
**San Diego State University
Interwork Institute**

**Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Services
and
State Rehabilitation Council
Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment**

**Submitted to:
Oregon State Rehabilitation Council
Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

**Prepared by:
Mark Tucker, Ph.D., CRC
Anne Ordway, M.S., CRC
Duane Bradford
Seneca Sharp
Vanessa Smith
Interwork Institute
San Diego State University**

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Executive Summary

The Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the State Rehabilitation Council and the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University jointly conducted an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of persons with disabilities residing in the state of Oregon. The purpose of the assessment was to provide planners with information pertinent to the allocation of resources, to provide a rationale for the development of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Service's State Plan, and to comply with the needs assessment mandate in the Rehabilitation Act.

The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved four primary data-gathering approaches:

- Electronic and telephone surveys conducted with four stakeholder groups (individuals with disabilities, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities, employers, and OVRs staff),
- Focus groups conducted with three stakeholder groups (individuals with disabilities, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities, and OVRs staff),
- Key informant interviews conducted with employers and with individuals identified as knowledgeable about the needs of individuals with disabilities in the state, and
- Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data relevant to individuals with disabilities.

Through the data collection efforts, researchers solicited information from four primary stakeholder groups: (a) potential or actual consumers of OVRs located throughout the state; (b) representatives of organizations that provide services to individuals who are potential or actual consumers of OVRs; (c) OVRs staff; and (d) representatives of businesses operating in Oregon. The approach was designed to capture input from a variety of perspectives in order to acquire a sense of the multi-faceted needs of persons with disabilities in the state. Responses to the individual survey reflect the opinions of current and former clients of OVRs as well as individuals on the agency's waiting list for services. Efforts were made to gather information pertinent to un-served and under-served populations through inquiries with individuals who serve a broad range of persons with disabilities in the state (whether they are affiliated with OVRs or not). Likewise, the OVRs staff that was surveyed serves clients representing a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. Efforts were made to solicit responses from businesses reflecting the opinions of employers representing a variety of industries

Four hundred and eight survey responses were received from individuals with disabilities, 46 partner surveys were completed, 101 OVRs staff surveys were completed, and 129 business surveys were completed. A total of 98 persons participated in 12 focus group conducted in Ontario, Bend, Medford, and Salem, while 18 individuals participated in the key informant interviews.

The following summary highlights some of the most commonly cited needs associated with achieving employment goals and accessing OVRs services derived from the surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews.

Barriers to achieving employment goals

Individuals with disabilities, representatives of partner organizations, and OVRs staff all identified the lack of available jobs as a frequently-cited barrier to achieving employment goals. Similarly, employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities were also among the most frequently-identified barriers for all three respondent groups. Both partners and OVRs staff frequently identified housing issues as a barrier to achieving employment goals. Key informants identified the following as the top three barriers to employment encountered by people with disabilities:

- Attitudinal barriers,
- Accommodations, especially assistive technology, and
- Lack of available jobs.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities

A question about barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities was asked of partner and OVRs staff respondents. Both partners and OVRs staff identified employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities most frequently as a barrier to achieving employment goals for persons with the most significant disabilities. Both respondent groups also frequently identified not having job skills and the lack of available jobs as barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with the most significant disabilities. In addition, most key informants agreed that the barriers to employment are greater for people whom OVRs classifies as having the most significant disabilities. In general, the sentiment was that employment barriers increased proportionately to an individual's functional limitations.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition

Partners and OVRs staff were asked about barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. There was noteworthy consistency between partners and OVRs staff with respect to the most frequently cited barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Both groups identified not having job skills, a lack of education or training, a lack of job search skills, and a lack of available jobs as among the top barriers for achieving employment goals for youth in transition. The general consensus among key informants was that the barriers to employment for youth with disabilities are unique. Many cited shortfalls in youth in transition programs. Others described youths' resistance to a diagnosis and their struggle with the stigma of disability.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities

Partners and OVRs staff were asked about barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. There was remarkable consistency between partners and OVRs staff with respect to the top barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities, however the number of respondents to this question was low and as a result caution is advised in interpreting the findings. Both groups identified the same four barriers – language barriers, not having education or training, not having job skills, and not enough jobs available – as among the top barriers to achieving employment goals for this group.

Most informants agreed that minority status is an additional complicating factor when attempting to secure employment. Informants stated that the service systems are inadequately equipped to address the needs of diverse individuals. Furthermore, cultures have different perceptions of disability and may not seek services, especially from state or federal agencies. Thus, there is a need to direct outreach campaigns to minority groups.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services

Individuals with disabilities, partners, and OVRs staff were asked about barriers to accessing OVRs services. All three respondent groups identified two items – limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation and difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment – as among the top barriers to accessing OVRs services. Both partner and OVRs staff respondents identified difficulties accessing training or education programs as among the top barriers to accessing services.

Business needs, disability in the workplace

With respect to disability in the workplace, the top needs indicated by respondents to the business survey were associated with financial incentives and training for workers with disabilities:

- Obtaining information on other incentives for employing workers with disabilities
- Obtaining information on other training programs available for workers with disabilities
- Obtaining information on tax credits for employing workers with disabilities

Responses to needs associated with the applicants with disabilities section of the survey generally reflected a lower percentage of respondents indicating a need. The top responses pertained to needs for assistance recruiting and assessing worker characteristics:

- Assessing applicants' skills
- Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills
- Recruiting applicants with good work habits

Focus groups

Most unmet needs were captured in three categories: service systems, other (needs), and mobility. A service system is defined as all agencies or organizations (in addition to OVRs) that provide vocational or independent living services to individuals with disabilities. The predominant unmet needs in this category included the following:

- Cooperation and information sharing amongst agencies/organizations,
- Health care services, and
- Employer outreach and education.

Next, a large proportion of unmet needs for people with disabilities were relegated to the “other” category. The needs expressed in this category do not succinctly fit into any one category yet are clearly related to unmet employment and independent living needs. The three unmet needs described most frequently included the following:

- Job placement (including more job developers and better coordination of services),
- Assistance navigating the various state and federal systems, and
- More housing in general and affordable housing in particular.

Finally, several unmet needs related to mobility were expressed. This category encompasses a wide array of needs including everything from public transportation to accessible housing. The unmet mobility needs included the following:

- Expanded public transportation routes,
- Expanded hours of operation for the regional public transportation systems, and
- Physically accessible buildings.

All of the needs described represent areas of high consensus within a region and across the state.

The needs assessment in the State of Oregon is the result of a cooperative effort between the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council. These efforts solicited information concerning the needs of persons with disabilities from persons with disabilities, service providers, OVRs staff and businesses for the purpose of providing OVRs and the SRC with direction for addressing structure and resource demands. The needs assessment effort is based upon the contributions of 800 individuals representing different stakeholder groups. It is anticipated that the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council will use this information in a strategic manner that results in provision of vocational rehabilitation services designed to address current needs of individuals with disabilities who seek employment.

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Impetus for Needs Assessment

The Rehabilitation Act requires all state vocational rehabilitation agencies to assess the rehabilitation needs of individuals within the respective state and relate the planning of programs and services to those needs. According to Section 101 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, each participating state shall submit a state plan for vocational services that contains “the plans, policies, and methods to be followed in carrying out the State plan and in its administration and supervision, including the results of a comprehensive, state-wide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with severe disabilities residing within the State and the State’s response to the assessment.” In response to this mandate and to ensure that adequate efforts are being made to serve the diverse needs of persons with disabilities in Oregon, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) entered into a contract with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University for the purpose of jointly developing and implementing methods for a comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

Purpose of Needs Assessment

At the outset, it was expected that the statewide needs assessment project would identify needs of persons with disabilities related to desired employment outcomes. Data collection efforts solicited input from a broad spectrum of persons with disabilities, service providers, businesses, and OVRs staff. It is expected that data from the needs assessment effort will provide OVRs with direction for current planning and allocation concerns and guidance in planning for future structure and resource demands.

Utilization of Needs Assessment Outcomes

It is anticipated that information and data from the needs assessment project will provide a source of information for the strategic development of the state plan. The data that appear in this report are relevant to the following activities:

1. Projecting needed services and redeployment of services,
2. Identifying common and unique needs of specific groups and populations,
3. Identifying perceived gaps in vocational rehabilitation services, and
4. Providing data and a rationale for the development of the Oregon State Plan and amendments to the plan.

Description of Needs Assessment Process

The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved four primary data-gathering approaches:

- Electronic and telephone surveys conducted with four stakeholder groups (individuals with disabilities, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities, employers, and OVRs staff),

- Focus groups conducted with three stakeholder groups (individuals with disabilities, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities, and OVRs staff),
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- Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data relevant to individuals with disabilities.

Through the data collection efforts, researchers solicited information from four primary stakeholder groups: (a) potential or actual consumers of OVRs located throughout the state; (b) representatives of organizations that provide services to individuals who are potential or actual consumers of OVRs; (c) OVRs staff; and (d) representatives of businesses operating in Oregon. In addition, the approach was designed to capture input from a variety of perspectives in order to acquire a sense of the multi-faceted needs of persons with disabilities in the state. Responses to the individual survey reflect the opinions of current and former clients of OVRs as well as individuals on the agency's waiting list for services. Efforts were made to gather information pertinent to un-served and under-served populations through inquiries with individual who serve a broad range of persons with disabilities in the state (whether they are affiliated with OVRs or not). Efforts were made to solicit responses from businesses reflecting the opinions of employers representing a variety of industries. Likewise, the OVRs staff that was surveyed serves clients representing a broad range of backgrounds and experiences.

The needs assessment approach was designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative data about the needs of persons with disabilities. Focus group and key informant interview activities yielded qualitative data that may be used to complement and lend depth to the findings of the survey efforts and the analysis of extant data. The use of multiple data collection strategies, both quantitative and qualitative, facilitates data collection that captures both the breadth and the depth of concerns relevant to individuals with disabilities in Oregon. In addition, the use of multiple data collection approaches enhances the ability to generalize assessment findings to larger populations with a degree of confidence.

Inherent in any type of research effort are limitations that may constrain the utility of the data that is generated. Therefore, it is important to highlight some of the most significant issues that may limit the ability to generalize the needs assessment findings to larger populations. Inherent in the methods used to collect data is the potential for bias in the selection of participants. The findings that are reported reflect only the responses of those who could be reached and who were willing to participate. Individuals who were disenfranchised, dissatisfied, or who did not wish to be involved with OVRs may have declined to participate. A second significant concern is that the information gathered from respondents may not accurately represent the broader concerns of all potential constituents and stakeholders. Data gathered from service providers, for example, may reflect only the needs of individuals who are already recipients of services, to the exclusion of those who are not presently served. Although efforts were made to gather information from a variety of stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process, it would be presumptuous to conclude with certainty that those who contributed to the focus groups, the key informant interviews, and the survey research efforts constitute a fully

representative sample of all of the potential stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process in the state.

Methodology

Individual Survey

Instrument. The instrument used for the telephone survey of individuals with disabilities (Appendix A) was based upon the telephone survey instrument developed by OVRs, the SRC, and Public Policy Insights for the 2007 statewide needs assessment. Minor modifications were made with the approval of the work group to the 2007 instrument. The work group and the researchers endeavored to make revisions without greatly altering the original intent of the survey instrument to facilitate comparisons between the 2007 and 2010 needs assessment findings.

The telephone survey instrument was designed to elicit consumers' perspectives in three main areas. First, respondents were asked a variety of questions related to vocational service and independent living needs (e.g., education, training, job skills, language skills, etc.) and whether OVRs had helped them with the identified needs. Next, respondents were asked whether they had experienced specific barriers to accessing OVRs services (e.g., public transportation barriers to accessing services, language barriers to accessing services). Finally, respondents were asked to provide specific demographic data in order to collect information descriptive of the respondent population.

Survey population. A definition of the population of individuals to be surveyed by telephone was developed through discussion between the work group and the project team at SDSU. From its client database, OVRs provided to the project team at SDSU telephone numbers of individuals who, between the period of October 1, 2009 and April 30, 2010, met the following criteria:

- Completed an application for OVRs services but had not yet been determined,
- Had been determined eligible for OVRs services but did not yet have a completed individualized plan for employment,
- Had a completed an individualized plan for employment and were receiving vocational rehabilitation services through OVRs,
- Had a case with OVRs which was closed and were determined rehabilitated, or
- Had a case with OVRs that was closed for other reasons.

This set of criteria was intended to result in survey responses from individuals with disabilities who were currently receiving services from OVRs, individuals with disabilities who had received services from OVRs in the past, and individuals who had applied for but were not yet receiving services from OVRs.

Data collection. Prior to the inauguration of the consumer telephone interviews, efforts were made to alert OVRs consumers of the process. Staff was sent a brief description of the process by the Director via email and was instructed on how to answer questions posed by consumers. Also, written notices were posted in all OVRs offices.

Trained interviewers with the Social Science Research Laboratory (SSRL) at San Diego State University conducted the telephone interviews using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) surveying technique. CATI is beneficial for a variety of reasons: (1) It customizes the flow of the survey questions based upon the responses provided by an individual; (2) it helps to facilitate a consistent interviewing approach when surveys are conducted by several different interviewers, and (3) it improves the rate at which data can be collected. Survey responses collected through the CATI interviewing approach were then exported to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and delivered to the project team at SDSU for analysis.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Numerous efforts were made to assure the confidentiality of survey respondents. OVRs provided the project team at SDSU with consumers' telephone numbers for conducting the surveys but did not include identifying information, such as names and addresses, that might be used to discern the identity of an individual. Also, the telephone interviewers with the SSRL did not ask individuals for their names and addresses. In addition, responses to the telephone surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results, which served to further obscure the identities of individual survey respondents.

Accessibility. Several measures were taken to ensure accessibility to the survey process. First, the survey instrument was translated into Spanish, and interviewers at SSRL were capable of conducting the interview in either English or Spanish. In addition, an Internet-based version of the survey was created and made available to individuals with communication impairments who expressed a desire to complete the survey electronically rather than by telephone. Also, in instances where an individual could not complete the survey due to his or her disability, a family member or an attendant was permitted to respond on behalf of the individual.

Data analysis. Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed with a degree of consistency by respondents.

Number of completed surveys. The SSRL completed 408 telephone interviews with individuals with disabilities, family members, and attendants.

Partner Survey

Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of community partners (Appendix B) was based upon a modified version of the OVRs staff survey developed by OVRs, the SRC, and Public Policy Insights for the 2007 statewide needs assessment. Minor modifications were made to the 2007 staff survey instrument in order that the instructions and questions were directed to the community partners.

Survey population. Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as representatives of organizations that provide services, coordinate services, or serve an advocacy role for persons with disabilities.

Data collection. Data was gathered from this population through the use of an Internet-based survey. OVRs and the work group identified 147 partners for participation in the survey effort. Approximately one week before the survey was released OVRs sent the partners an e-mail message alerting them to the survey effort. Once the survey was active, OVRs sent an invitation and link to the survey by e-mail. Approximately ten days after the distribution of the initial invitation, another electronic notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. Survey responses collected through the electronic survey approach were then exported to SPSS by the project team at SDSU for analysis.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the partner survey were not asked to identify themselves or their organizations when completing the survey. In addition, responses to the electronic surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results that served to further obscure the identities of individual survey respondents.

Accessibility. The electronic partner survey was made available in two formats: a standard version and a text-only version for individuals who use screen-readers or other assistive technology. Respondents were also provided with the name and contact information for the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternate survey formats.

Data analysis. Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

Number of completed surveys. A total of 46 electronic surveys were completed by representatives of community partner agencies. Forty-five were completed using the standard form of the survey and one was completed using the text-only version.

