

Consumer Experience Survey

2021 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



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Methods



Sampling – Who We Talked To

- Market Decisions Research (MDR) completed a total of 1,418 surveys in 2021.
 - General VR Consumers: 1,148
 - Youth in Transition Consumers: 208
 - Older Individuals who are Blind Consumers: 62
- These surveys were done with consumers with cases open during January 2021 to September 2021, 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 2021.
 - Unlike 2020, no pauses or changes to our initial data collection plan were necessary to complete data collection.
- 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 29.1%.
 - This marks a decline in response rate compared to prior years. Declines in response rate have been common over the COVID pandemic period.
- 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	73	77	76
Experience with Services Provided by VR	75	74	79	81
Experience with Staff and Counselors	86	85	89	86
Communications with Staff	74	73	79	75
Customer Control and Involvement	79	79	79	79
Outcomes and Meeting Goals	80	80	82	79
Ease of the application process for VR services	77	77	77	73
Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability	88	89	90	66
Satisfaction with current employment	75	74	77	N/A
Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes)	90%	90%	93%	92%
Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no)	75%	73%	82%	85%



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 remained stable compared to 2020, despite individuals being better prepared for many of the problems caused by the pandemic.
- Individuals were generally more likely to say they would recommend the program to their friends in 2021 compared to 2020.
- Those completing their **IPE to 6 months in service** were more positive about their control and involvement than other groups, and less likely to report experiencing problems.
- Unlike prior years, those with **closed cases** were much more positive than other groups. They reported a more positive experience than others for all core metrics except outcomes and meeting goals and experiencing problems.

Trends to Watch

Less Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- The **least positive** general VR domain is Overall Satisfaction and Expectations and Communications with Staff (both 73).
- Other less positive domains include:
 - Experience with Services Provided by VR
 - Ease of the Application
 - Satisfaction with Employment
- Those **in-service 6 to 12 months** are less positive about every domain and key outcome. While they still report an experience that is positive overall, this group felt challenged by services to a greater extent than any other.
- General VR consumers consistently experience more problems than any other population, as in prior years.

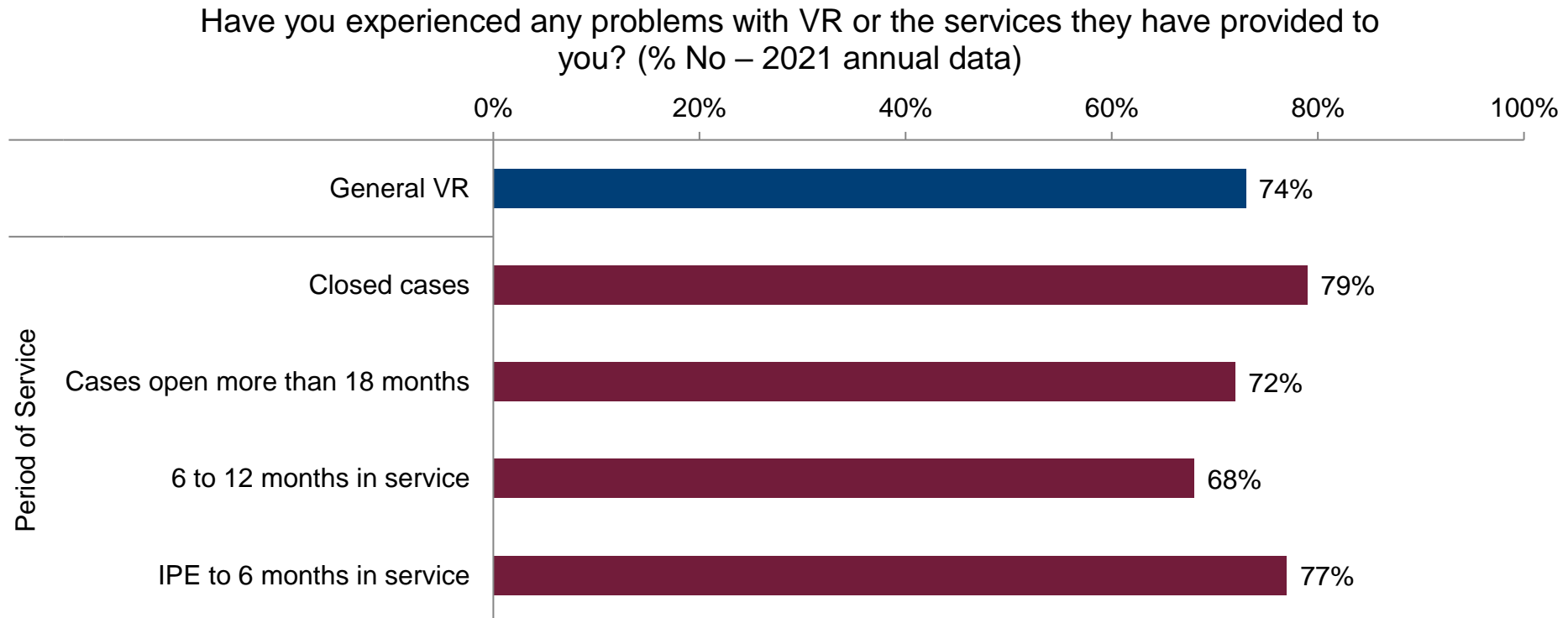
Nevada VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics for General VR - Trends

