

SILC Needs Assessment Survey: A Discussion on Current Approaches and Practices in Needs Assessment in SILCs

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Presenters:

Valerie Barnum-Yarger

Deb Cook

Susan Fager

Jeff Sheen

Larry Wanger

Brad Williams

Purpose of Survey

- To gain a better understanding of how Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs) across the states and territories are conducting needs assessment activities in relation to their state plan development in order to inform training and technical assistance efforts of the IL-NET.

Process

- 23 question telephone survey developed by the Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University and ILRU
- Surveys conducted between July and August
- 54 out of 56 SILCs completed the survey

Survey Respondents

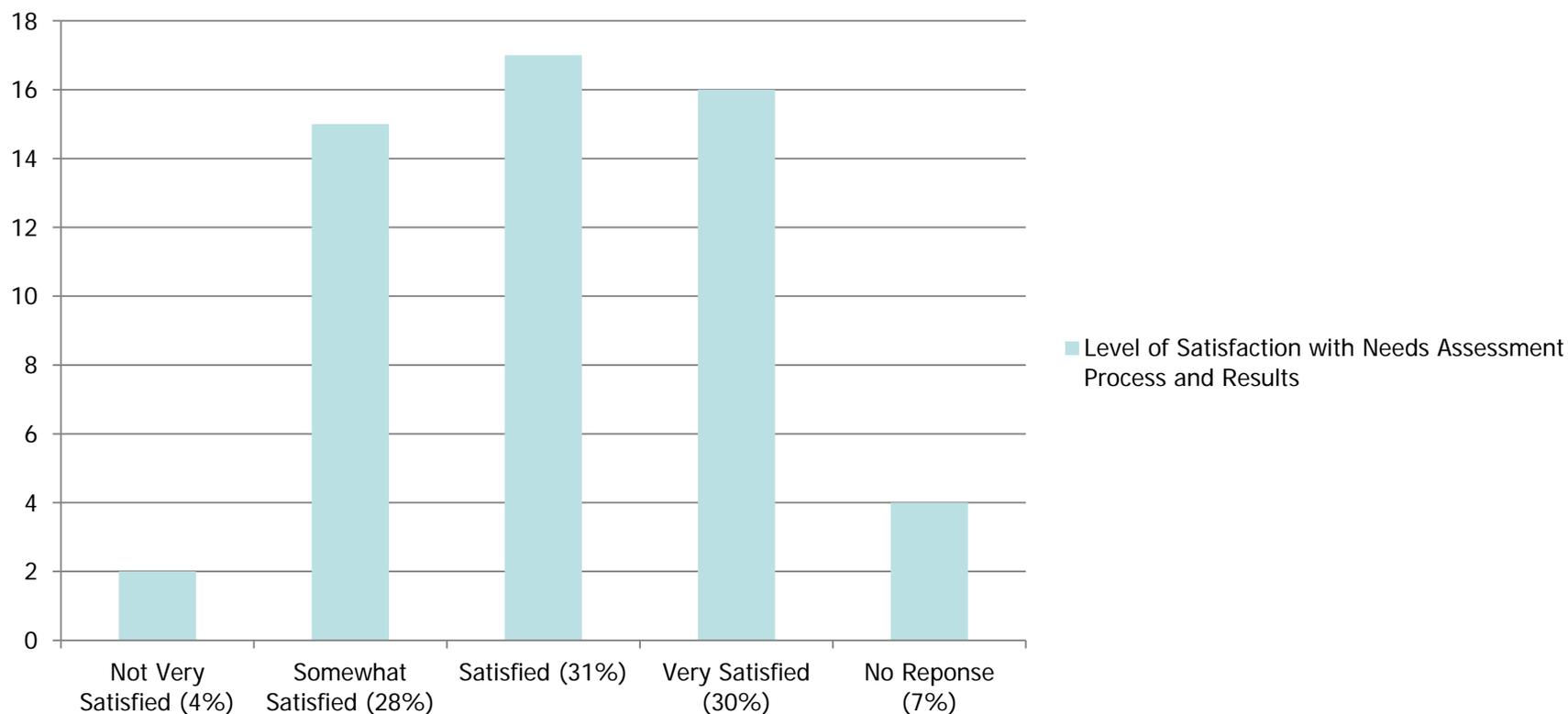
- 39 completed by Executive Directors, 6 by DSU Liaisons, and 8 by SILC Chair
- Median number of years with SILC was 6
- 3 respondents with SILC less than one year
- 3 respondents with SILC more than 20 years

Key Findings—Methods

- Over half the respondents (52%) used some form of survey (mail, Web, or phone) as a data collection method, but only 5% of these knew how many surveys were actually distributed.
- The majority of respondents did not have a good sense of how many responses they ultimately received from their various data collection activities.
- Only three respondents established a pre-determined minimum response rate for data collection; most used a cut-off date versus a sample size criteria to end data collection activities.

Key Findings—Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction with Needs Assessment Process and Results



Key Findings—Miscellaneous

- 33 respondents (61%) used CIL consumer satisfaction data as part of the needs assessment data.
- Just over half of these respondents (55%) indicated that the CIL consumer satisfaction data was standardized among the CILs in their state.
- 20 respondents reported that they used the results of their needs assessment for purposes beyond the state plan development.
- 14 respondents indicated that members of the SILC had not received training on how to conduct an effective needs assessment and an additional 13 were unsure if training had been received (*this is a total of 27 or 54% of the respondents*).

Relationships in the Data (a.k.a. Correlations)

- Having been involved with the SILC for a longer period of time was associated with:
 - higher levels of satisfaction with the needs assessment process;
 - a higher likelihood that CIL data was used as part of the needs assessment; and
 - a respondent being more likely to use the needs assessment data for purposes other than developing the state plan.

Relationships in the Data (a.k.a. Correlations), cont'd.

- Higher levels of satisfaction with the needs assessment process was associated with:
 - Having used available data from other sources as part of the needs assessment (more comprehensive data); and
 - Having used the data for purposes beyond the state plan (more bang for the buck).

General Recommendations

1. Work with SILCs to develop and provide training on the fundamentals of conducting effective needs assessments to improve the rigor of methods and quality of data collected.
2. Explore the pros and cons of working to standardize the CIL consumer satisfaction data collection (at least at the state level).
3. Encourage SILCs to broaden the sources of existing data that they use to inform their needs assessments.
4. Help SILCs connect their needs assessment process to more than just compliance and development of the state plan. Make clearer connections between needs assessment data and day-to-day goals of SILC.

Limitations of Study

- This survey is a “snapshot” of current practices and is a preliminary discussion of the topic.
- Additional data collections (e.g., in-depth interviews regarding best practice) could yield additional helpful information.
- Survey responses are from one individual involved with each SILC. Having other SILC members complete the survey or completing as a group may provide additional information.

Promising Practices

1. Use available data from other sources beyond VR and CILs as part of needs assessment (e.g., Aging, DD Councils, Census, local government, etc.)
2. Use the results of the needs assessment for purposes beyond the state plan (e.g., media plan, legislative advocacy, evaluate existing programs, coordinate services with other agencies, etc.)

Questions and Answers

Discussion



Contact Information

- Valerie Barnum-Yarger – valarie@misilc.org
- Deb Cook – debcook@uw.edu
- Susan Fager- susan.fager@state.co.us
- Jeff Sheen – jeff.sheen@usu.edu
- Larry Wanger – larry@azsilc.org
- Brad Williams – BradW@nysilc.org

Wrap Up and Evaluation

Please *click the link below* to complete your evaluation of this program:

<https://vovici.com/wsb.dll/s/12291g54e3a>

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