OVRs Staff Survey

Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of OVRs staff (Appendix C) was based upon a modified version of the OVRs staff survey developed by OVRs, the SRC, and Public Policy Insights for the 2007 statewide needs assessment. The work group and researchers endeavored to make revisions without greatly altering the original intent of the survey instrument to facilitate comparisons between the 2007 and 2010 needs assessment findings.

Survey population. Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as all staff working for OVRs during August and September of 2010.

Data collection. Data was gathered from OVRs staff through the use of an Internet-based survey. All staff was sent an e-mail message alerting them to the survey effort approximately two weeks before the survey was released by the agency Director. Once the survey was made available, staff was sent an electronic invitation and link to the survey from the Director. Approximately ten days after the initial distribution, a subsequent notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. Survey responses collected through the electronic survey approach were then exported to SPSS by the project team at SDSU for analysis.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the staff survey were not asked to identify themselves by name when completing the survey. Responses to the electronic surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of individual survey respondents.

Accessibility. The electronic staff survey was made available in two formats: a standard version and a text-only version for individuals who use screen-readers or other assistive technology. Respondents were also provided with the name and contact information for the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternate survey formats.

Data analysis. Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

Number of completed surveys. A total of 101 electronic surveys were completed by OVRs staff. All were completed using the standard form of the survey; none were completed using the accessible text-only version.

Business Survey

Instrument. The business survey (Appendix D) differed markedly from the individual, community partner, and OVRs staff surveys. The business survey was much shorter in length and focused largely upon three subject areas: disability in the workplace, applicants with disabilities, and familiarity with a statewide media effort to encourage employers to hire workers with disabilities. A short section that prompted respondents to describe their businesses in terms of type of industry, years of operation, location, and number of employees concluded the business survey.

Survey population. OVRs and the work group provided the researchers at SDSU with names and addresses of 780 businesses located throughout the state. The businesses identified for inclusion in the survey process were those identified in OVRs records as businesses where one or more OVRs clients have been placed.

Data collection. Data was gathered from businesses through the use of a mailed survey form. Each business survey distributed was accompanied by a letter for the OVRs Director informing respondents of the purpose of the survey effort and soliciting their participation.

Respondents were also provided with a stamped, addressed return envelope in order facilitate a higher response rate. After initial distribution of the survey by mail in early August 2010, 49 surveys were returned to the sender due to improper addresses. These addresses were corrected by OVRs staff, and the project team mailed 49 replacement surveys to the revised addresses in early September 2010. Surveys returned by mail were then entered into SPSS by the Research Director at SDSU for analysis.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the business survey were not asked to identify themselves or their businesses when completing the survey. Completed surveys were returned directly by mail to the researchers at SDSU. Responses from the businesses were aggregated by the project team prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of the respondents.

Data analysis. Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed with a degree of consistency by respondents.

Number of completed surveys. A total of 129 surveys were completed by business respondents and returned by mail to the project team at SDSU.

Focus Groups

Instrument. The focus groups were conducted based on protocol developed by the researchers at SDSU (Appendix E). The central question raised in each of the focus group meetings was the following: “What are the most important employment-related needs encountered by people with disabilities?” When appropriate the moderator introduced additional questions prompting respondents to discuss needs associated with preparing for employment, obtaining employment, retaining employment, and increasing the employment of persons with disabilities. Participants in the partner agency and OVRs staff groups were also asked to discuss the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities; the needs of individuals from cultural, racial, or ethnic minority groups; and the needs of students with disabilities transitioning from high school.

Population. Three groups were conducted in each of the four regions identified by the needs assessment work group: (1) One group was comprised of individuals with disabilities, (2) the second group was comprised of representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities, and (3) the third group was comprised of OVRs staff. Focus group participants were recruited by OVRs staff in the four regions. Staff was asked to recruit at least six to eight participants in each group.

Data collection. A total of 12 focus groups were conducted in Ontario, Bend, Medford, and Salem from July 26, 2010 to August 13, 2010. The format of the focus groups was consistent across the regions. A few minutes were devoted to introductions, personal background, and rapport building in order to establish a productive focus group environment. The focus group moderator explained the purpose of the focus group and provided a brief

description of the larger needs assessment effort. The moderator explained the role of San Diego State University in the needs assessment effort and assured participants of the confidentiality of their statements. A note-taker recorded the discussion as it occurred.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Names and other identifying characteristics were not recorded by the note-taker. Focus group participants were informed that their responses would be treated as confidential information, would not be reported with information that could be used to identify them, and that information from multiple focus groups would be consolidated before results were reported. In addition, OVRS staff did not attend the focus groups consisting of individuals with disabilities and partner agencies in order to ensure an open dialogue amongst participants.

Accessibility. The project team included funds in its budget sufficient to pay for interpreting and other communication accommodations necessary to conduct the focus groups. However, no accommodations were requested.

Data analysis. Notes were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers at SDSU. Results were organized according to the following unmet needs that emerged frequently in the group discussions: mobility, communication, self-care, interpersonal skills, work skills, work tolerance, transition (for transition-age youth with disabilities), under-served groups, service systems, and other. Themes or concerns that surfaced with consistency across groups (within or across regions) were identified and reported as consensual themes in the report narrative.

Number of participants. A total of 98 persons participated in the 12 focus group meetings. The participation for each group in the four regions was the following:

- Ontario consumers 6, community partners 10, OVRS staff 8;
- Bend consumers 4, community partners 8, OVRS staff 4;
- Medford consumers 4, community partners 10, staff 11; and
- Salem consumers 12, community partners 13, staff 8.

Often, participation exceeded the expectations of the project team at SDSU.

Key Informant Interviews

Instrument. The instruments used for the key informant interviews (Appendix F) and employer interviews (Appendix G) were based on a slightly modified version of the instrument developed by OVRS, the SRC, and Public Policy Insights for the 2007 statewide needs assessment. The work group and researchers endeavored to make revisions without greatly altering the original intent of the interview protocols to facilitate comparisons between the 2007 and 2010 needs assessment findings.

Survey population. The key informant population was identified by OVRS and the work group and consisted of individuals who were perceived to be knowledgeable of the employment-related needs of individuals with disabilities in the state. A small number of employers were also identified as potential key informant interview participants. These employers represented

businesses where clients of OVRs had been placed in employment either through OVRs directly or through one of their partner organizations. OVRs and the work group provided the project team at SDSU with a list of 33 key informants and 59 representatives of the employer community.

Data collection. Key informant interviews were conducted from August 1, 2010 to September 10, 2010. All key informants (excluding the sample group of employers) were sent an e-mail message by the OVRs Director alerting them to the interview effort prior to contact by the researchers at SDSU. Individuals were contacted by phone a minimum of two times. Individuals were also contacted at least once by email (if email addresses were available.)

Key informant interviews were conducted by telephone. The general format of the interviews was consistent between representatives of agencies/organizations that provide services to people with disabilities and representatives of business and industry. First, participants were asked questions to ascertain their personal and professional expertise and their experience with OVRs. Participants were then asked open-ended questions about their perceptions of barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. Finally, participants were asked to share their perceptions of how OVRs could improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Employers were asked an additional question regarding their perception of OVRs's public awareness campaign.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Names and other identifying characteristics were not recorded by the interviewer. Participants were informed that their responses would be treated as confidential information, would not be reported with information that could be used to identify them, and would be consolidated with information from other respondents before results were reported.

Accessibility. The project team included funds in its budget sufficient to pay for communication accommodations necessary to conduct the key informant interviews. One individual with deafness requested the interview questions via email and responded similarly.

Data analysis. The interviewer took notes on the discussion as it occurred. The notes were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers at SDSU. Themes or concerns that surfaced with consistency across interviews were identified and are reported as common themes in the report narrative.

Number of participants. A total of 18 individuals (17 representatives of community agencies/organizations and one representative from business and industry) participated in the key informant interviews.

Analysis of Existing Data Sources

The project team at SDSU reviewed a variety of existing data sources for the purposes of identifying and describing OVRs's target population and sub-populations statewide and by distinct service areas. Data relevant to the population of the state, the population of persons with

disabilities in the state, and other demographic characteristics of residents of the state of Oregon were utilized in this analysis. Sources analyzed include the following:

- The 2008 American Community Survey,
- The 2008 Oregon Population Survey,
- The 2008 State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report,
- OVRs case service data, and
- Oregon Department of Education 2008 – 2009 Special Education Child Count.

Individual Survey Results

Respondent Characteristics

Interviewers with SSRL completed surveys with 408 individuals between July 20th and August 17th, 2010. One respondent indicated that he or she preferred to communicate in Spanish. The interview was then conducted in the individual's preferred language. The remaining 407 respondents expressed a preference for conducting the interview in English. One interview was conducted via TTY/TTD.

All respondents were 18 years of age or older. Of the 408 completed interviews, 360 (approximately 88.2%) were conducted with the person with the disability, 44 (approximately 10.8%) were completed with a family member, and four (approximately 1.0%) were completed with the individual's attendant.

The median interview length was 24 minutes. A total of 1,945 calls were placed in order to complete the 408 interviews (these calls included answered calls, unanswered calls, busy signals, refusals, disconnected numbers, unqualified respondents, wrong numbers, and requests for callbacks), yielding an AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research) response rate of 60% and an AAPOR cooperation rate of 91%.

Current clients of OVRs comprised 63.7% of the interview respondents (n = 260) while individuals with closed cases comprised the other 36.3% (n = 148). Two hundred twenty-one of the respondents (54.2%) indicated that at some point they had been notified by OVRs that they were on a waitlist for services. Sixty-six respondents (16.2%) indicated that they had been notified by OVRs that they were currently on a waitlist for services.

Of the 408 respondents, 192 (47.1%) were male and 216 (52.9%) were female. Participants were asked to report their year of birth. The birth years reported by respondents spanned a range from 1936 (1 individual) to 1992 (4 individuals) with a median year of birth of 1963. The most common year of birth reported by respondents was 1958 (17 respondents).

Table 1 illustrates the race/ethnic distribution of the telephone interview respondents.

What is your racial or ethnic group?	n	Percent (n)
Caucasian/White	334	81.9%
Another ethnic group	21	5.1%
Hispanic	14	3.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	12	2.9%
African-American/Black	11	2.7%
Asian or Pacific Islander	7	1.7%
Don't know	1	0.2%
Refused	8	2.0%

Table 1. *Race or Ethnicity of Interview Respondents*

Approximately 82% of the respondents indicated that they were Caucasian/White, while the other race/ethnic groups were represented in percentages ranging from 1.7% (Asian or Pacific Islander) to 3.4% (Hispanic). Approximately 5% of respondents indicated that they were of another ethnicity not mentioned in the choices. The majority of these individuals reported being of mixed race.

Interview respondents were presented with a list of 20 conditions used by OVRS to categorize disabling conditions and were asked to identify what they felt was their primary disabling condition. Respondents were also provided with an “other” response which they could choose if they felt that none of the response options described their primary disability. Table 2 illustrates the conditions reported by the respondents to the telephone interview. The valid percentage of the respondents reporting each type of disability is reported as “Valid %.” This is followed by another number (“Sample %”), which indicates the percentage of individuals in the telephone sample that were identified by OVRS as having that disability in their OVRS case record.

While the telephone interview process was conducted using random sampling techniques, there are some discrepancies between the percentages of reported disabilities in the final survey sample and the primary disabilities documented by OVRS in the case files of the individuals that comprised the larger client universe from which the final survey sample was obtained. The discrepancies of largest size occur with the “general physical debilitation” category (15.2% of the final telephone survey sample versus 4.8% of the OVRS client universe) and the “cognitive impairments” category (14.7% of the final telephone survey sample versus 23.7% of the OVRS client universe).

Primary disability	Valid %	Sample %
Blindness	1.0%	0.3%
Cognitive impairments	14.7%	23.7%
Communicative impairments	4.3%	1.3%
Deaf-blindness	0.0%	0.0%
Deafness, communication auditory	0.8%	1.1%
Deafness, communication visual	0.5%	1.7%
General physical debilitation	15.2%	4.8%
Hearing loss, communication auditory	3.3%	2.5%
Hearing loss, communication visual	0.5%	0.2%
Manipulation	0.0%	2.1%
Mobility	9.1%	4.2%
Mobility and manipulation	5.8%	4.3%
Psychosocial impairments	10.9%	16.6%
Respiratory impairments	2.5%	0.1%
Other hearing impairments	0.8%	0.0%
Other mental impairments	10.6%	15.0%
Other orthopedic impairments	4.1%	7.5%
Other physical impairments	8.4%	13.1%
Other visual impairments	1.8%	0.3%
Other: Specify	4.8%	0.0%

Table 2. *Primary Disability Reported by Respondents*

There are a number of possible explanations for the discrepancies between the two sets of percentages. The first is that individuals from different disability categories may have elected to participate or declined to participate at differential rates. Another possible explanation for the discrepancies may be a lack of understanding of the distinctions between the different disability categories, which might prompt an individual to identify a disability category that is different from the one identified through the OVRS disability determination process. Another possible explanation is that individuals were given the freedom to report whichever disability they felt was their primary disability, and their opinions about their primary disability might differ from the disability identified by OVRS as the primary disability. Some of the discrepancy might be attributable to individuals who might have been reluctant to disclose their disability due to concerns about stigma associated with the disability. Finally, approximately 4.8% of the telephone respondents selected “other” as their primary disability. Upon inspection of their responses in the “other” category, it is clear that some of these responses would be more appropriately included among the existing disability categories.

Respondents were also asked whether they had a secondary or third (tertiary) disabling condition. Table 3 illustrates the number of respondents reporting each type of primary, secondary, and tertiary disability.

Self-reported primary disability (n)	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Blindness	4	2	3
Cognitive impairments	58	30	8
Communicative impairments	17	29	6
Deafness, communication auditory	3	2	0
Deafness, communication visual	2	0	0
General physical debilitation	60	21	17
Hearing loss, communication auditory	13	4	5
Hearing loss, communication visual	2	1	0
Manipulation	0	6	4
Mobility	36	25	12
Mobility and manipulation	23	20	7
Psychosocial impairments	43	38	14
Respiratory impairments	10	11	11
Other hearing impairments	3	2	2
Other mental impairments	42	33	17
Other orthopedic impairments	16	21	11
Other physical impairments	33	25	28
Other visual impairments	7	9	7
Other: Specify	19	19	11

Table 3. *Reported Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Disabilities*

It should be noted that not all participants reported a secondary or tertiary disability. Of the 408 respondents, 298 reported having a secondary disability, and 163 reported having a tertiary disability.

Employment-Related Needs

Participants were asked a series of 16 closed-ended (yes/no) questions about specific employment-related needs. Each of these questions was paired with another closed-ended (yes/no) question asking respondents if OVRS had helped them with the need. Table 4 illustrates the number percentage of the 408 respondents who identified each of the specific needs as a barrier to achieving their employment goals.

Barriers to achieving employment goal	n	Identified as a barrier (%)
Not enough jobs available	229	56.1%
Other health issues	204	50.0%
Mental health issues	180	44.1%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	167	40.9%
Not having education or training	159	39.0%
Not having job skills	154	37.7%
Not having disability accommodations	120	29.4%
Not having job search skills	113	27.7%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	104	25.5%
Other transportation issues	104	25.5%
Disability-related transportation issues	98	24.0%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	73	17.9%
Housing issues	54	13.2%
Language barriers	45	11.0%
Substance abuse issues	33	8.1%
Childcare issues	26	6.4%

Table 4. *Employment-Related Barriers*

The most commonly identified barriers to achieving employment goals were not enough jobs being available (56.1%), other health issues (50.0%, explained in greater detail below), mental health issues (44.1%), and employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (40.9%).