Domain	2020 T3	2021 T1	2021 T2	2021 T3
Overall Satisfaction and Expectations	72	73	73	74
Experience with Services Provided by VR	74	75	74	74
Experience with Staff and Counselors	85	86	85	86
Communications with Staff	73	72	73	75
Customer Control and Involvement	77	79	78	78
Outcomes and Meeting Goals	76	80	78	80
Ease of the application process for VR services	77	75	78	79
Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability	89	88	90	88
Satisfaction with current employment	79	71	77	77
Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes)	88	90	88	92
Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no)	72	74	74	74

Problems Experienced

26% of consumers reported experiencing a problem with VR or the services they were provided.

- Of those experiencing a problem, 33% indicate that Nevada VR worked to resolve the problem.



Types of Problems Experienced by General VR consumers

Type of Problem or Issue	% Experiencing
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	16%
Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability	16%
Did not receive employment	11%
Better communication needed	5%
Services offered were not effective	6%
Counselor was not helpful or supportive	6%
Didn't receive job search help	6%

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 831 consumers that provided additional feedback. This is 72% of interviewed general VR consumers.

Consumer Feedback

	%
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	25%
Covid-19 related problems	15%
Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems	14%
Better communication needed	10%
Forms and paperwork hard, complicated	11%
Counselor was not helpful or supportive	11%
Lots of paperwork, too long, make it shorter	10%
Calls, mail not returned for days, weeks, had to wait too long for return call	10%



