % |
|---|-----|
| Working full time, that is, more than 35 hours per week | 20% |
| Working part time | 25% |
| Currently looking for a job | 29% |
| In school or receiving job training | 19% |
| Keeping house | 25% |
| Currently unable to work | 17% |
| Volunteering your time | 11% |

Job Satisfaction

77% of employed consumers are satisfied with their job.

**Thinking about your current job, how satisfied are you
with what you are doing?**
(2020 Annual Data)



Job Satisfaction

**Why are you not satisfied with your current job?
(2020 Annual Data)**

| | % |
|--|------------|
| Need a job aligned with skills, training | 17% |
| Not a career move, only temporary job | 16% |
| Bored with job, been at job too long, burnt out, need change | 13% |
| Job does not provide benefits, does not provide good benefits | 12% |
| Low pay, does not meet financial need | 11% |
| Job is physically demanding | 8% |



Youth in Transition



Trends to Watch

Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

Overall, youth in transition (YIT) consumers report having a very positive experience with VR and the services they receive

- Experience with VR Staff and Counselors is the **most positive** aspect of their experience.
- Nearly all youth consumers would recommend the VR program to their friends with disabilities
- Youth in service IPE to 6 months are more positive about the following aspects of their experience:
 - Their choice of service providers,
 - The application for services was easy to complete,
 - VR staff are respectful and helpful, and
 - Their counselor is easy to contact.

Trends to Watch

Less Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- **Least positive** domain is Ease of the Application Process
- Satisfaction with services and communication has been trending down throughout the year.
- Declining Domains (two or more consecutive trimesters)
 - Experience with VR Services
 - Experience with VR Staff and Counselors
 - Outcomes and Meeting Goals
 - Recommend VR (Still above 90% in T3 of 2020)
- Despite the declines in 2020, Youth are still very positive overall.

Nevada VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics for Youth in Transition - Trends

| Domain | May - July 2019 | Sept - Dec 2019 | Jan - April 2020 | Aug. – Dec. 2020 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Overall Satisfaction and Expectations | 82 | 77 | 79 | 76 |
| Experience with Services Provided by VR | 83 | 84 | 82 | 76 |
| Experience with Staff and Counselors | 91 | 95 | 89 | 86 |
| Communications with Staff | 77 | 81 | 80 | 75 |
| Customer Control and Involvement | 85 | 82 | 82 | 78 |
| Outcomes and Meeting Goals | 90 | 88 | 86 | 82 |
| Ease of the application process for VR services | 76 | 69 | 77 | 74 |
| Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability | 94 | 90 | 92 | 88 |
| Satisfaction with current employment | 85 | 68 | 80 | 76 |
| Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes) | 94 | 100 | 96 | 93 |
| Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no) | 86 | 77 | 88 | 77 |