Comparison with Findings of 2007 Needs Assessment

Examining the similarities and differences between the 2007 and 2010 statewide needs assessment should be undertaken with caution as the questions asked of respondents, though similar with respect to the topics addressed, were presented to respondents differently. In 2007 the most frequently identified employment barriers were the following:

- Not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of job skills: The question was, "Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last three to five years as a result of not having enough job skills or the wrong kinds of skills?" Approximately 58% of respondents identified this issue as a barrier in 2007. In 2010, a related question was asked ("Do you have the job skills to achieve your employment goals?"), and approximately 38% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to employment.
- Not having enough education or training: The question was, "Not having enough education or training...has this prevented you from achieving your employment goals during the last three to five years?" Approximately 55% of respondents identified this as

a barrier in 2007. In 2010, a related question was asked (“Do you have the education or training to achieve your employment goals?”), and approximately 39% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to employment.

- Not enough jobs available: The question was, “Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals during the last three to five years because there were not enough jobs available?” Approximately 44% of respondents identified this as a barrier in 2007. In 2010, a related question was asked (“Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals because there were not enough jobs available?”), and approximately 56% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to employment.

Participants who indicated that other health issues were a barrier to achieving their employment goals (50.0%) were asked to describe these health issues. It should be noted that many of these 204 individuals responded with multiple health issues. Commonly reported other health issues included:

- Back injuries,
- Arthritis,
- Knee injuries,
- Diabetes,
- Fibromyalgia,
- Heart conditions, and
- Vision impairments.

Other Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

In the same section of survey items, participants were also provided with an “other” response option and prompted to describe the barrier if they selected this option. Two-hundred seven respondents (50.7%) provided answers to this open-ended question prompting them to describe other challenges or barriers not addressed in previous questions that had prevented them from achieving their employment goals. The most common issues preventing individuals from achieving their employment goals related to the limitations imposed by their disability or disabilities. Other commonly reported issues preventing respondents from achieving their employment goals were:

- Education needs,
- The state of the economy and the lack of available jobs,
- Age discrimination, and
- Training needs.

Following the question about whether there was anything else that had prevented them from achieving their employment goals, those who responded affirmatively were asked whether OVRs had helped them with these other employment-related barriers. Approximately 27.9% of respondents indicated that OVRs had helped them with these other needs. Respondents who indicated that OVRs had helped them were asked to describe how they had been helped. This was an open-ended question, and 114 respondents provided narrative statements describing how

OVRs had helped them with these other needs. It should be noted that many of these 114 respondents described more than one way that OVRs had helped them. The most commonly mentioned types of assistance with other needs described in the open-ended question were:

- Employment assistance,
- Education assistance,
- Assessment services, and
- Counseling provided by the rehabilitation counselor.

At the conclusion of the survey section prompting respondents to identify employment-related barriers, interviewers asked survey participants to describe the most significant barrier to achieving their employment goals. This was an open-ended question, and 390 respondents provided narrative statements describing their perceptions of the most significant barriers they faced. The most common barrier expressed by respondents was the limitations imposed by their disability or disabilities. Other commonly mentioned barriers to achieving employment goals were:

- Education,
- The lack of available jobs,
- Training,
- The individual's general health,
- Work skills,
- The individual's age, and
- Financial issues.

Most Helpful OVRs Services

Respondents were presented with an open-ended question, which asked them to identify the three most helpful services received from OVRs. Respondents provided narrative statements describing their perceptions of the services that were most helpful to them. Some individuals (178 respondents) described three services, while others described only two services (37 respondents) or one service (100 respondents). Predominant themes that emerged in response to this question were:

- Assistance with personal or public transportation,
- Assistance with education,
- Counseling,
- Assistance with obtaining a job,
- Purchasing or otherwise providing equipment, and
- Providing assessment services.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services

Participants were asked eight closed-ended (yes/no) questions about specific challenges or barriers to accessing services through OVRs. Table 5 illustrates the percentage of

respondents who identified each of the eight response options as a barrier to accessing OVRs services.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services	n	Identified as a barrier (%)
Difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor	90	22.1%
Other difficulties working with OVRs staff	70	17.2%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	56	13.7%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	54	13.2%
Lack of disability-related accommodations	40	9.8%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	37	9.1%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	17	4.2%
Language barriers	15	3.7%

Table 5. *Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services*

The challenges or barriers to accessing OVRs services most frequently cited by respondents included scheduling meetings with counselors (22.1%) and difficulties working with OVRs staff (17.2%). Participants were also presented with an open-ended question asking if there were any other challenges or barriers that had made it difficult for them to access OVRs services. Eighty-nine respondents detailed other challenges or barriers they encountered in response to an open-ended question. The predominant types of challenges to accessing OVRs services encountered by individuals were:

- Waiting for services (due to the wait list and funding restrictions),
- The individual’s disability,
- Difficulty communicating with OVRs staff,
- Being unfamiliar with the services available through OVRs, and
- Frustration with the eligibility process.

Individuals who indicated that other difficulties working with OVRs were a barrier to accessing OVRs services were asked to describe these difficulties. Seventy respondents supplied answers to this question. The most commonly reported difficulty was timely communication with OVRs staff. Other commonly reported difficulties included:

- Interpersonal conflicts with OVRs staff,
- Frustration with staff changes (being assigned to new counselors), and
- Being dissatisfied with the services provided or coordinated by OVRs staff.

Comparison with Findings of 2007 Needs Assessment

Examining the similarities and differences between the 2007 and 2010 statewide needs assessment should be undertaken with caution as the questions asked of respondents, though

similar with respect to the topics addressed, were presented to respondents differently. In 2007 the most frequently identified barriers to accessing OVRs services were the following:

- Difficulties scheduling meetings with counselors: The question was, “What about difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor? Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?” Approximately 23% of respondents identified this issue as a barrier to accessing OVRs services in 2007. In 2010, a related question was asked (“Have difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor prevented you from accessing OVRs services?”), and approximately 22% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to accessing OVRs services. This figure is similar to the findings of the 2007 needs assessment.
- Other challenges or barriers: The question was, “Have you had any other challenges or barriers that have made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?” Approximately 20% of respondents identified this as a barrier in 2007. In 2010, an identical question was asked, and approximately 22% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to accessing OVRs services.
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment: The question was, “What about difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment? Has this made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?” Approximately 18% of respondents identified this as a barrier in 2007. In 2010, a related question was asked (“Have difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment prevented you from accessing OVRs services?”), and approximately 13% of individuals identified this item as a barrier to employment.

Improvements to OVRs Services

Respondents were presented with a question that asked them what changes to OVRs services might improve their experience with OVRs and help them to achieve their employment goals. This was an open-ended question, and 299 respondents provided narrative statements describing suggested changes. It should be noted that a number of the individuals who responded to this question did not suggest any changes but rather expressed satisfaction with the services provided by OVRs. Of those who did suggest changes, predominant themes that emerged in response to this question were:

- Increasing the OVRs budget and by extension the resources provided to clients,
- More frequent contact with counselors,
- Expediting the rehabilitation process and provision of services,
- Improving communication between clients and OVRs staff,
- Increasing the number of OVRs staff and reducing the size of caseloads,
- Reducing the wait for services and/or eliminating the wait list,
- Explaining the scope of OVRs services to clients, and
- Funding or providing work training opportunities for clients.

Partner Survey Results

A total of 46 partner surveys were completed (147 invitations to participate were distributed to partners by e-mail). Questions appearing on the partner survey addressed five general areas:

- Barriers to achieving employment outcomes,
- Barriers to accessing OVRs services,
- Services readily available to OVRs clients,
- Needed services for OVRs clients, and
- Desired changes.

Respondent Characteristics

The first survey question was an open-ended question asking respondents to indicate their job title. The majority of respondents provided job titles associated with direct service provision (e.g., Disability Program Navigator, ILS Specialist, Job Developer, and Employment Specialist) or administration (e.g., Executive Director, Program Director, Administrator, Senior Project Manager).

Specialization	n	Percent
Spinal cord injuries	5	10.9%
Hearing impaired	6	13.0%
Diagnosed mental health	11	23.9%
Developmental disabilities	7	15.2%
Youth transition program	5	10.9%
Other	14	30.4%

Table 6. *Target Populations or Specializations of Respondents*

Potential Barriers to Employment

Partner survey respondents were presented with a number of potential barriers to achieving employment goals that might be encountered by OVRs clients. For each potential barrier, respondents were asked to indicate whether the potential barrier was adequately addressed by OVRs, not adequately addressed by OVRs, or not a barrier. Respondents were also given a “Don’t know” response option. Table 7 below summarizes, in descending order, the percentage of respondents that identified each of the following issues as a barrier to achieving employment goals that was not adequately addressed by OVRs.

Barriers to achieving employment goals	n	Identified as a barrier not adequately addressed (valid %)
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	24	54.5%
Not enough jobs available	23	53.5%
Not having education or training	22	51.2%
Housing issues	22	50.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	19	43.2%
Substance abuse issues	19	43.2%
Language barriers	19	42.2%
Mental health issues	18	40.9%
Childcare issues	17	38.6%
Other health issues	17	38.6%
Other transportation issues	15	34.9%
Disability-related transportation issues	15	34.1%
Not having job search skills	15	34.1%
Not having job skills	14	31.8%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	12	27.3%
Not having disability accommodations	9	20.9%

Table 7. *Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals for OVRs Consumers*

Employment-related barriers identified as not adequately addressed by OVRs by half or more of respondents included employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (54.5%), not enough jobs available (53.5%), not having the education or training to achieve employment goals (51.2%), and housing issues (50.0%). Partner survey respondents were also given an "other" response option. Eleven respondents identified "other" barriers and described them in considerable detail. Though the issues raised in response to this question were largely distinct from one another, a few themes or barriers were mentioned by more than one respondent:

- The current economy and lack of jobs and
- Difficulties accessing OVRs services.

Partner survey respondents were given a list of barriers and asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs clients. Table 8 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned by the 46 survey respondents.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals	n	Percent
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	27	58.7%
Not enough jobs available	26	56.5%
Not having job skills	22	47.8%
Not having education or training	17	37.0%
Mental health issues	13	28.3%
Not having job search skills	10	21.7%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	6	13.0%
Substance abuse issues	4	8.7%
Disability-related transportation issues	4	8.7%
Not having disability accommodations	4	8.7%
Other transportation issues	2	4.3%
Other health issues	1	2.2%
Housing issues	1	2.2%
Language barriers	1	2.2%
Childcare issues	1	2.2%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	0	0.0%

Table 8. *Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals for OVRs Consumers*

Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities, lack of available jobs and lack of job skills were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals.

Barriers to Employment for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with the most significant disabilities are different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 respondents, 82.6% (n = 38) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities from a list of 17 barriers. Table 9 lists the barriers along with the number of times each barrier was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities by the 38 individuals that responded to this question.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities	n	Percent
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	21	55.2%
Not having job skills	19	50.0%
Not enough jobs available	12	31.6%
Not having disability accommodations	11	28.9%
Not having education or training	9	23.7%
Mental health issues	8	21.1%
Not having job search skills	7	18.4%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	6	15.8%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	6	15.8%
Other health issues	3	7.9%
Disability-related transportation issues	2	5.3%
Housing issues	1	2.6%
Language barriers	1	2.6%
Childcare issues	1	2.6%
Substance abuse issues	0	0.0%
Other transportation issues	0	0.0%

Table 9. *Top Three Barriers for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities*

Employers' perceptions of people with disabilities, not having job skills, and lack of job skills were the items most frequently mentioned as the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with most significant disabilities. Partner survey respondents were also given an "other" response option and were asked to describe these other employment-related issues or barriers. Three responses were provided, and the issues mentioned related to the abilities of providers to serve this population and to overcome communication barriers.

Barriers to Employment for Youth in Transition

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition were different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 partner respondents, 65.2% (n = 30) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for youth in transition. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition from a list of 17 barriers. Table 10 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for youth in transition by partner survey respondents by the 30 individuals who responded to this question.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition	n	Percent
Not having job skills	27	90.0%
Not having education or training	22	73.3%
Not having job search skills	11	36.7%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	9	30.0%
Not enough jobs available	9	30.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	3	10.0%
Mental health issues	2	6.7%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	2	6.7%
Housing issues	1	3.3%
Substance abuse issues	1	3.3%
Other transportation issues	1	3.3%
Not having disability accommodations	0	0.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	0	0.0%
Other health issues	0	0.0%
Language barriers	0	0.0%
Childcare issues	0	0.0%

Table 10. *Top Three Barriers for Youth in Transition*

Lack of job skills and lack of education or training were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Five responses were provided, and the statements described a diverse set of barriers that are not easily combined into common themes.

Barriers to Employment for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 respondents, 54.3% (n = 25) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities from a list of 17 barriers. Table 11 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities by the 25 partner survey respondents who provided responses to the question.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities	n	Percent
Not having education or training	14	56.0%
Language barriers	13	52.0%
Not having job skills	8	32.0%
Not enough jobs available	7	28.0%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	6	24.0%
Not having job search skills	4	16.0%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	2	8.0%
Childcare issues	2	8.0%
Mental health issues	1	4.0%
Housing issues	1	4.0%
Substance abuse issues	1	4.0%
Not having disability accommodations	1	4.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	0	0.0%
Other transportation issues	0	0.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	0	0.0%
Other health issues	0	0.0%

Table 11. *Top Three Barriers for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities*

Lack of education or training, language barriers, and not having job skills were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option and asked to describe these other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Nine responses were provided illustrating a variety of barriers for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. The only subject where there appeared to be consensus between two or more respondents related to the idea that racial/ethnic bias is a barrier to achieving employment goals.

Partner agency respondents were presented with an open-ended question asking if there was anything else that should be known about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRS consumers. Eleven responses were provided expressing a variety of needs; common themes or issues that appeared in two or more of the responses were the following:

- Needs related to skilled job developers and
- More rehabilitation counselor support for consumers.

Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services

Respondents were presented with a question that prompted them to indicate the top three reasons that people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services. There were ten response options including an “other” response category. Table 12 lists the barriers to OVRs access along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers by the 46 partner survey respondents that completed the survey.

Top three barriers to accessing OVRs services	n	Percent
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	12	26.1%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	12	26.1%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	11	23.9%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	10	21.7%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	8	17.4%
Difficulties accessing plan services	8	17.4%
Language barriers	4	8.7%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	4	8.7%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	4	8.7%

Table 12. *Top Three Reasons People Find it Difficult to Access OVRs Services*

Difficulties accessing training or education programs, difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment, difficulties accessing assessment services, and a lack of access to OVRs via public transportation were the items most commonly cited as presenting barriers to accessing OVRs services. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option. Twenty-four responses were provided describing a variety of factors that make it difficult for people to access OVRs services. The two themes that appeared to surface commonly in the comments by respondents were the following:

- Lack of awareness of OVRs by people with disabilities as well as other providers and
- High counselor caseloads or inadequate staffing.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

Partner survey respondents were asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with the most significant disabilities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 respondents, 41.3% (n = 19) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with the most significant disabilities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with the most significant disabilities. Table 13 lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for individuals with the most significant disabilities by the 19 respondents who answered this question.

Top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities	n	Percent
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	9	47.7%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	7	36.8%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	6	31.5%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	6	31.5%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	6	31.5%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	5	26.3%
Difficulties accessing plan services	5	26.3%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	4	21.1%
Language barriers	1	5.3%

Table 13. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities*

Inadequate disability-related accommodations and difficulties accessing assessment services were the items most commonly cited as presenting barriers to accessing OVRs services. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services. Five responses were provided with each describing a unique challenge or set of difficulties.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Youth in Transition

Partner survey respondents were asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 respondents, 28.3% (n = 13) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by transition-aged youth. Table 14 below lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned by the 13 respondents who answered this question.