Employment and job satisfaction



Employment

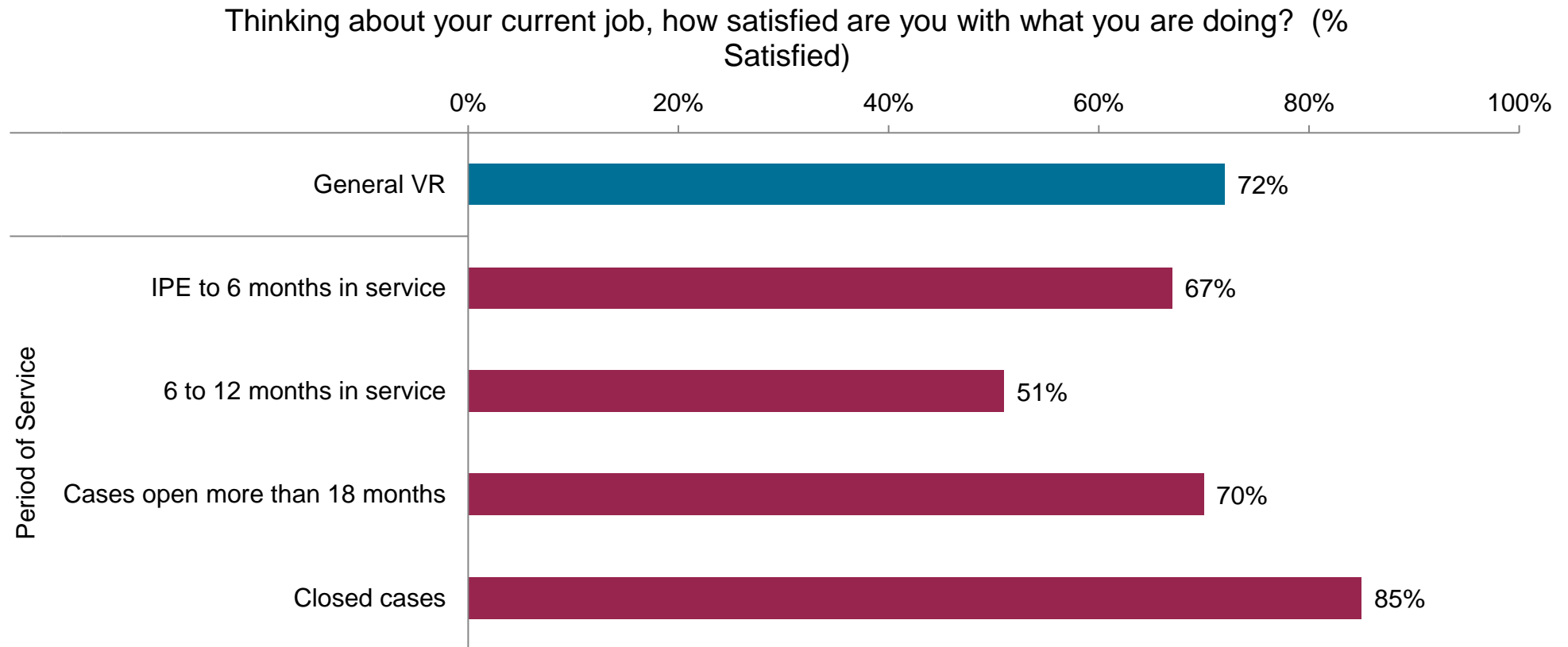
41% of General VR consumers are working.

Finally, these last few questions ask about what you are currently doing. Are you currently...?
(2021 Annual Data)

	%
Working full time, that is, more than 35 hours per week	23%
Working part time	18%
Currently looking for a job	38%
Keeping house	17%
In school or receiving job training	20%
Currently unable to work	12%
Volunteering your time	10%

Job Satisfaction

72% of employed consumers are satisfied with their job.



Job Satisfaction

Why are you not satisfied with your current job? (2021 Annual Data)

	%
Had another job, career, training in mind	12%
Need a job aligned with skills, training	10%
Dissatisfied with aspects or parts of job	7%
Problems with employer or coworker	7%
Not a career move, only temporary job	6%
Bored with job, been at job too long, burnt out, need change	6%



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

- Accessibility of the VR Office is the **most positive** aspect of their experience followed by Experience with VR Staff and Counselors.
- 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,
 - Communication with staff,
 - Overall satisfaction,
 - Outcomes and meeting goals, and
 - Satisfaction with current employment.

Trends to Watch

Less Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- **Least positive** domains are Ease of the Application Process and Overall Satisfaction and Expectations.
- Communication has been trending down throughout the year.
- Declining Domains (two or more consecutive trimesters)
 - Communication with Staff
 - Ease of the Application Process
 - Customer Control and Involvement
 - Recommend VR (98% in T2 dropped to 92% in T3 of 2021)
- Despite the declines in 2010, Youth are still very positive overall.

