

# Survey Results and Analysis Outreach to Unserved Geographic Areas and Underserved Populations

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## Background

Centers continuously express an interest in strengthening their efforts to serve areas and populations that are currently unserved or underserved. In terms of geographic areas, this is often rural areas of a state. In terms of populations, this includes racial and ethnic minorities and various disability populations. This short survey asks questions that will help the IL NET determine what areas of training and technical assistance would be of most value to the CILs concerning outreach and inclusion. This report summarizes the results from the 88 respondents who completed the survey.

## Summary of Survey Results

When asked about which areas of specific training would be most useful out of 12 choices, “responding to rural issues such as lack of transportation systems, lack of services and other resources, rural demographics and economics, etc.” was marked by 64.8% of respondents; “using technology to provide services across vast distances” was marked by 62.5% of respondents; and “how to do effective outreach and inclusion of a wide diversity of individuals” was marked by 59.1%. The remaining choices:

- Designing and managing a CIL infrastructure that can accommodate and include a wide range of consumer characteristics and needs – 54.5%
- Creating a CIL infrastructure to manage service provision throughout large territories – 48.9%
- Funding opportunities for rural areas – 53.4%
- Training and orienting CIL staff to work with a wide diversity of individuals – 53.4%
- Networking and collaborating with other agencies to provide services across a wide geographic area – 45.5%
- Dealing with mental health systems – 45.5%
- Working with non-English speaking individuals – 45.5%
- Dealing with developmental disabilities systems – 42%
- Other (answers included developing a database of available resources and increasing the diversity of staff and volunteers) - 3.4%

When asked which of the topics areas would attract them to actually participate in a training, there were three that ranked highest:

- Funding opportunities for rural areas – 72.7%
- Responding to rural issues such as lack of transportation systems, etc. – 62.5%
- Training and orienting CIL staff to work with a wide diversity of individuals – 52.3%

When asked which areas (of 16 listed) currently provide significant challenges for your center, two items were noted as being particularly significant, “serving individuals in rural counties with limited or no transportation available” at 83% and “serving areas that have few or no support services” at 72.7%.

Other challenges include:

- Serving a geographic area that has vast distances – 55.7%
- Outreach to Hispanic individuals – 50%
- Using technology to provide services and build community in rural areas – 47.7%
- Outreach to Native Americans – 42%
- Outreach to individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired – 40.9%
- Balancing your center’s resources between a metropolitan area and rural areas – 36.4%
- Outreach to individuals who have mental illness – 33%
- Outreach to individuals who have developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities – 30.7%
- Outreach to African-American individuals – 27.3%
- Outreach to individuals who abuse alcohol or drugs – 27.3%
- Outreach to individuals who are elderly – 23.9%
- Outreach to individuals who have traumatic brain injury – 22.7%
- Outreach to other racial or ethnic groups (please specify) – 21.6% (answers included Asian, Pacific Islanders, Russian, those with criminal backgrounds, Isolates, and those with physical disabilities)
- Other (answers included deaf/blind individuals) – 6.8%

When asked the open-ended question, “Please state what you believe your center’s greatest challenge is in doing outreach to unserved geographic areas,” 23 respondents indicated that limited funding or staffing was the biggest challenge. A wide range of answers were given including “lack of transportation,” “locating consumers,” “few resources in counties,” and “harsh weather conditions.”

When asked the open-ended question, “Please state what you believe your center’s greatest challenge is in doing outreach to underserved populations,” 13 respondents indicated that limited funding or staffing was the biggest challenge. Other answers included “lack of staff competencies for working with certain populations,” lack of translation capabilities,” “lack of acceptance of CIL by certain cultures,” and “locating the people.”