When reviewing the responses depicted in Table 14, please note that the total number of respondents to this question was relatively small (13). Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment and difficulties completing the application were the items most commonly cited as barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option. Five responses were provided by respondents. The one issue that was mentioned commonly in this group of responses was awareness of OVRs and the services available to persons with disabilities through OVRs.

Top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for transition-age youth	n	Percent
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	6	46.2%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	5	38.5%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	4	30.8%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	4	30.8%
Difficulties accessing plan services	4	30.8%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	3	23.1%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	2	15.4%
Language barriers	2	15.4%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	1	7.7%

Table 14. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Youth in Transition*

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities

Partner survey respondents were asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 46 respondents, 28.3% (n = 13) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Table 15 lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three reasons for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities by the 13 respondents who answered this question.

Language barriers, followed by difficulties completing the IPE and other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office were the items most commonly cited as barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Partner survey respondents were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services that they would consider among the top three barriers to access for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Five responses were provided. One issue mentioned by more than one respondent pertained to the cultural competence of OVRs staff.

Partner survey respondents were presented with an open-ended question asking if there was anything else that should be known about why individuals with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services. Twelve responses were provided which outlined a variety of additional considerations associated with accessing OVRs services. One theme that emerged with some degree of consistency in the responses was the role that lack of awareness of OVRs and its services plays in accessing vocational rehabilitation services.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities	n	Percent
Language barriers	11	84.6%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	4	30.8%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	4	30.8%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	3	23.1%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	3	23.1%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	2	15.4%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	2	15.4%
Difficulties accessing plan services	1	7.7%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	1	7.7%

Table 15. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities*

Services to OVRs Consumers

Partner survey respondents were provided with a checklist of services and asked to indicate which of the services were readily available in the area to individuals with a wide range of disabilities. Table 16 illustrates the number and percentage of the 46 survey respondents who indicated that each service was readily available.

Which services are readily available to OVRs consumers?	n	Percent
Job search services	23	50.0%
Benefits planning assistance	23	50.0%
Assistive technology	20	43.5%
Job training services	18	39.1%
Other education services	16	34.8%
Other transportation assistance	15	32.6%
Mental health treatment	14	30.4%
Vehicle modification assistance	11	23.9%
Substance abuse treatment	10	21.7%
Medical treatment	9	19.6%
Housing	7	15.2%
Income assistance	6	13.0%
Personal care attendants	6	13.0%
Health insurance	4	8.7%

Table 16. *Percentage of Partners Indicating Service is Readily Available*

Items lower on the table indicate services that respondents believe are less available in their communities. Table 16 illustrates that a greater percentage of partner survey respondents perceive services such as job search, benefits planning and assistive technology services to be readily available to OVRS clients than services such as health insurance, personal care attendants, and income assistance. Partner survey respondents were presented with an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other services that were readily available to OVRS clients. Little consensus was noted in the five responses to this particular question.

Partner survey respondents were asked a yes/no question which asked them if, in their experience, the network of rehabilitation service providers in Oregon is able to meet the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with disabilities. Of the 42 partner survey respondents who answered the question, 30.4% responded “Yes,” 41.3% responded “No,” and 19.6% responded “Don’t know.” This question was followed by an open-ended question that asked respondents to identify the vocational rehabilitation service needs that the network of rehabilitation service providers in Oregon were unable to meet. Thirteen respondents provided answers to this question. Partner survey respondents identified a number of services that providers were unable to meet. Those that were mentioned by more than one respondent were:

- Addressing the magnitude of the current demand for services (combined with inadequate staffing levels),
- Meeting the educational needs (in particular higher education) of consumers,
- Providing assistive technology, and
- Meeting the needs of individuals who require long-term rehabilitation services and more involved rehabilitation plans.

Partner survey respondents were provided with a checklist and asked to identify the primary reasons that vocational rehabilitation service providers are generally unable to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Table 17 depicts the responses of the 19 individuals who responded to the question.

Primary reasons providers unable to meet service needs	n	Percent
Not enough providers available in area	10	52.6%
Low quality of provider services	9	47.3%
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with providers	6	31.6%
No providers in the area	0	0.0%

Table 17. *Reasons Providers are Unable to Meet Service Needs*

“Not enough providers available in area” was the most frequently selected reason for providers being unable to meet the needs of persons with disabilities; this item was identified by 10 of the 19 respondents to the question. “Low quality of provider services” followed closely, identified by 9 of the 19 respondents to the question. Partner survey respondents were presented with an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other primary reasons that providers were unable to meet consumers’ service needs. Eight respondents provided answers to

this question. There were a variety of reasons for providers being unable to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, with lack of funding surfacing in two of the responses.

Partner survey respondents were presented with an open-ended question and asked to identify the most important change that OVRS could make to support consumers’ efforts to achieve their employment goals. Thirty respondents provided answers to the question, and a considerable variety of changes were articulated by respondents. A commonly expressed theme was the need for more information-sharing and cooperative work between OVRS and other partners in the vocational rehabilitation process.

Partner survey respondents were presented with an open-ended question and asked to identify the most important change that community partners could make to support consumers’ efforts to achieve their employment goals. Twenty-six respondents provided and described a variety of desired changes. Two changes that were mentioned with a degree of consistency were:

- Enhancing cooperative efforts between agencies (including OVRS) and
- Accessing new funding sources or restructuring existing systems.

Time Required to Complete Survey

The last survey item asked partner survey respondents how long it took them to complete the survey. Forty-two of the 46 respondents answered this question. Table 18 illustrates the responses to this question.

How long did it take you to complete this survey?	n	Percent
0-5 minutes	5	11.9%
6-10 minutes	16	38.1%
11-15 minutes	10	23.8%
16-20 minutes	6	14.3%
21-25 minutes	0	0.0%
26-30 minutes	2	4.8%
More than 30 minutes	2	4.8%
Don't know	1	2.4%

Table 18. *Time Required to Complete Survey*

The most commonly reported length of time required to complete the survey was 6 - 10 minutes (n = 16).

OVRs Staff Survey Results

A total of 101 OVRs staff surveys were completed. Questions appearing on the staff survey addressed five general areas:

- Barriers to achieving employment outcomes,
- Barriers to accessing OVRs services,
- Services readily available to OVRs clients,
- Needed services for OVRs clients, and
- Desired changes.

Respondent Characteristics

A preliminary question prompted respondents to share their job titles. Table 19 illustrates the job titles held by the 101 survey respondents.

Job title	n	Percent
Branch Manager	9	8.9%
Counselor	45	44.6%
Counselor Specialist	7	6.9%
Office Specialist	2	2.0%
Human Services Assistant	21	20.8%
Business Manager - OVRs Administration	2	2.0%
Field Technician - OVRs Administration	1	1.0%
Management and Professional Staff	9	8.9%
Missing	5	5.0%

Table 19. Job Titles of Respondents

Counselors and Human Services Assistants comprised the majority of the respondents to the staff survey. Of the respondents 30 indicated that they specialized in specific disability or client target populations. Table 20 illustrates the disability and client target populations indicated by the survey respondents. Of the eleven “other” responses, two described specializations pertaining to individuals with prior criminal records.

Specialization	n
Spinal cord injuries	3
Hearing impaired	8
Diagnosed mental health	7
Developmental disabilities	6
Youth transition program	8
Other	11

Table 20. *Target Populations Served by Respondents*

Potential Barriers to Employment

OVRs staff was presented with a number of potential barriers to achieving employment goals that might be encountered by clients. For each potential barrier, respondents were asked to indicate whether the potential barrier was adequately addressed by OVRs, not adequately addressed by OVRs, or not a barrier. Respondents were also given a “Don’t know” response option. Table 21 summarizes, in descending order, the number and percentage of the 101 OVRs staff respondents that identified each of the following issues as a barrier to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers.

Barriers to achieving employment goals not adequately addressed	N	Percent
Housing issues	63	62.4%
Employers’ perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	58	57.4%
Not enough jobs available	54	53.5%
Substance abuse issues	51	50.5%
Mental health issues	47	46.5%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	43	42.6%
Language barriers	41	40.6%
Childcare issues	39	38.6%
Other health issues	38	37.6%
Other transportation issues	36	35.6%
Disability-related transportation issues	19	18.8%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	16	15.8%
Not having job skills	15	14.9%
Not having education or training	14	13.9%
Not having disability accommodations	14	13.9%
Not having job search skills	7	6.9%

Table 21. *Employment-Related Barriers for OVRs Consumers*

Employment-related issues identified as not adequately addressed by OVRs by more than half of respondents included housing (62.4%), employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (57.4%), not enough jobs being available (53.5%), and substance abuse issues (50.5%). OVRs staff were also given an "other" response option and were asked to describe other employment-related issues or barriers. Twenty-two respondents identified "other" barriers. Issues mentioned commonly pertained to the following:

- The lack of other human service resources that might assist consumers,
- Transportation issues,
- Client motivation, and
- Limited job availability.

Comparison of 2007 and 2010 Needs Assessment Findings

Examining the similarities and differences between the 2007 and 2010 statewide needs assessment should be undertaken with caution as the questions asked of respondents, though similar with respect to the topics addressed, were presented to respondents differently. In 2007 the barriers to achieving employment goals most frequently identified by OVRs staff were the following:

- Disability-related transportation issues: The question was presented similarly in both 2007 and 2010. However, in 2007 the possible response options were: "It is a barrier and OVRs services adequately address the barrier", "It is a barrier, and OVRs services do not adequately address the barrier", and "It is not a barrier." In 2010, an additional response option was added ("I do not know if it is a barrier"), giving respondents four ways of responding to the question. Approximately 93% of respondents identified this issue as barrier in 2007. In 2010, approximately 89% of OVRs staff identified this item as a barrier to employment (either a barrier addressed adequately by OVRs or a barrier not adequately addressed by OVRs).
- Mental health issues: This question was also presented similarly in both 2007 and 2010, but with the additional response option ("I do not know if it is a barrier") available in 2010. Approximately 93% of respondents identified this issue as barrier in 2007. In 2010 approximately 95% of OVRs staff identified this item as a barrier to employment (either a barrier addressed adequately by OVRs or a barrier not adequately addressed by OVRs).
- Inadequate job search skills: This question was presented differently in 2007 ("Inadequate job search skills") and 2010 ("Not having job search skills"). In addition, respondents in 2010 had the additional response option ("I do not know if it is a barrier") mentioned previously. Approximately 92% of respondents identified this issue as barrier in 2007. In 2010, approximately 94% of OVRs staff identified this item as a barrier to employment (either a barrier addressed adequately by OVRs or a barrier not adequately addressed by OVRs).

OVRs staff were given a list of barriers and asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs clients. Table 22 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers by OVRs staff.

Lack of available jobs, mental health issues, employers’ perceptions of people with disabilities, and lack of job skills were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals. Twenty-two responses were provided. The issues mentioned commonly were lack of motivation on the part of clients and lack of available jobs.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals	n	Percent
Not enough jobs available	52	51.5%
Mental health issues	46	45.5%
Employers’ perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	37	36.6%
Not having job skills	36	35.6%
Not having education or training	20	19.8%
Not having job search skills	20	19.8%
Substance abuse issues	14	13.9%
Other health issues	12	11.9%
Other transportation issues	11	10.9%
Housing issues	10	9.9%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	9	8.9%
Language barriers	5	5.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	5	5.0%
Not having disability accommodations	5	5.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	4	4.0%
Childcare issues	1	1.0%

Table 22. *Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals for OVRs Consumers*

Barriers to Employment for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with the most significant disabilities are different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 74.3% (n = 75) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers from a list of 17 barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities. Table 23 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities by OVRs staff.

Employers’ perceptions of people with disabilities, mental health issues, and lack of job skills were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities. Eleven responses were provided, and the issues mentioned commonly were lack of motivation on the part of clients and access to medical care.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities	n	Percent
Employers’ perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	49	65.3%
Mental health issues	36	48.0%
Not having job skills	32	42.7%
Not enough jobs available	26	34.7%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	15	20.0%
Not having job search skills	12	16.0%
Other health issues	12	16.0%
Not having disability accommodations	12	16.0%
Not having education or training	10	13.3%
Other transportation issues	8	10.7%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	8	10.7%
Disability-related transportation issues	8	10.7%
Substance abuse issues	3	4.0%
Language barriers	3	4.0%
Housing issues	1	1.3%
Childcare issues	1	1.3%

Table 23. *Top Three Barriers for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities*

Barriers to Employment for Youth in Transition

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition are different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 63.4% (n = 64) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for youth in transition. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers from a list of 17 barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Table 24 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for youth in transition.

Lack of job skills, education or training, and job search skills were the items most frequently mentioned in the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. OVRs staff was also given an “other” response option and was asked to describe other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to

achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Thirteen responses were provided. The themes mentioned more than once by respondents were lack of motivation, inexperience, and the low expectations that families may have for their transition-aged youth.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition	n	Percent
Not having job skills	51	79.7%
Not having education or training	37	57.8%
Not having job search skills	30	46.9%
Not enough jobs available	26	40.6%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	9	14.1%
Other transportation issues	9	14.1%
Mental health issues	6	9.4%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	3	4.7%
Disability-related transportation issues	3	4.7%
Not having disability accommodations	2	3.1%
Housing issues	2	3.1%
Other health issues	1	1.6%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	1	1.6%
Substance abuse issues	0	0.0%
Language barriers	0	0.0%
Childcare issues	0	0.0%

Table 24. *Top Three Barriers for Youth in Transition*

Barriers to Employment for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities

Respondents were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the overall population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 49.5% (n = 50) indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three barriers from a list of 17 to achieving employment goals for consumers with the most significant disabilities. Table 25 lists the barriers along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities.

Language barriers, lack of education or training, and lack of available jobs were the items most frequently mentioned as the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other employment-related issues or barriers that they would place among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Fourteen responses were provided, and the theme mentioned most frequently by respondents was discrimination or bias on the part of some employers.

Top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities	n	Percent
Language barriers	37	74.0%
Not having education or training	25	50.0%
Not enough jobs available	19	38.0%
Not having job skills	16	32.0%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	11	22.0%
Not having job search skills	10	20.0%
Mental health issues	4	8.0%
Other transportation issues	2	4.0%
Not having disability accommodations	2	4.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	1	2.0%
Housing issues	1	2.0%
Other health issues	1	2.0%
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	1	2.0%
Substance abuse issues	1	2.0%
Childcare issues	1	2.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	0	0.0%

Table 25. *Top Three Barriers for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities*

OVRs staff was presented with an open-ended question asking if there was anything else that should be known about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers. Twenty-nine responses were provided; common themes or issues that appeared in the responses were the following:

- Lack of consumer motivation,
- Transportation barriers,
- Mental health issues, and
- Substance abuse issues.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services

Respondents were presented with a question that prompted them to indicate the top three reasons that people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services. There were ten response options, including an “other” response that permitted respondents to elaborate. Table 26 lists the barriers to OVRs access along with the number of times each of the barriers was mentioned as one of the top three barriers by the 101 OVRs staff that completed the survey.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services	n	Percent
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	35	34.7%
Language barriers	27	26.7%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	22	21.7%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	21	20.8%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	19	18.8%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	17	16.8%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	11	10.9%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	7	6.9%
Difficulties accessing plan services	4	4.0%

Table 26. *Top Three Reasons People Find it Difficult to Access OVRs Services*

Lack of access via public transportation, language barriers, difficulties accessing training or education programs, and difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment were the items most commonly cited as barriers to accessing OVRs services. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services. Fifty-two responses were provided, and the themes mentioned commonly by respondents included the following:

- Lack of awareness of the existence of OVRs or the services that OVRs can provide,
- The wait list and delays associated with service provision,
- Lack of client motivation, and
- Lack of mental or physical health stability.