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

Domain	2020 T3	2021 T1	2021 T2	2021 T3
Overall Satisfaction and Expectations	76	75	79	78
Experience with Services Provided by VR	76	78	81	78
Experience with Staff and Counselors	86	88	88	91
Communications with Staff	75	80	79	78
Customer Control and Involvement	78	79	75	80
Outcomes and Meeting Goals	82	78	86	83
Ease of the application process for VR services	74	74	77	78
Accessibility of the VR office for someone with your type of disability	88	90	89	91
Satisfaction with current employment	76	82	86	70
Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the VR program for help? (% yes)	93	91	98	92
Did you experience any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you? (% no)	77	86	87	80

Youth in Transition Services

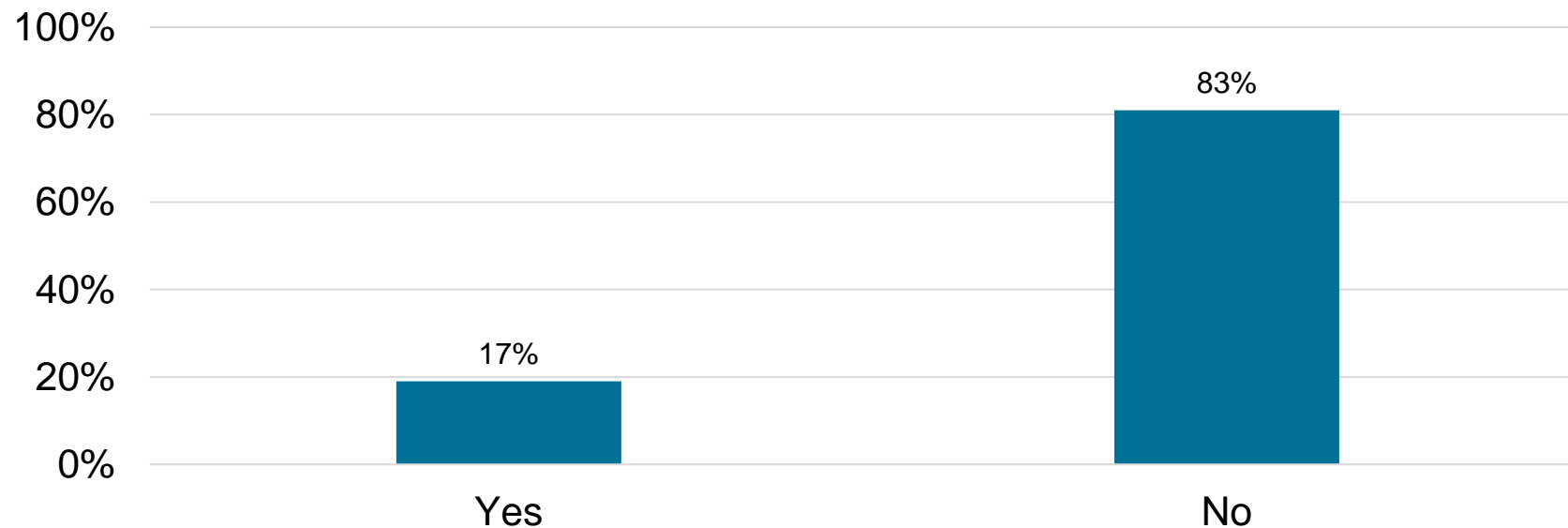
- A series of questions was asked to assess use of special services targeted toward youth in transition.
 - Almost all those receiving these services found them valuable.

	% Receiving Service	% Finding the Service Valuable
Job exploration counseling or career counseling	57%	92%
Work based learning experiences including a job, internship, or volunteering	56%	97%
Counseling on opportunities to attend college, learn a trade, or get a professional certification after high school	47%	96%
Workplace readiness to help get ready for the challenges of work	61%	97%
Instruction in self-advocacy to help you live the life you want including peer mentoring	44%	100%

Problems Experienced

- 17% of youth consumers reported experiencing a problem with VR or the services they were provided.
 - Of those experiencing a problem, 46% indicate that Nevada VR worked to resolve the problem.