Youth in Transition Services

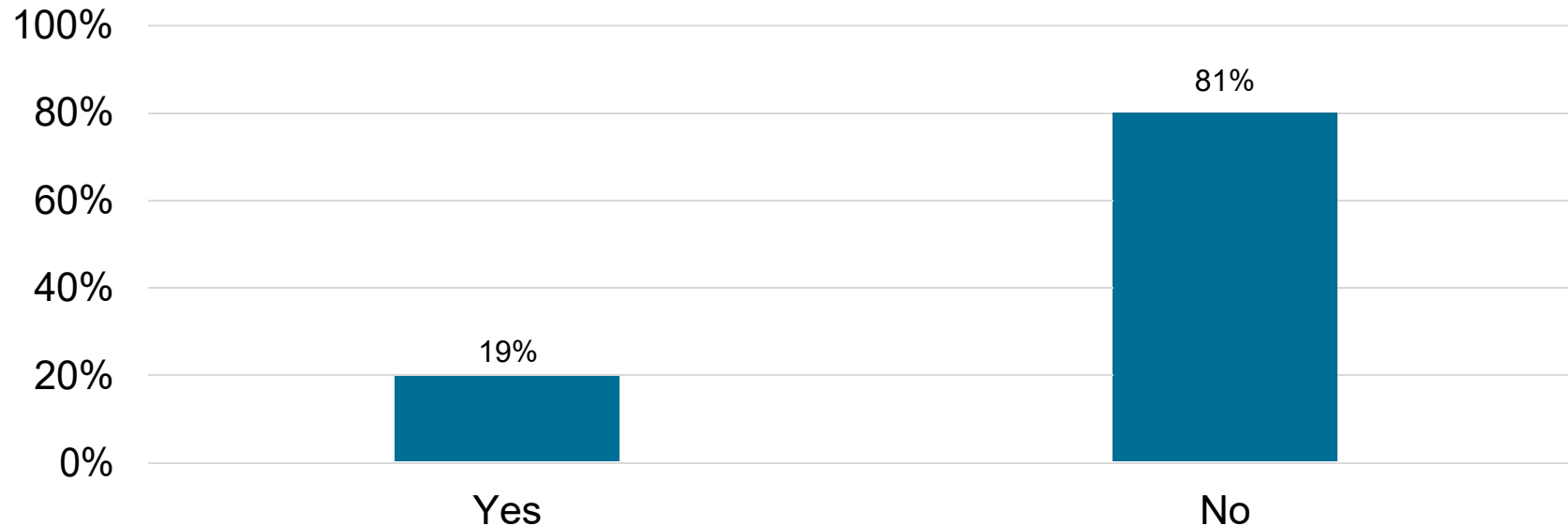
- A series of questions was asked to assess use of special services targeted toward youth in transition.
 - Almost all those receiving these services found them valuable.

| | % Receiving Service | % Finding the Service Valuable |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Job exploration counseling or career counseling | 49% | 96% |
| Work based learning experiences including a job, internship, or volunteering | 49% | 99% |
| Counseling on opportunities to attend college, learn a trade, or get a professional certification after high school | 48% | 94% |
| Workplace readiness to help get ready for the challenges of work | 47% | 95% |
| Instruction in self-advocacy to help you live the life you want including peer mentoring | 44% | 97% |

Problems Experienced

- 19% of youth consumers reported experiencing a problem with VR or the services they were provided.
 - Of those experiencing a problem, 55% indicate that Nevada VR worked to resolve the problem.

**Have you experienced any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you?
(2020 Annual Data)**



Types of Problems Experienced by YIT Consumers

| Type of Problem or Issue | % Experiencing |
|--|----------------|
| Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems | 11% |
| Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability | 7% |
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 6% |
| Counselor rude, disrespectful, unprofessional | 5% |
| Online services, computer | 5% |
| VR closed case or stopped services | 4% |
| Speed up process, provide services quicker | 4% |

Percentage among those experiencing a problem.



Feedback from Youth in Transition



Consumer Feedback

- Consumers were asked to provide additional feedback when they were not positive in their assessment.
 - Not satisfied with VR
 - VR did not meet expectations
 - Disagreed that VR helped or met their goals, they did not feel welcome, they found something difficult, they did not find VR accessible.
- Feedback was collected throughout the survey in response to 26 questions.
- Consumers could provide more than one response.
- The following table summarizes the most common responses from 103 consumers that provided additional feedback. This is 59% of YIT consumers.

Consumer Feedback

| | % |
|--|-----|
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 10% |
| Better communication needed | 9% |
| Hard to remember, find phone number, who to contact | 8% |
| Forms and paperwork hard, complicated | 8% |
| Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems | 7% |
| Not aware of available services due to lack of information | 7% |
| Trouble understanding, terms, language, confused | 7% |



Older Individuals Who are Blind



Trends to Watch

Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- **OIB program consumers report the most positive consumer experience of all three populations.**
- The **most positive** part of their experience is working with OIB program staff and counselors.
- Fewest problems of any population.
- Other positive areas include:
 - Experience with Services Provided by Nevada OIB program
 - Overall Satisfaction and Expectations.