Comparison of 2007 and 2010 Needs Assessment Findings

Examining the similarities and differences between the 2007 and 2010 statewide needs assessment should be undertaken with caution as the questions asked of respondents, though similar with respect to the topics addressed, were often presented to respondents differently. In 2007 the most frequently identified barriers to accessing OVRs services were the following:

- Other (specified) challenges: The questions asked in 2007 and 2010 were identical. In 2007, 54% of OVRs staff survey respondents identified “other” barriers to accessing OVRs services. In 2010, approximately 52% of OVRs staff respondents identified “other” barriers to accessing OVRs services.
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation: The questions asked in 2007 and 2010 were identical. In 2007, 38% of OVRs staff survey respondents identified limited availability of OVRs via public transportation as a barrier to accessing OVRs services. In 2010, approximately 35% of OVRs staff respondents identified accessibility via public transportation as a barrier to accessing OVRs services.

- Language barriers: The questions asked in 2007 and 2010 were identical. In 2007, 30% of OVRs staff survey respondents identified language issues as a barrier to accessing OVRs services. In 2010, approximately 27% of OVRs staff respondents identified language issues as a barrier to accessing OVRs services.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities

OVRs staff was asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with most significant disabilities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 35.6% (n = 36) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with most significant disabilities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with most significant disabilities. Table 27 lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three reasons for individuals with most significant disabilities.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities	n	Percent
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	17	47.2%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	9	25.0%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	9	25.0%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	9	25.0%
Difficulties accessing plan services	8	22.2%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	7	19.4%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	4	11.1%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	4	11.1%
Language barriers	3	8.3%

Table 27. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities*

Lack of access via public transportation, difficulties completing the application, other challenges related to the physical location of OVRs offices, and inadequate disability-related accommodations were the items most commonly cited as barriers to accessing OVRs services. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services that they would consider among the top three barriers to access for individuals with most significant disabilities. Fourteen responses were provided; issues mentioned by more than one respondent were:

- Transportation barriers and
- Barriers associated with the need for personal attendant services.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Youth in Transition

OVRs staff was asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 33.7% (n = 34) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by transition-aged youth. Table 28 lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three reasons for youth in transition.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition	n	Percent
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	13	38.2%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	11	32.4%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	8	23.5%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	8	23.5%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	8	23.5%
Difficulties accessing plan services	6	17.6%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	6	17.6%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	4	11.7%
Language barriers	3	8.8%

Table 28. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Youth in Transition.*

Lack of access to OVRs via public transportation and difficulties completing the application were the items most commonly cited as presenting barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services that they would consider among the top three barriers to access for transition-aged youth. Seventeen responses were provided; issues mentioned by more than one respondent were:

- The referral process and relationships between schools and VR staff and
- Lack of interest or motivation in VR on the part of transition students.

Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities

OVRs staff was asked if the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Of the 101 respondents, 39.6% (n = 40) indicated that the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities are different from the general population of persons with disabilities. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Table 29 lists the reasons along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three reasons for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities	n	Percent
Language barriers	37	92.5%
Difficulties completing the OVRs application	13	32.5%
Difficulties accessing assessment services	9	22.5%
Limited accessibility to OVRs via public transportation	7	17.5%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	6	15.0%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	6	15.0%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office	3	7.5%
Difficulties accessing plan services	3	7.5%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	3	7.5%

Table 29. *Difficulties Accessing OVRs Services for Consumers who are Racial or Ethnic Minorities*

Language barriers and difficulties completing the OVRs application were the items most commonly cited as barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. OVRs staff were also given an “other” response option and were asked to describe other barriers to accessing OVRs services that they would consider among the top three barriers to access for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. Fifteen responses were provided; issues mentioned by more than one respondent were:

- Awareness of OVRs services and
- Cultural barriers to providing services.

OVRs staff was presented with an open-ended question asking if there was anything else that should be known about why individuals with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services. Twenty responses were provided. Common themes or issues that appeared in the responses related to a lack of awareness about the existence of OVRs and misunderstandings about the services provided by OVRs and the clients OVRs serves.

Services to OVRs Consumers

OVRs staff were provided with a checklist of services and asked to indicate which of the services were readily available in the area to individuals with a wide range of disabilities. Table 30 illustrates the percentage of respondents who indicated that each service was readily available.

Which services are readily available to OVRs consumers?	n	Percent
Job search services	88	87.1%
Benefits planning assistance	72	71.3%
Assistive technology	71	70.3%
Job training services	70	69.3%
Other education services	67	66.3%
Other transportation assistance	64	63.4%
Vehicle modification assistance	52	51.5%
Mental health treatment	43	42.6%
Medical treatment	39	38.6%
Substance abuse treatment	38	37.6%
Income assistance	22	21.8%
Personal care attendants	21	20.8%
Housing	15	14.9%
Health insurance	12	11.9%

Table 30. *Percentage of OVRs Staff Indicating Service is Readily Available*

Table 30 illustrates that a greater percentage OVRs staff perceive services such as job search, benefits planning and assistive technology services to be readily available to OVRs clients than services such as health insurance, housing, and personal care attendants. OVRs staff were presented with an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other services that were readily available to OVRs clients. Sixteen OVRs staff provided responses to this question. Several responses indicated that while some of the services might be available through other agencies, the extent of these services was limited or the demand exceeded the available supply.

OVRs staff was asked a yes/no question whether in their experience, vendors were able to meet OVRs consumers’ vocational rehabilitation needs. Of the 95 OVRs staff that responded to this particular question, 66.3% responded “Yes”, 23.2% responded “No”, and 10.5% responded “Don’t know.” This question was followed by an open-ended question which asked respondents to identify the services that vendors were unable to meet. Seventeen respondents provided answers to this question. OVRs staff identified a number of services that vendors were unable to meet; those that were mentioned most commonly were:

- Job development or job placement,
- Job coaching, and
- Assessment services.

OVRs staff who indicated that vendors were not able to meet OVRs consumers’ vocational rehabilitation need (n = 22) were then asked to identify the primary reasons that vendors are generally unable to meet consumers’ service needs. Table 31 depicts the responses of OVRs staff to this question.

Primary reasons vendors unable to meet service needs	n	Percent
Not enough vendors in the area	16	72.7%
Low quality of vendor services	11	50.0%
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors	6	27.2%
No vendors in the area	5	22.7%

Table 31. *Reasons Vendors are Unable to Meet Service Needs*

Of the relatively small number of OVRs staff that indicated that vendors were generally unable to meet consumers' vocational rehabilitation needs, the reason most commonly identified was that there were not enough vendors in the area. OVRs staff were presented with an "other" response option and asked to describe any other primary reasons that vendors were unable to meet consumers' service needs. Six respondents provided answers to this question. One reason that was referenced in three of the responses was vendors' lack of disability expertise or the capacity to work effectively with individuals with significant disabilities.

Desired Changes in OVRs Services

OVRs staff were presented with an open-ended question and were asked to identify the most important change that OVRs could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals. Seventy-two respondents provided answers to the question, and a considerable variety of changes were articulated by OVRs staff. Changes that were mentioned commonly included:

- More OVRs staff,
- Conducting outreach to the employer community,
- Smaller caseloads,
- More staff training,
- Reducing paperwork associated with the VR process, and
- Changing or assessing client motivation.

OVRs staff were presented with an open-ended question and were asked to identify the most important change that vendors could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals. Sixty-four respondents provided responses and described a variety of desired vendor changes. Changes that were mentioned commonly included:

- Increasing the number of vendors,
- Establishing clear communication between vendors and OVRs staff,
- Additional training for vendors,
- Conducting outreach to employers,
- Increasing knowledge of disability, and
- Spending more time with clients.

OVRs staff were presented with a checklist of items and asked to identify the top three staff-focused changes that would enable them to better assist their consumers. Table 32 lists the changes along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three staff-focused changes that would enable them to better assist consumers.

Staff-focused changes	n	Percent
Less paperwork	55	54.5%
Smaller caseload	41	40.6%
More administrative support	32	31.7%
Additional training	28	27.7%
More interaction with community-based service providers	28	27.7%
Better data management tools	22	21.8%
Better assessment tools	21	20.8%
More supervisor support	12	11.9%
Job coaching/mentoring	10	9.9%

Table 32. *Staff Focused Changes*

The staff-focus changes most commonly identified by OVRs staff as among the top three changes that would enable them to better serve their consumers were less paperwork, smaller caseloads, and more administrative support. Staff-focused changes that were least commonly cited among the top three changes that would enable them to better serve their consumers were more job coaching/mentoring and more supervisor support. OVRs staff were presented with an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other staff-focused changes that would be among the top three changes that would enable them to better serve their clients. Thirty respondents provided answers to this question. Concepts that were expressed commonly were the need for consistent communication across OVRs and the need to streamline or scale back paperwork and VR process demands.

OVRs staff were presented with a checklist of items and asked to identify the top three consumer-focused changes that would enable them to better assist their consumers. Table 33 lists the changes along with the number of times each was mentioned as one of the top three consumer-focused changes that would enable them to better assist consumers.

Consumer-focused changes	n	Percent
More time to provide job development services to your consumers	44	43.6%
Better job development skills	32	31.7%
Confidence approaching employers	30	29.7%
Better communication with your consumers	26	25.7%
More time to provide job coaching services to your consumers	23	22.8%

Table 33. *Consumer Focused Changes*

The consumer-focused changes most commonly identified by the 101 OVRS staff that responded to the survey as among the top three changes that would enable them to better serve their consumers were more time to provide job development services, better job development skills, and confidence approaching employers. OVRS staff were presented with an “other” response option and were asked to describe any other staff-focused changes that would be among the top three changes that would enable them to better serve their clients. Thirty-six respondents provided answers to this question, and they described a variety of changes. One change mentioned more commonly than the others was a desire to have more time to spend working with consumers.

Time Required to Complete Survey

The last survey item asked OVRS staff how long it took them to complete the survey. Ninety-four of the 101 respondents answered this question. Table 34 illustrates the responses to this question.

How long did it take you to complete this survey?	n	Percent
0-5 minutes	3	3.2%
6-10 minutes	24	25.5%
11-15 minutes	27	28.7%
16-20 minutes	17	18.1%
21-25 minutes	6	6.4%
26-30 minutes	5	5.3%
More than 30 minutes	5	5.3%
Don't know	7	7.4%

Table 34. *Time Required to Complete Survey*

The most commonly reported length of time required to complete the survey was 11 – 15 minutes (n = 27).

Business Survey Results

A total of 129 business surveys were completed and returned by mail (780 surveys were mailed to businesses, and 49 of these businesses were sent a replacement survey after address corrections were made). Questions appearing on the business survey addressed four general areas. The first pertained to disability in the work place, the second pertained to employment of applicants with disabilities, the third pertained to familiarity with the “Think Beyond the Label” media campaign designed to enhance awareness of hiring employees with disabilities, and the fourth section prompted respondents to share general demographic information regarding their businesses.

With respect to the “Disability in the Workplace” section of the survey, employers were presented with nine questions about whether their business needed help with a variety of concerns related to disability and employment. The questions were structured in a yes/no

response format. Table 35 summarizes the results of the responses to the nine questions according to the percentage of respondents who answered each question and indicated a need for help with respect to the subject addressed in the question.

Does your business need help...	n	Valid Percent
Obtaining information on other incentives for employing workers with disabilities?	62	48.1%
Obtaining information on training programs available for workers with disabilities?	55	42.6%
Obtaining information on tax credits for employing workers with disabilities?	42	33.1%
Identifying possible job accommodations for workers with disabilities?	41	31.8%
Helping workers with disabilities to retain employment?	35	27.3%
Obtaining training on disabilities in general?	31	24.0%
Obtaining information on insurance or liability issues?	30	23.3%
Obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with disabilities?	27	20.9%
Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act?	15	11.7%

Table 35. *Disability in the Workplace*

The survey items with the highest percentages were associated with incentives for hiring workers with disabilities (48.1%) and training programs for workers with disabilities (42.6%). The item with the lowest percentage was in implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (11.7%).

Regarding assistance with applicants with disabilities, employers were asked to provide responses to six questions, each with a yes/no response format. Table 36 summarizes the results of the responses to the six questions according to the percentage of respondents who indicated a need for help with respect to the question.

Does your business need help...	n	Valid Percent
Assessing applicants' skills?	38	29.7%
Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills?	37	29.1%
Recruiting applicants with good work habits?	35	27.3%
Identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants?	33	26.0%
Discussing reasonable job accommodations with applicants?	30	23.6%
Recruiting applicants who meet the job qualifications?	29	22.5%

Table 36. *Applicants with Disabilities*

The survey items with the highest percentage of respondents indicating that their business did have a need were assessing the skills of applicants (29.7 %) and recruiting applicants with good social or interpersonal skills (29.1%). The item with the lowest percentage of business

representatives indicating that their business had a need was identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants (22.5%).

At the conclusion of the applicants with disabilities section, respondents were provided with an open-ended question prompting them to describe other types of assistance needed regarding workers with disabilities. A small number of respondents (n = 12) provided responses to this question, with a smaller number (n = 7) actually identifying other types of assistance. The small number of responses poses a challenge for a detailed analysis of the statements.

Respondents were presented with a yes/no question asking them if they were familiar with the “Think Beyond the Label” media campaign. Of the valid responses to this question, 28.8% of respondents indicated they were familiar with the campaign, while 71.2% indicated that they were not familiar with the campaign.

The 129 respondents described their respective businesses as belonging to the categories shown in Table 37.

Which best describes your type of business?	n	Percent
Service	37	28.7%
Retail	17	13.2%
Manufacturing	6	4.7%
Agriculture/forestry/fishing	3	2.3%
Construction	6	4.7%
Government	11	8.5%
Education	9	7.0%
Health care	19	14.7%
Banking/finance	1	0.8%
Other	17	13.2%
Missing	3	2.3%

Table 37. *Type of Business*

The most commonly reported business type was service (n = 37) followed by health care (n = 19) and other (n = 17). These businesses have been in operation for an average of approximately 29.0 years. Information concerning the number of individuals employed by the businesses appears in Table 38.

Total number of employees	n	Percent
1 to 15	41	31.8%
16 to 50	34	26.4%
51 to 250	33	25.6%
251 to 999	14	10.9%
1000+	6	4.7%
Missing	1	0.8%

Table 38. *Number of employees*

The most commonly reported number of employees was 1 to 15 employees (n = 41), followed by 16 – 50 employees (n = 34), and 51-250 employees. The largest employers were represented in smaller numbers among the survey responses. Respondents were also asked to identify the five-digit Zip code of their primary business location. Responses to this question resulted in 78 distinct Zip codes, which indicate that survey responses include a variety of business locations throughout the state.

Focus Groups Results

A total of 98 persons participated in the 12 focus group meetings. The participation for each group in the four regions was the following:

- Ontario consumers 6, community partners 10, OVRs staff 8;
- Bend consumers 4, community partners 8, OVRs staff 4;
- Medford consumers 4, community partners 10, staff 11; and
- Salem consumers 12, community partners 13, staff 8.

Results are organized in order of importance: The unmet needs expressed with the highest frequency appear first.