**Have you experienced any problems with VR or the services they have provided to you?
(2021 Annual Data)**



Types of Problems Experienced by YIT Consumers

Type of Problem or Issue	% Experiencing
Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability	15%
Counselor was not helpful or supportive	13%
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	11%
Vendor rude, disrespectful, unprofessional	7%
Time lag to get services, appointments	7%
Services offered by VR were not effective	7%
Issues with vendor in general	7%
Need more guidance, support, explanation	6%

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 21 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

	%
Forms and paperwork hard, complicated	16%
Better communication needed	13%
Covid-19 related problems	13%
Received no help in reaching plan or goals	12%
Services offered by VR were not effective	11%
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	11%
Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability	7%



Older Individuals Who are Blind



Trends to Watch

Positive Aspects of the Consumer Experience

- **OIB program consumers report overall positive experiences, but not as positive as they have been in the past.**
- The **most positive** part of their experience is working with OIB program staff and counselors.
- Other positive areas include:
 - Experience with Services Provided by Nevada OIB program,
 - Customer Control and Involvement,
 - Outcomes and Meeting Goals, and
 - Overall Satisfaction and Expectations.

Several domains declined in 2021 trimester 1 but have since notably improved:

- Outcomes and meeting goals,
- Overall Satisfaction and Expectations, and
- 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.
- More OIB program consumers have experienced problem with the program than other populations.
- Communication with the OIB program was a challenge throughout 2021 and has historically been a lower domain.
- OIB program consumers experience issues with office accessibility more often than other populations. It is the lowest domain score among this population.

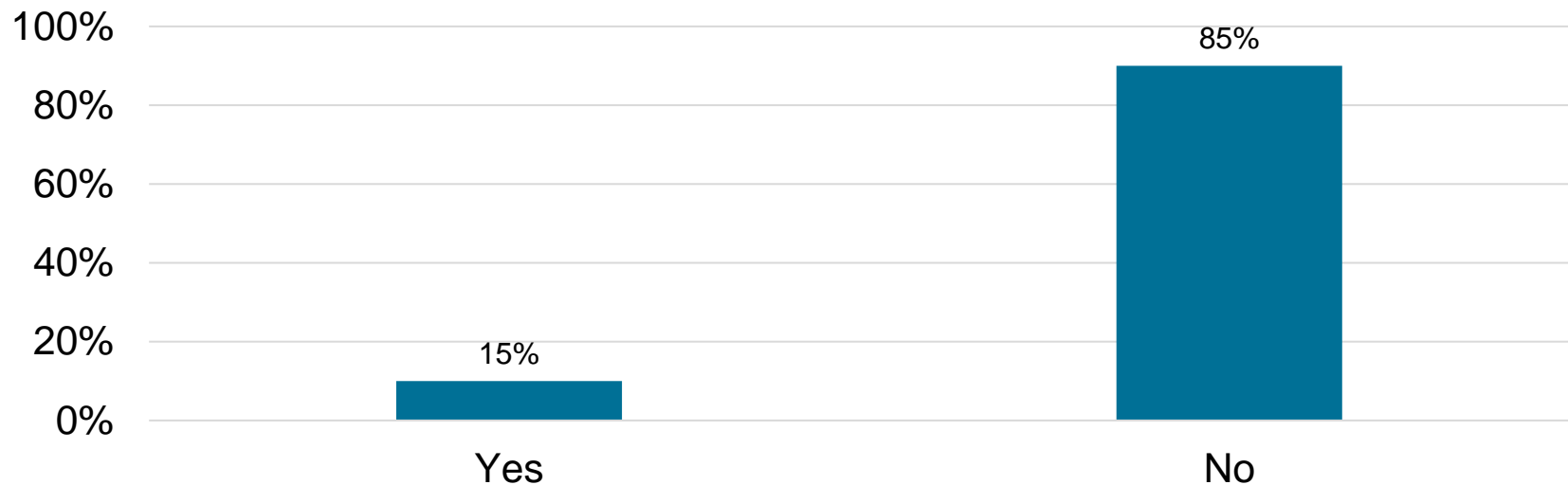
Nevada VR Consumer Experience Core Metrics for Older Individuals Who are Blind - Trends

Domain	2020 T3	2021 T1	2021 T2	2021 T3
Overall Satisfaction and Expectations	86	73	75	78
Experience with Services Provided by the OIB program	89	74	83	82
Experience with Staff and Counselors	92	85	85	87
Communications with Staff	84	76	78	71
Customer Control and Involvement	86	84	80	75
Outcomes and Meeting Goals	86	71	76	87
Ease of the application process for OIB program services	76	76	68	76
Accessibility of the OIB program office for someone with your type of disability	83	76	70	56
Would you tell your friends with disabilities to go to the OIB program for help? (% yes)	89	93	91	91
Did you experience any problems with the OIB program or the services they have provided to you? (% no)	90	86	83	87