Several domains declined in 2020 trimester 1 but have since improved significantly:

- Ease of the application process
- Experience with Staff and Counselors
- Experience with Services

Trends to Watch

Less Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- OIB program consumers report challenges with the application process and rate it more negatively than other populations.
- Fewer OIB program consumers would recommend the program to their friends with disabilities.
- Communication with the OIB program was a challenge throughout 2020 but did improve later in the year.
- OIB program consumers experience issues with office accessibility more often than other populations.

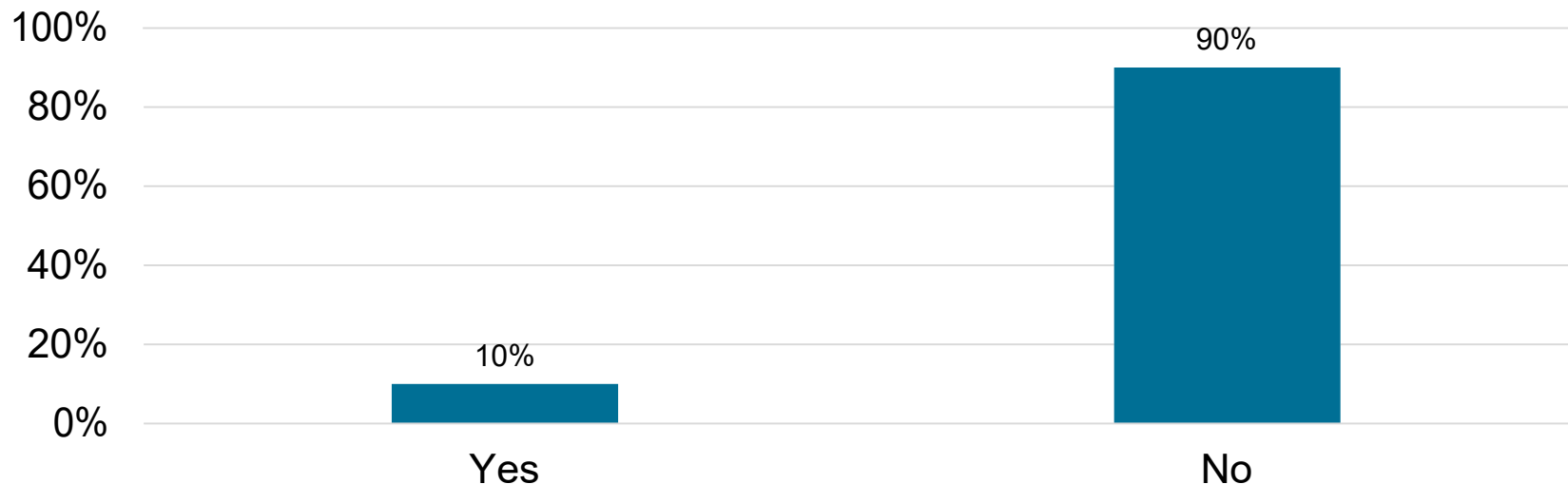
Nevada VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics for Older Individuals Who are Blind - Trends

| Domain | May - July 2019 | Sept - Dec 2019 | Jan - April 2020 | Aug. – Dec. 2020 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Overall Satisfaction and Expectations | 88 | 86 | 82 | 86 |
| Experience with Services Provided by the OIB program | 91 | 90 | 82 | 89 |
| Experience with Staff and Counselors | 97 | 94 | 84 | 92 |
| Communications with Staff | 88 | 85 | 83 | 84 |
| Customer Control and Involvement | 89 | 87 | 82 | 86 |
| Outcomes and Meeting Goals | 91 | 87 | 84 | 86 |
| Ease of the application process for OIB program services | 77 | 67 | 54 | 76 |
| Accessibility of the OIB program office for someone with your type of disability | 84 | 86 | 77 | 83 |
| Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the OIB program for help? (% yes) | 97 | 97 | 96 | 89 |
| Did you experience any problems with the OIB program or the services they have provided to you? (% no) | 88 | 89 | 84 | 90 |

Problems Experienced

- 10% of consumers reported experiencing a problem, the least of any population.
 - Of those experiencing a problem, only 17% indicate the OIB program worked to resolve the issue.