Service Systems

An overwhelming majority of unmet needs were related to the service systems themselves. A service system is defined as all agencies or organizations (in addition to OVRs) that provide vocational or independent living services to individuals with disabilities. Participants in Ontario expressed the most unmet needs in this category followed by participants in Medford, Salem, and Bend respectively. Thus, there was a great deal of consensus statewide regarding unmet needs in this category.

The predominant unmet service system need that was expressed by participants was the need to cooperate and share information among agencies. Participants in all four regions indicated great need in this area. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *In the past, VR relied more on collaboration with other organizations/agencies. Now, there is too much policy and procedure to allow this to happen.*
- *There needs to be a better connection between VR, the brokerage system, and the schools.*
- *VR could maximize successful closures by using existing state services alongside VR for consumers on the wait list.*
- *There is no communication between the agencies under DHS. Clients have to repeat their stories over and over again even though these agencies are theoretically housed in the same department.*

The need for health care services immediately followed the need for cooperation in importance. Focus group participants in Salem, Ontario, and Medford expressed unmet health care needs. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *Very few doctors accept OHP, which can lead to greater barriers in service for medically sensitive consumers.*
- *Costs for specialized services are very high.*
- *Some medical clinics will not see VR clients.*

The need to conduct outreach and education to employers ranked very highly. Focus group participants in all four regions voiced unmet needs related to employers' receptivity to hiring individuals with disabilities. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *Employer education is not happening in this county.*
- *Employers in the community are unaware that VR can provide information and support to the employer. VR needs to do a better job of informing employers that these resources are available.*
- *Employers are reluctant to work with VR because of negative experiences in the past.*
- *Disability stigma needs to be worked on through employer education and outreach.*

Needs (and barriers) associated with uncertain local, state, and national economies were also expressed. Focus group participants in all four regions discussed the lack of jobs and the changing employment landscape. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *The area has been steadily losing employers in manufacturing, and there is a need to encourage new employers to move to this area.*
- *There are not enough jobs in the area to support the demand.*
- *There is a lack of jobs, and the job outlook is negative.*
- *The economy has made finding work much harder.*

The wait for services was also a major concern. Focus group participants in all four regions discussed how extended waits for all services have negatively impacted people with disabilities. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *If individuals do not come into VR with supports (e.g., from the brokerage system or county mental health) it takes staff months to assist clients in connecting with these resources.*
- *The waitlist has hurt services for clients of all priority levels.*
- *One big system issue has been order of selection. It shut down services for a bit.*
- *Waiting lists have slowed down services for the Deaf/hard of hearing population needing subsidized hearing aids.*

Other Needs

A large proportion of unmet needs for people with disabilities were relegated to the “other” category. The needs expressed in this category do not succinctly fit into any one category yet are clearly related to unmet employment and independent living needs. Participants in Medford expressed the most needs in this category followed by, Salem, Bend, and Ontario respectively. The classification of unmet needs to this category does not diminish their importance.

The need for help with job placement (including more job developers, better coordination of services) was of primary importance. Focus group participants in all four regions expressed unmet needs in this area. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *There is a lack of qualified job developers in the area. There is also a need for coordinated job development services in the area (e.g., a program versus independent contractors).*
- *The new EEOC II model and job development contracts are not working for community partners. It is driving away good job developers and has removed the relationship piece that was so needed by clients.*
- *The incentive idea for job developers is good; however, it is not cost effective. It is costly for VR to pay a developer to obtain a part-time job for a client; the process fits only a small percentage of VR clients.*
- *Job developing and coaching is much harder to access for consumers needing these services.*

Equally as important was the need for assistance navigating the various state and federal systems. Focus group participants in all four regions expressed frustration with trying to obtain services from these large, complex systems. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *Consumers could benefit from a disability advocate that could provide advice on how to navigate the multiple government agencies.*
- *Many individuals have a difficult time navigating the various systems. It's difficult for them to prioritize resources. None of the various systems work together, and they have no regard for VR.*
- *Clients feel as though they may be missing out on services simply because they do not know what questions to ask.*
- *Consumers expressed a need for assistance in navigating the various state and federal programs.*

Housing emerged as a central need for many individuals. Focus group participants in Medford and Bend discussed the need more housing in general and affordable housing specifically. The following comments from focus group participants in these regions illustrate this need:

- *Housing assistance is needed: The waitlist for the housing authority is long. You're hoping for somebody to die so that you can have a place to live.*
- *There is a lack of affordable housing in the area for people with limited income.*

The need to conduct outreach and education to employers was discussed previously; however, a need to conduct outreach and education to the public at large was also indicated. Focus group participants in Salem, Medford, and Bend discussed a need for both disability awareness as well as information on specific disabilities. The following comments illustrate this need:

- *Community education about disability is a great need.*
- *Educating the public would increase opportunities for people with disabilities.*
- *The time of rehabilitation counselors would be better used for community outreach and education.*

Also of great importance was the need to educate people about the services and resources available to them. This includes services provided by VR as well as services provided by other agencies and organizations. Participants in Salem, Medford, and Bend expressed a desire to have information regarding the services for which they are eligible. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *Consumers indicated they would like a list of every non-profit agency that provides assistance to people with disabilities.*
- *There is a need to educate people with disabilities about what services are available to them and the agencies that provide these services.*
- *Clients did not know if VR paid for bus passes or helped with accommodations at the community college.*

Mobility

Focus group participants described a variety of concerns related to mobility. This category encompasses a wide array of needs including everything from public transportation to accessible housing. Focus group participants in Bend expressed the most unmet needs in this category followed by Medford, Ontario, and Salem respectively.

By far, the predominant need related to mobility was the need for expanded public transportation routes. It was evident that this need impacted individuals' abilities to find and retain employment, especially in rural areas. Focus group participants in all four regions described the limitations of the public transportation systems in their regions. The following comments illustrate this need:

- *The public transportation system is not comprehensive. It does not serve the smaller communities that are not on the main line.*
- *Transportation is a major need for all consumers, especially those in rural areas.*
- *The public transportation system is very limited.*

- *Improvements to the public transportation system need to be made. There is very little transportation to rural areas.*

Other limitations with public transportation include restricted hours. Participants in all four regions detailed the need for expanded hours of operation for the regional public transportation systems. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *There is a need for public transportation on evenings and weekends. The weekday service is generally decent, but the lack of evening and weekend service limits participation in social and recreational activities.*
- *Public transportation is not available in the evenings and has reduced hours on the weekends.*
- *There have been weekend and evening transportation cuts that are affecting clients.*
- *The [public transportation] service hours are very limited.*

Another unmet need that impacts the mobility of a person with a disability is the lack of physical accessibility to establishments. Barriers related to access were discussed by participants in Medford and Bend. The following comments from participants in these two regions illustrate this need:

- *Many of the buildings are not accessible to people with disabilities.*
- *Businesses are not ADA compliant. Businesses are not physically accessible to people with disabilities and do not want to be accommodating.*

Work Skills

The need for work skills followed in significance. This category constitutes a range of needs from development of pre-employment (vocational) skills to the need for college-based training opportunities. Focus group participants in Ontario expressed the most unmet needs in this category followed by Medford, Salem, and Bend respectively.

The need for pre-employment skills was the premier unmet need in this category. Pre-employment skills include activities such as resume writing and job searching. Focus group participants in Ontario, Bend, and Salem expressed unmet needs in this category. The following comments illustrate this need:

- *CRPs cannot provide (and bill for) assistance with pre-employment skills since the clients are required to use services that are already provided by other state and federal agencies. However, clients are not receiving these services from other agencies.*
- *It is difficult to place individuals with the most significant disabilities because they may have not worked for a long time. They have a greater need for pre-employment skill building.*
- *Job preparation is not being utilized by the populations that need it.*

Following in importance is the need for post-secondary education opportunities. Focus group participants in all four regions expressed unmet need related to college-based training. The following comments illustrate this need:

- *School cutbacks negatively affect consumers by cancelling classes or training that are crucial to getting a job.*
- *The quality of education at the community college has decreased. Yet, areas cannot get another education provider because of turf issues.*
- *There is a lack of post-secondary resources in the area.*
- *All the classes are impacted at the local community college, and new students cannot enroll for courses. It is the only college in the area.*

Equally as important as the availability of post-secondary education was funding for education. Participants in Medford, Salem, and Ontario discussed needs related to tuition and stipends while in school. The following comments from these regions illustrate this need:

- *There is a need for more VR funding for education plans including tuition and books. We need help getting long-term funding for school.*
- *VR needs to sponsor low interest rate loans for school.*
- *VR should provide a stipend while in school to cover textbooks and school supplies.*

Under-served Groups

Throughout the state, focus group participants indicated that there were populations of people with disabilities that were not being served at a rate proportional to their numbers and needs. Participants in Salem addressed this topic with the highest frequency followed by Ontario, Medford, and Bend respectively. Several under-served populations were identified across the state. Although Hispanics were identified the most frequently as an under-served population, they were identified only slightly more than the following populations of people with disabilities: older workers; Deaf and hard-of-hearing; racial, ethnic, or cultural minorities in general; rural populations; and individuals with TBI. The following comments from focus group participants indicate the needs of these groups:

- *Cultural minorities are under-served and are not utilizing resources at the rate they should.*
- *The elderly are under-served in this area.*
- *The Hispanic community is not accessing services. Individuals will only come to VR if a respected advocate from the community brings them in.*
- *The Deaf community is not accessing services at the rate they should. Most likely, they know about the order of selection and are waiting until the order is not in place to pursue services.*

Other under-served groups mentioned include veterans, youth in transition, homeless, individuals with autism spectrum disorders, individuals with cognitive impairments, Asians, individuals who are blind, college students, individuals with mental illness, migrant workers, ex-offenders, and individuals with substance dependency.

Transition

A unique category was designed to capture the unmet needs of youth in transition. Participants in Medford identified the most unmet needs in this area followed by Bend, Ontario, and Salem respectively. The unmet needs in this category were not extensive with the need for paid and unpaid work experiences taking primacy. Other unmet needs that were defined include the need for cooperation among transition partners, needs related to the transition curriculum, needs related to working cooperatively with the school district, the needs for health care and insurance, and the needs for transition services in general. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate these needs:

- *High school students need opportunities for internships and work-study.*
- *VR needs to have a closer relationship to the high schools. VR needs to be informing young adults about the services available to them once they leave school.*
- *VR staff has been fighting the youth transition program policy that all students must earn a four-year degree. This is not always in the best interest of the client.*
- *Students in transition need more basic skills classes and training.*

Work Tolerance

An adjunct category to work skills, work tolerance captures unmet needs for individuals actively engaged in employment. Unmet needs were not high in this category with Salem participants expressing the most unmet needs followed by Medford and Bend. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate this need:

- *Consumers need greater job retention services.*
- *I can get a job but I can't keep a job because I am too slow.*
- *There is a need for early intervention before conflicts arise, and an individual loses a job. This is a common reason why individuals cannot maintain a position.*

Communication, Self-care, Interpersonal Skills

Although communication, self-care, and interpersonal skills constitute separate categories, the reporting of unmet needs for these categories was equally low. Focus group participants across the state indicated the following unmet needs: the needs for ASL and bi-lingual ASL interpreters, the need for personal care attendants, and life skills classes, opportunities to develop social skills, and assistance interviewing for jobs. The following comments from focus group participants illustrate these needs:

- *There are limited resources for healthy socialization opportunities for people with disabilities. Social skills are important to keeping a job. VR used to offer training modules regarding social skills and employment; however, this resource is no longer available.*
- *There is a need to train work-like behavior.*
- *Interpreter funding is limited, and there is a need for more interpreters.*

Key Informant Interview Results

A total of 18 individuals (17 representatives of community agencies/organizations and one representative from business and industry) participated in the key informant interviews.

Respondent Characteristics

Informants included individuals with a range of personal and professional expertise with regards to individuals with disabilities and the VR system. There was representation from non-profit organizations, advocacy organizations, post-secondary education, public services, and business. Informants identified their positions as trainers, advocates, directors, coordinators, and consultants. Informants have functioned in these positions an average of 13 years. Most were no longer providing direct services to consumers and had assumed an administrative role. Informants expressed varying degrees of contact with OVRs: Some informants represented organizations that have partnered with OVRs for less than a year where others described partnerships that have existed for several decades.

Barriers to Employment

Informants were asked to indicate the top three barriers to employment encountered by people with disabilities. Attitudinal barriers were cited as the top barrier to employment for people with disabilities. Informants indicated that the employers' and the public's attitudes, misconceptions, and misunderstandings of the abilities of people with disabilities to work competitively still present a major roadblock. Low expectations on the part of people with disabilities, their support networks, employers, and the public were frequently cited by informants and are congruous with attitudinal barriers. Many informants stated that society has concluded that people with disabilities cannot work competitively, and consumers have internalized this message.

Accommodations, especially assistive technology, followed attitudes and expectations as a barrier to employment for people with disabilities. Informants stated that employers are generally unwilling to hire someone with a disability who has a need for a reasonable accommodation. Employers often have misconceptions regarding the cost of an accommodation.

Finally, a consumer's lack of job preparedness, defined as both general work skills and pre-employment skills, was described as a major barrier to employment. Many cited this as a failure of both the education system and the service system as a whole. Other barriers described by key informants include fear of losing benefits, inadequate health care, lack of quality job placement services, transportation issues, and decline in available jobs.

People with Most Significant Disabilities

Most informants agreed that the barriers to employment are greater for people whom OVRs classifies as having the most significant disabilities. In general, the sentiment was that employment barriers increased proportionately to an individual's functional limitations.

However, two informants qualified their responses. One informant stated that the VR system focuses on the extreme cases at the expense of high to moderate functioning individuals. The other informant disagreed with OVRs's definition of "most significant," which often excludes illnesses that are cyclical in nature and require long-term supports.

People with Disabilities from Minority Groups

Most informants agreed that the barriers to employment are greater for people with disabilities from racial, cultural, or ethnic minority groups. Many indicated that minority status is an additional complicating factor when attempting to secure employment. Informants stated that the service systems are inadequately equipped to address the needs of diverse individuals. Furthermore, cultures have different perceptions of disability and may not seek services, especially from state or federal agencies.

Youth in Transition

The general consensus was that the barriers to employment for youth with disabilities are unique. Many cited shortfalls in youth in transition programs (YTP). According to informants, the bar is set too low for youth. Special education and YTP curriculum is not preparing youth for competitive employment. In addition, some key informants stated that OVRs needs to connect with youth prior to exiting school. Others commented that going through developmental and transformative stages is more difficult with a disability, especially since most youth are resistant to a diagnosis and struggle with the stigma of disability, and that the current service systems are not addressing these needs.

Under-served Groups

All informants agreed that there are consumers who have difficulty accessing and benefiting from OVRs services. Under-served groups include the following:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities,
- Individuals with moderate to high-functioning autism,
- Individuals with TBI,
- Individuals that have a disability and are homeless,
- Individuals that have a disability and are migrant workers,
- Individuals with the most significant disabilities,
- Individuals with chronic disease,
- Individuals with a disability in rural areas,
- Individuals with deafness, and
- Individuals with mental illness.

Various reasons were offered for the deficiencies in serving these groups. Many cited systematic issues such as order of selection or logistical issues such as lack of public transportation or placement of VR offices. Some described service providers' attitudes and institutional bias as barriers to service, especially for those with developmental disabilities or mental illness. A few

informants indicated that turf battles contributed to lack of services for certain groups as well as providers' inability to collaborate and pool resources.