Problems Experienced

- 15% of consumers reported experiencing a problem, the least of any population.
 - Of those experiencing a problem, only 11% 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?
(2021 Annual Data)**



Types of Problems Experienced by OIB Program Consumers

Type of Problem or Issue	% Experiencing
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	67%
Did not receive employment, VR could not find me a job	50%
Listen to customer, understand needs, wants, ability	33%

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

	%
Time lag to get services, appointments	26%
Counselor did not return calls, emails or follow up	19%
Forms and paperwork hard, complicated	19%
Counselor was not helpful or supportive	19%
Covide-19 related problems	19%
Better communication needed	16%
Need more information about services offered, not enough information provided	16%
Transportation in general, do not have transportation, need transportation	13%
Changing counselors, switching too much, causes problems	13%



COVID-19



New COVID-19 Items

- This section details the questions added in August 2020 to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the consumer experience.
- Questions added are:
 - COVID1. In what ways has the corona virus 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	28%	27%	31%	29%
Process has slowed down, delays in achieving goals	21%	23%	10%	13%
Difficulty communicating, hard to get in touch with counselor	18%	19%	7%	8%
Services stopped, waiting for services	10%	9%	16%	21%
VR is closed	8%	9%	6%	13%
Employers are not hiring	6%	7%	2%	-
All of it, everything was affected	6%	7%	3%	4%
Difficulty with school, online classes	5%	3%	13%	4%
Had to stop working	2%	2%	-	-
Isolated, can't leave home	2%	1%	7%	8%
Stopped looking for work	1%	1%	2%	-
Don't have necessary equipment (computer)	1%	1%	-	4%
Delayed medical care	1%	1%	-	13%
Other	8%	7%	10%	4%
DK-REF	1%	1%	0%	0%

COVID-19 Impact on the Consumer Experience

- Despite its broader impacts, the pandemic did not affect services for a majority of consumers.
- 20% 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 (12%) and Youth (17%) stopped looking for work.

	Overall	General VR	Youth in Transition	OIB
Put VR services on hold	20%	21%	15%	28%
Stopped looking for work	12%	11%	17%	8%
Neither	18%	18%	14%	28%

COVID-19 Impact On the Employed

- Among those who are currently unemployed, 23% of general VR and 20% of youth in transition lost a job because of COVID-19.
- Among general VR, 43% were laid off while 47% of youth experienced a layoff.
- Around one-fifth left a job because of concern for the health.

	Lost a job Due to COVID (% Yes among those Unemployed)	Among those who lost a job due to COVID...		
		Laid off from your job	Furloughed	Concerned for your safety and left voluntarily
Overall	22%	44%	15%	19%
General VR	23%	43%	17%	18%
Youth in Transition	20%	47%	-	27%



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.
 - A small percentage lost a job or stopped looking for one.
- The **most positive** aspects of the consumer experience is working with staff and counselors and accessibility of the program office.
- **The YIT population** 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
 - Increase accessibility of the office and to counselors

Areas of Focus for Quality Improvement

- **In addition to 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
 - Evaluate where customer is with disability (OIB program specifically)
 - Take specific interests into account when creating goals

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 increased consistently in 2021 among General VR and OIB and remained stable among Youth
 - **Outcomes and meeting goals** is also declining for both General VR and Youth, although it remains high among the OIB population.
 - OIB and General VR are more likely to **recommend VR/OIB program** compared to this time in 2020.
 - The **application process** remains one of the more negative aspects of the experience.
 - OIB consumers report considerably more difficulty accessing offices than at any prior point.

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
 - We predict online surveys will move to become the primary format for data collection as the survey evolves
- 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**
- **Probe the potential benefits of moving to an online-first contact method**
 - **Counter decreasing- but still above average- response rates**
 - **Cost effectiveness**
- **What else?**



Thank you!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

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