**Have you experienced any problems with the OIB program
or the services they have provided to you?
(2020 Annual Data)**



Types of Problems Experienced by OIB Program Consumers

| Type of Problem or Issue | % Experiencing |
|--|----------------|
| Counselor would not listen, dismissed concerns | 22% |
| Evaluate where customer is with disability | 22% |
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 22% |
| Customers' needs were not met | 11% |
| Broken promises, no follow through | 11% |
| Did not receive employment, VR could not find me a job | 11% |

Percentage among those experiencing a problem.



Feedback from Older Individuals Who are Blind



Consumer Feedback

- Consumers were asked to provide additional feedback when they were not positive in their assessment.
 - Not satisfied with the OIB program
 - The OIB program did not meet expectations
 - Disagreed that VR helped or met their goals, they did not feel welcome, they found something difficult, they did not find the OIB program accessible.
- Feedback was collected throughout the survey in response to 21 questions.
- Consumers could provide more than one response.
- The following table summarizes the most common responses from 88 consumers that provided additional feedback. This is 100% of OIB program consumers.

Consumer Feedback

| | % |
|---|-----|
| Had no control over experience, told me what to do | 16% |
| Forms and paperwork hard, complicated | 16% |
| Hard to remember, find phone number, who to contact | 10% |
| Better communication needed | 8% |
| Time lag to get services, appointments | 8% |
| Distance, too far away | 6% |
| Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up | 6% |



COVID-19



New COVID-19 Items

- This section details the questions added in August to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the consumer experience.
- Questions added are:
 - COVID1. In what ways has the coronavirus pandemic affected your experience with VR/OIB?
 - COVID2. Have you put VR/OIB services on hold or stopped looking for work?

Asked of those unemployed:

- COVID3. Did you lose or leave a job due to the coronavirus pandemic?
- COVID4. Were you laid off, furloughed, or concerned for your safety and left work voluntarily?

COVID-19 Impact on the Consumer Experience

| | Overall | General VR | Youth in Transition | OIB |
|---|---------|------------|---------------------|-----|
| Unable to meet with counselor, social distancing | 13% | 12% | 17% | 10% |
| Stopped looking for work | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Had to stop working | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% |
| VR is closed | 7% | 8% | 3% | 12% |
| Employers are not hiring | 3% | 3% | 2% | 1% |
| Don't have necessary equipment (computer) | 1% | 1% | 1% | - |
| Delayed medical care | 1% | 1% | - | 7% |
| Difficulty communicating, hard to get in touch with counselor | 13% | 14% | 8% | 12% |
| Isolated, can't leave home | 3% | 2% | 3% | 6% |
| Process has slowed down, delays in achieving goals | 16% | 17% | 13% | 15% |
| Other | 5% | 5% | 3% | 6% |
| DK-REF | 44% | 43% | 56% | 31% |

COVID-19 Impact on the Consumer Experience

- Despite its broader impacts, the pandemic did not affect services for a majority of consumers.
- 25% of consumers put services on hold due to the pandemic.
 - OIB program consumers were most likely to pause their services.
- Just over one in ten General VR (15%) and Youth (12%) stopped looking for work.

| | Overall | General VR | Youth in Transition | OIB |
|---------------------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|-----|
| Put VR services on hold | 25% | 26% | 20% | 31% |
| Stopped looking for work | 14% | 15% | 12% | 7% |
| Neither | 67% | 65% | 74% | 66% |