OVRs Partnerships

Perceptions regarding the strength of OVRs partnerships varied. A few organizations had recently initiated partnerships with OVRs and had little to report. Some informants simply stated that the partnership was strong. Several informants stated that partnerships seem to be strong at the administrative level but have varying degrees of success at the direct services level. Similarly, some informants described relationships that varied greatly from one region to the next. Most attributed this to the attitudes, whether positive or negative, of the VRCs and branch managers in the area. A couple informants seemed to have a cynical view of the collaboration and described it as perfunctory. They stated that the relationship was guided by compliance to the collaboration: It was more about briefing than enacting positive change.

Some of the informants offered suggestions on ways to improve their relationships with OVRs. A couple informants stated they would like more opportunities to participate in collaborative trainings or even to educate OVRs staff on specific topics. One informant suggested that a VRC maintain office hours at the organization. Another suggested a consistent approach between OVRs and the informant's agency when conducting outreach to employers.

OVRs Counselors

In general, informants agreed that VRCs had the appropriate qualifications, specializations, and communications methods for the job. Many stated there was a great deal of variability in the quality of the counselors. Some stated that the high-level of autonomy inherent to the position was actually a deficit. VRCs are often viewed by consumers as gate-keepers, and the discrepancy in power between the two parties can negatively impact relationships. Some charged VRCs with institutionalized thinking and an inability to think outside of the box. Perhaps that strongest criticism of VRCs was the suggestion that they were the weakest link in the organization. One informant stated that the job description of the VRC needs to be redefined. According to this informant, VRCs are case managers not counselors. The informant suggested either creating separate positions for counselors and case managers or integrating the therapeutic portion into the role of the VRC. Additional recommendations for improvements included training counselors in specific areas such as mental illness, developmental disabilities, person-centered planning, TBI, and cultural competencies.

Model Programs

Several model programs or evidence-based practices that have been successful in assisting individuals with disabilities obtain employment were mentioned by informants. Programs and practices include the following:

- YTP,
- Project Access,
- Work Incentives Network (WIN),

- Disability Program Navigator,
- Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living,
- Lifeways,
- Individual placement and support (IPS) model,
- Dartmouth Community Mental Health Program, and
- Incight.

A few informants also discussed programs that were no longer operating including a program specifically for TBI between the Brain Injury Association of Utah and the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation; Careers, Communities, and Families at Oregon Health and Science University; the Oregon Business Leadership Network.

Employer Expectations

Almost all of the informants offered ways that OVRS could better assist consumers prepare for and meet employer expectations. Several informants stated that OVRS needs to spend more time not only conducting outreach and education to employers but also examining the demands of the labor market and the skills sets required for these jobs. For some job readiness meant assisting consumers in developing realistic expectations for employment. Others described a more skill-based approach and advocated for more opportunities for work experiences. Still others placed the focus on the VRCs and stated that the counselors needed to examine their attitudes regarding disability and employment.

A couple informants focused on the needs of youth in transition. One informant stated that employment outcomes for this group would improve if VR was in charge of providing transition services instead of the schools. The informant believes that school staff lack the professionalism and expertise to accomplish the objective effectively. Others stated that VR needs to be more involved in the IEP process.

On the other hand, some informants expressed that too much emphasis has been placed and too many dollars have been spent on getting people with disabilities ready for work. According to these individuals, putting these conditions on the consumers for employment is just another barrier to getting a job.

Retaining Employment

All informants agreed that long-term supports are required for consumers to retain their positions. Long-term supports were often characterized as the need for VRCs to provide a surge of support for the employer and the consumer at the beginning of the relationship, build capacity, and gradually phase out their roles. Informants seemed to concentrate on the needs of employers and detailed the need for specific supports such as education about workplace accommodations. On the other hand, some informants focused on consumers and indicated that services need to be customized and that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective. Furthermore, informants discussed the need for continuous consumer training on workplace expectations, social dynamics, and the politics of the work environment. Finally, informants stated that benefits counseling is necessary both before an individual secures a job and on a continuous basis.

Increasing Employment

An overwhelming majority of informants stated that society's expectations regarding employment and people with disabilities need to change: Employment should not be presented as an option but an expectation. Informants stated that there needs to be strong mandates at the state and federal levels that people with disabilities will work. Informants positioned VR as the leader in a greater campaign to disseminate this message. Other suggestions included greater inter-agency collaboration, improved opportunities for work experiences, better job development, and employer training on accommodations. One informant stated that the whole VR model should be questioned. In essence, without this incredible super-structure, more money would go directly to the consumer.

Changing OVRs

Informants discussed several aspects of OVRs that they would like changed. Areas where there was high consensus are the following:

- Increased community (including employer) outreach and education,
- Improved collaboration with other agencies and organizations,
- Enhanced long-term supports and post-employment services, and
- Elimination of the waitlist for services.

Some informants focused on services to specific groups. One informant advocated for pre-employment training programs for individuals with traumatic brain injury. Some informants discussed the need to augment transition services and make youth transition programs more accessible for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Informants also discussed the need to provide support to individuals with moderate to high-functioning autism spectrum disorders the need to establish a clear policy on service provision to individuals with mental illness.

Informants discussed the role of the counselor and improvements in service provision by the VRC. One individual stated that there was too much variability in the VRCs approach to services and presented the case for more consistency. Another stated that VRCs (and Branch Managers) needed to evaluate their perceptions of the abilities of people with the most significant abilities to work competitively. One suggested that VRCs improve communication with consumers and forge stronger relationships. Finally, one informant stated that VRCs should be matched with populations that interest them and create more areas of specialization.

Many focused less on service provision and more on the structure of the system itself. Some suggested that the VR process is too cumbersome and needs to be streamlined. In addition, the disability system is too complex, and consumers need assistance navigating the various agencies. Some informants shared a similar sentiment about the need for more transparency and efficiency and less bureaucracy. They stated that OVRs is not efficient compared to other disability systems in Oregon such as the brokerage system or county mental health services. One informant faulted the organization of OVRs within the Department of

Human Services. According to the informant, the needs of OVRS are not met by the overall policies and procedures of DHS. OVRS needs more autonomy within this structure.

Additional changes to the OVRS system were addressed. One informant stated that OVRS should provide job preparation and support services in-house versus contracting them out. Another discussed the weaknesses of the new job development and placement system. The informant suggested that the new system is a cookie cutter approach and is not applicable to all consumers. One change specific to mental health was the proposal that OVRS match the unmatched mental health dollars that were directed to supported employment services. Next, one informant stated that there should be more oversight of OVRS by the SRC. Finally, one informant suggested that OVRS should conduct the comprehensive needs assessment annually to address the changing needs of people with disabilities in the state.

Analysis of Existing Data Results

Description of Data Sources

Data sources utilized in the analysis of existing data included the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS). At the time the comprehensive statewide needs assessment report was prepared, the 2008 data were the most recent ACS data available. The 2008 Oregon Population Survey was also used as a primary source of population data. In addition, the project team utilized OVRS case service data for the 2008 calendar year and the 2008 State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report in the analysis of extant data. Data from the Oregon Department of Education 2008 – 2009 Child Count was also consulted.

Strengths and Limitations of Data Sources

The project team recommends utilizing caution when drawing conclusions from the analysis of existing demographic and case service data presented in this report. In most if not all cases, the existing demographic and case service data were not originally collected specifically to identify the needs of individuals with disabilities in Oregon. Often the data analyzed is comprised of estimates and there are substantial margins of error associated with these estimates. In some cases the definitions of disability vary across data sources. As such the analysis based upon secondary data is speculative, and conclusions drawn should be tentative. When drawing conclusions based upon analysis of existing data, readers are encouraged to consider their own knowledge of the state and the systemic factors impacting the vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities as well as the findings of the other approaches to assessing the needs of persons with disabilities that were carried out as part of the statewide needs assessment effort.

Due to either a lack of relevant data or current data (2008 – 2009), the project team could not conduct an analysis of some of OVRS's populations and sub-populations. Analyses of Oregonians with the most significant disabilities, Oregonians who have not been served or are under-served, and Oregonians with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce system are not included in this report (nor were they included in the 2007 report). Although included in the 2007 report, an analysis of individuals with psychosocial disabilities and an analysis of individuals with TBI are not included in this report. A review of possible data

sources was conducted (including SAMHSA, CDC, NIH, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Oregon Department of Human Services, and various Oregon non-profit organizations). However, the most recent data for these two groups is from 2006 – 2007. Therefore, this data was included in the 2007 report.

Prevalence of Disability within Oregon

Estimates of the prevalence of disability within the state are drawn from the 2008 OPS estimates and the 2008 ACS estimates. Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of individuals in Oregon reporting disabilities.

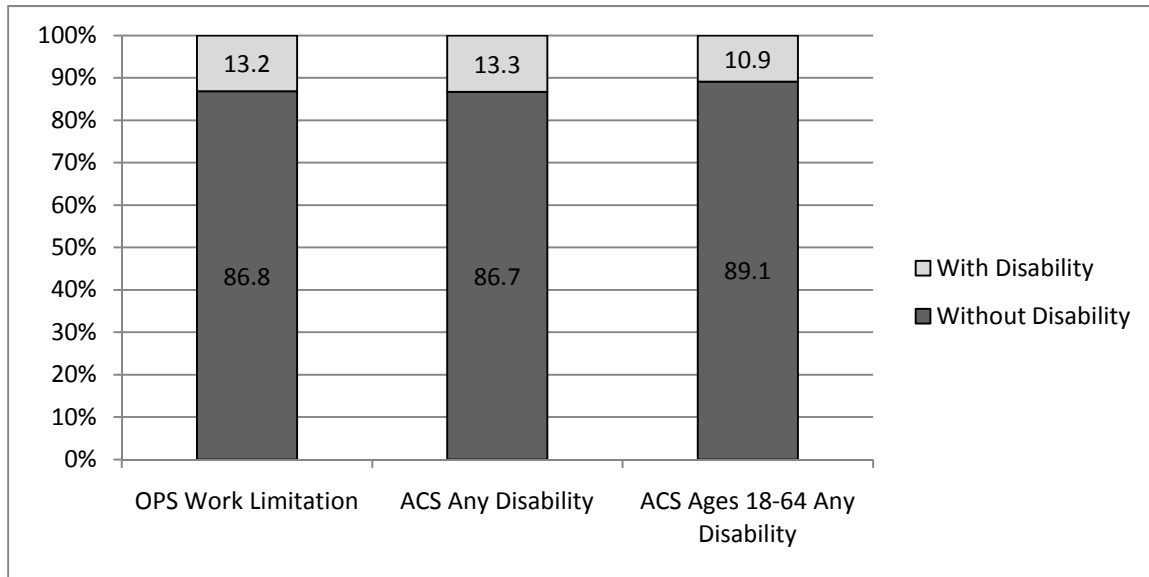


Figure 1. *Prevalence of Disability in Oregon* (sources: 2008 OPS, 2008 ACS)

The 2008 OPS total population estimate for the state of Oregon is 3,784,821. The number of individuals who reported a disability that limits the kind of work they can do is 500,484 (13.2% of the total population). The 2008 ACS estimate of the total civilian non-institutionalized population of Oregon is 3,746,320. The ACS estimate of the percentage of the total population with any disability is 13.3%, while the estimate of the percentage of the civilian non-institutionalized population between the ages of 18 and 64 with a disability is 10.9%.

Employment Rates for Oregonians with and without Disabilities

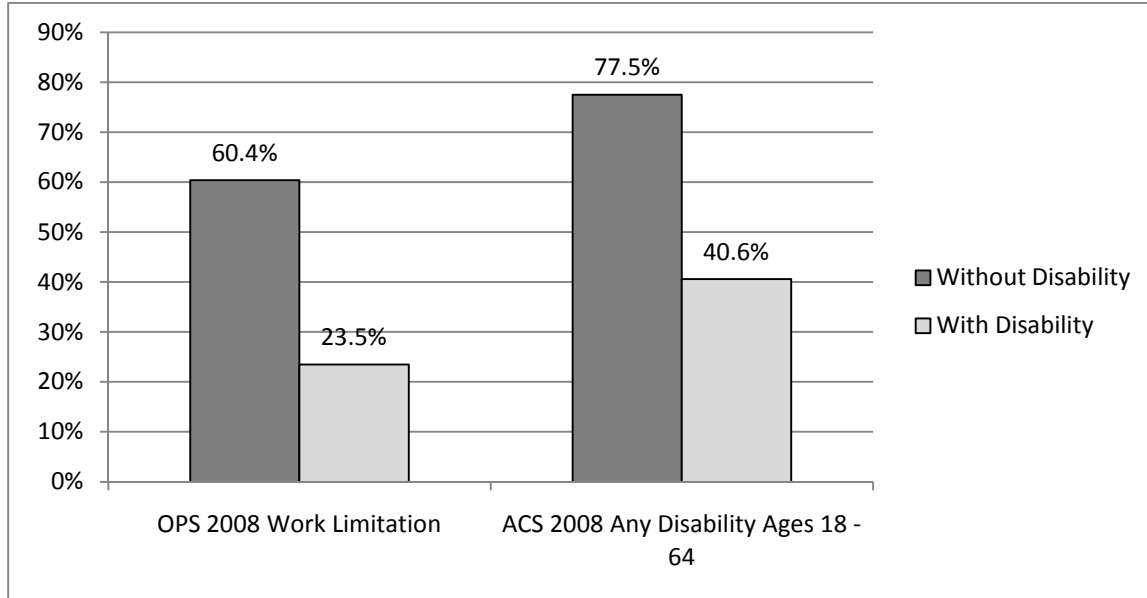


Figure 2. *Employment Rates of Oregonians with and without Disabilities* (sources: 2008 OPS, 2008 ACS)

OPS 2008 respondents were asked if they were currently employed for pay or self-employed in a business or a farm. Respondents to the 2008 OPS who reported having a disability were asked if the disability limited the kind of work they could do. The OPS data presented in Figure 2 illustrates the percentages of those (with and without a work limitation) who reported being currently employed. The 2008 ACS estimates placed the percentage of non-institutionalized persons with any disability, ages 18 – 64, who were employed in Oregon in 2008 at 40.6%. The corresponding estimate for individuals without disabilities, ages 18 – 64, in Oregon who were employed in 2008 was 77.5%.

Estimates of Potential OVRs Target Population

OPS 2008 figures indicated that 500,484 individuals reported having a disability that limited the kind of work they could do. Of these individuals, 23.5% reported that they were currently employed at the time they were interviewed. Utilizing the approach to estimating OVRs target populations developed in the 2007 OVRs Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report, in order to close the employment gap between those with a disability that presents a work limitation (23.5%) and those without (60.4%), an additional 184,679 individuals with work limitations would need to become employed.

Examining the ACS 2008 population estimates, the employment rate of those with any disability ages 18 – 64 in Oregon was 40.6%, while the employment rate of those without any disability ages 18 – 64 was 77.5%. Based upon a total 2008 population estimate of 3,746,320 (408,349 with any disability and 3,337,971 without any disability) an additional 150,680 individuals would need to become employed in order to close the employment gap between those with any disability and those without any disability.

While these individuals might be considered an OVRS target population, some caution is warranted. As noted in the 2007 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report, these figures may illustrate the high end of the range of the OVRS target population as some individuals with disabilities may not wish to utilize the services of OVRS, may have disabilities that are not sufficiently severe to warrant OVRS services, or may voluntarily be out of the work force.

Individuals Served as a Percentage of Oregon Populations

The 2008 SRC Annual Report indicated that the 16,447 individuals were served by OVRS during the twelve-month period from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. Figure 3 illustrates the percentage of several Oregon populations that these 16,447 individuals constitute.