COVID-19 Impact On the Employed

- Among those who are currently unemployed, 20% of general VR and 11% of youth in transition lost a job because of COVID-19.
- Among general VR, 48% were laid off while only 23% of youth experienced a layoff.
- Very few left a job because of concern for the health.

| | Lost a job Due to COVID (% Yes of Unemployed) | Among those | | |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|------------|--|
| | | Laid off from your job | Furloughed | Concerned for your safety and left voluntarily |
| Overall | 18% | 42% | 6% | 15% |
| General VR | 20% | 48% | 7% | 17% |
| Youth in Transition | 11% | 23% | 4% | 8% |



Conclusions



Positive Consumer Experiences

- **Despite the challenges of the pandemic, consumers remain positive about their VR/OIB program experience.**
 - Few consumers report significant impacts and most continued their services.
 - Very few lost a job or stopped looking for one.
- The **most positive** aspect of the consumer experience is working with staff and counselors.
- **The OIB program** continue to report a more positive experience than other populations.
- Those **in service IPE to 6 months** among General VR and Youth are more positive than other service phases.
- By region, **rural consumers** are more positive about their experience than the North or South.

Areas of Focus for Quality Improvement

- **While no longer the least positive domain, communication is the primary subject of quality improvement feedback.**
 - True of all three service populations
 - A greater issue given the challenges of the pandemic
- Consumer feedback focuses on staying connected and the time it takes to contact their counselor:
 - Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up
 - Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems
 - Better communication needed
 - Calls, mail not returned for days, weeks, had to wait too long for return call
- Among suggested improvements:
 - More open communication with client, more follow-up
 - Better communication in general

Areas of Focus for Quality Improvement

- **Apart from basic communication issues, population mentions specific issues about not feel heard or respected.**
 - Common feedback includes:
 - Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability
 - Counselor was not helpful or supportive
 - Counselor would not listen, dismissed concerns
 - Counselor rude, disrespectful, unprofessional
 - Evaluate where customer is with disability (OIB program specifically)

Areas of Focus for Quality Improvement

- **Core areas to monitor and improve**
 - While still largely positive, more consumers report issues with **staff and counselors**.
 - Domain declined consistently in 2020 among General VR and Youth
 - **Outcomes and meeting goals** is also declining for both General VR and Youth.
 - Each population is now less likely to **recommend VR/OIB program** compared to this time in 2019.
 - The **application process** is still one of the more negative aspects of the experience.

Moving Forward

- Data collection will continue in three Trimester data collection periods.
 - January – April
 - May – August
 - September – December
- Data collection will still be primarily handled by telephone.
 - Consumers will be provided additional methods by which to complete data collection.
 - Online
 - Mail/Paper
- Initial efforts to complete the survey will be done by telephone, followed by:
 - Email reminders to those with available and valid emails
 - Consumers may request an email invitation to the online survey or a mailed paper version of the survey.

Moving Forward

- **The survey and its questions are working well.**
- **Continue to ask COVID-19 items until services return to normal.**
- **Continue to use the online survey**
 - **Better response rate**
 - **More flexibility**
- **Eliminate the item follow-ups for YIT services and ask a single, broad question:**
 - **Very little usable feedback from existing YIT follow-ups**
 - **Nearly all youth find their services valuable**
 - **“How can VR improve the transitional services you are receiving?”**

Comparing Nevada VR to Other Agencies

- Several states conduct consumer experience surveys using the same or similar questions that are used for Nevada VR and the OIB program.
- These states have agreed to share their results.
- A separate report will be provided to Nevada VR that compares results on the core metrics, problems, and consumer feedback to five other agencies:
 - FL Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (FL VR)
 - ME Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ME DVR)
 - ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ND DVR)
 - VT Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VT DVR)
 - VT Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VT DBVI)



Thank you!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

Brian Robertson, Ph.D.

(207) 767-6440, ext. 102

brianr@marketdecisions.com