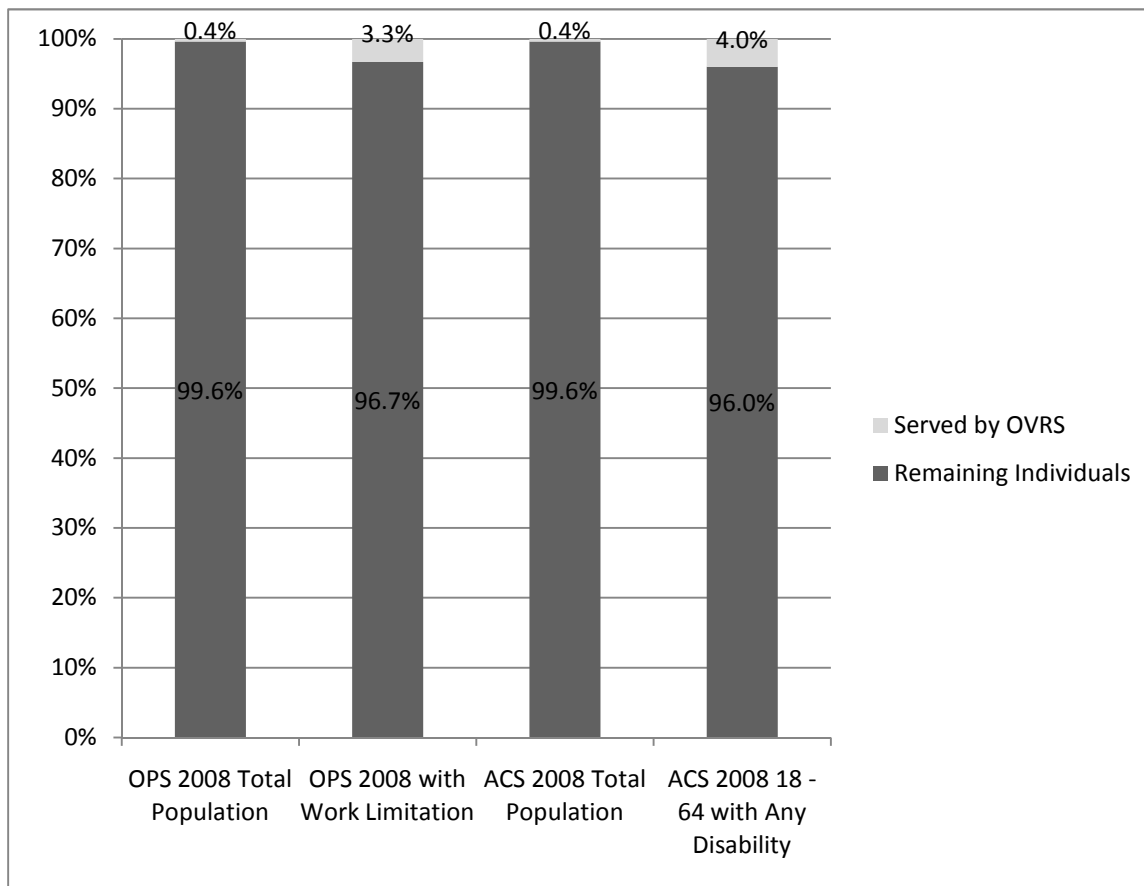


Figure 3. *Percentages of Populations Served by OVRS* (sources: 2008 OPS, 2008 ACS)

According to OPS 2008 estimates for total Oregon population (3,784,821) and estimates of the population with a disability that limits the kind of work they can do (500,484), OVRS served approximately 0.4% of the total Oregon population and approximately 3.3% of the individuals whose disability or disabilities limit the kind of work they can do. Using ACS 2008 estimates for total Oregon population (3,746,320) and the population of persons ages 18 – 64

with any disability (408,349), OVRS served approximately 0.4% of the total Oregon population and approximately 4.0% of the individuals ages 18 – 64 with any disability.

Disability Prevalence by Branch Office

For the purposes of estimating the prevalence of disability by branch office, the same approach to organizing branch offices by county that was used in the 2007 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report (including combining the Marion and North Salem branches for the analysis) was utilized. Table 39 illustrates the counties associated with each of the OVRS branch offices.

Branch office	County/Counties served
East, North and Central Portland Branch Offices	Multnomah
Washington	Washington, Tillamook, Clatsop, Columbia
Clackamas	Clackamas
Marion/North Salem	Marion, Polk, Yamhill
Linn/Benton/Lincoln	Linn, Benton, Lincoln
Lane	Lane
Roseburg	Douglas, Coos, Curry
Medford	Josephine, Jackson, Klamath, Lake
Bend/Hood River	Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, Wheeler, Gilliam, Sherman, Wasco, Hood River
Eastern Oregon	Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow

Table 39. *Counties Associated with OVRS Branch Offices*

OPS 2008 estimates regarding individuals with disabilities that limited the kind of work they could do were the basis for the estimates of the prevalence of disability in each branch office area. Figure 4 illustrates the OPS 2008 estimates of individuals with a work disability in each area.

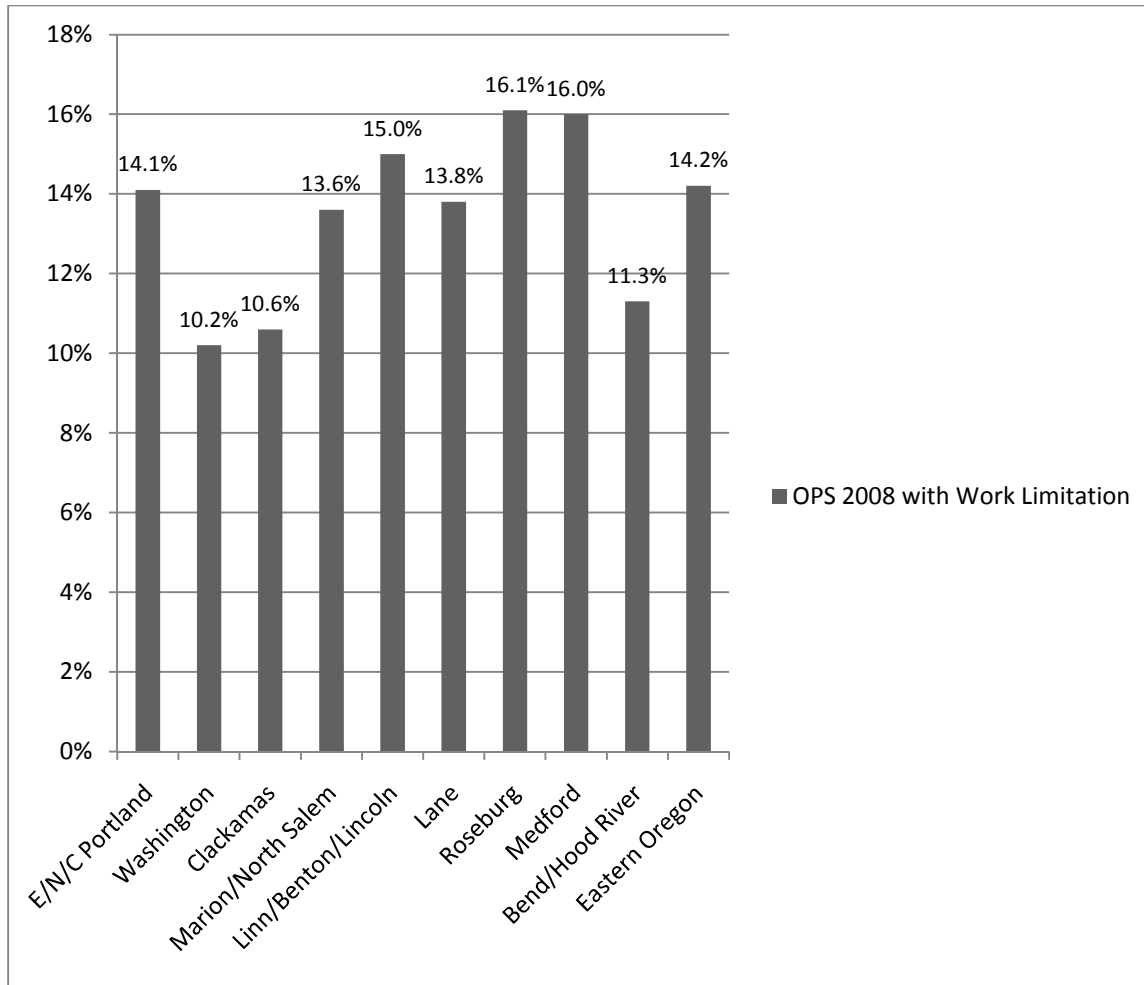


Figure 4. OPS 2008 Work Disability by Branch Office (source: 2008 OPS)

According to Figure 4, there appears to be some variation among the branch office service areas with respect to the proportion of individuals reporting work limitations. The OPS 2008 estimates indicate that the Roseburg and Medford branch office areas had the highest percentages of individuals reporting work limitations (16.1% and 16.0% respectively) while the Washington (10.2%), Clackamas (10.6%), and Bend/Hood River (11.3%) branches were among the branches with the lowest percentage of individuals reporting work limitations.

Examining the answer to the question about whether an individual with a work limitation was currently employed revealed some differences in the rates of employment of individuals who reported work limitations in the branch office areas. Figure 5 illustrates employment rates in each area based upon OPS 2008 estimates of individuals with work limitations.

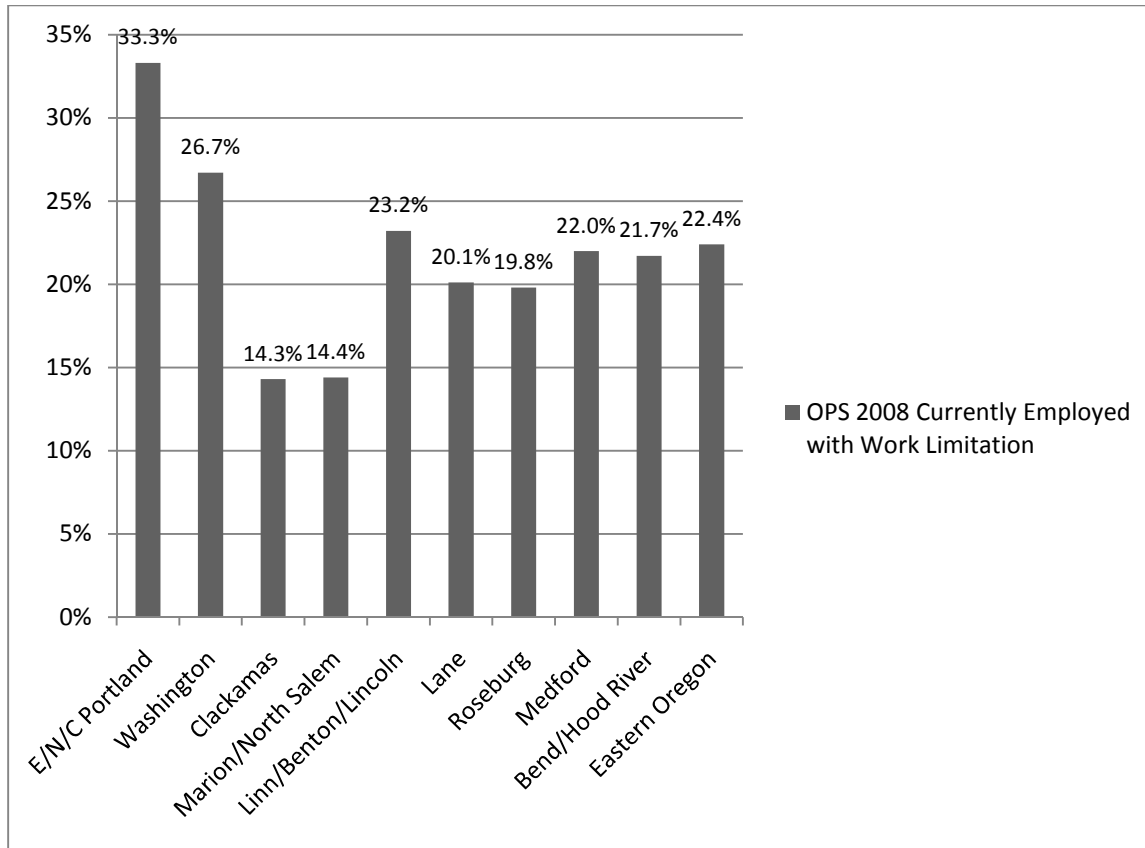


Figure 5. OPS 2008 Currently Employed with Work Disability by Branch Office (source: 2008 OPS)

The OPS 2008 employment rate estimates for persons reporting disabilities that limited the kind of work they could do varied considerably among branch office areas. The East/North/Central Portland branch office region had a substantially higher employment rate estimate (33.3%) than most other regions. The Clackamas and Marion/North regions (14.3% and 14.4% respectively) had the lowest employment rate estimates. It should be noted that these employment rate estimates should not be used to assess the performance of any of the branch offices as there are many variables that contribute to discrepancies in employment rates of persons with disabilities from region to region.

Racial and Ethnic Minorities with Disabilities

Data from the 2008 ACS (individuals ages 18 – 64 reporting any disability) was used to develop the population estimates, employment rates, employment gaps, and target population estimates for several race and ethnic groups shown in Table 40. It is likely that these figures overestimate the target population figures as the definitions used by the ACS do not identify those individual whose disabilities pose a barrier to employment.

Race/Ethnicity	Number with disability	Employment rate with disability	Employment rate without disability	Employment gap	Estimated target population
White	214,100	40.7%	77.6%	36.9%	79,003
Black/African American	6,400	32.5%	71.5%	39.0%	2,496
Native American or Alaska Native	4,900	25.0%	78.7%	53.7%	2,631
Asian	4,600	39.4%	74.8%	35.4%	1,628
Hispanic	20,200	44.4%	79.4%	35.0%	7,070
Some Other Race(s)	9,700	44.6%	72.0%	27.4%	2,658

Table 40. *Target Population Estimates by Racial/Ethnic Group* (source: 2008 ACS)

Based upon 2008 ACS estimates, individuals who are Native American or Alaska Natives experience the greatest employment gap and the lowest rate of employment for individuals with disabilities. Individuals of Hispanic ethnicity and persons categorized in the ACS as “Some Other Race(s)” had both the highest rates of employment for persons with disabilities and the smallest employment gaps.

OVRs provided the research team with data identifying the race/ethnicity status of all consumers served during the 2008 calendar year. Table 41 provides the number and percentage of consumers from selected race/ethnic groups served by OVRs alongside 2008 ACS estimates of the population distribution, by race/ethnicity, of individuals ages 18 – 64 with any disability. For the purposes of this analysis, individuals served by OVRs and identified as “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” were combined with “Asian” in order to facilitate comparison to the ethnicity codes used in the 2008 ACS.

Race/Ethnicity	Served by OVRs (n)	Served by OVRs (%)	ACS any disability (n)	ACS any disability (%)
White	14,370	83.6%	214,100	82.4%
Black	788	4.6%	6,400	2.5%
Native American or Alaska Native	332	1.9%	4,900	1.9%
Asian	290	1.7%	4,600	1.8%
Hispanic	998	5.8%	20,200	7.8%

Table 41. *Comparison of OVRs Population Served with ACS 2008 Population Figures for Individuals Ages 18 – 64 with Any Disability by Race/Ethnicity* (sources: OVRs 2008 Case Service Data and 2008 ACS)

It should be noted that, due to differences between the ways that race and ethnicity categories were defined, the comparisons in Table 41 do not include individuals reporting

multiple races/ethnicities or races or ethnicities that do not correspond to the ones that appear in the figure (e.g., the “Some Other Race(s)” category in the ACS). Although a great deal of caution should be used when interpreting the results of this table, the finding may suggest a need to enhance efforts to serve individuals who are Hispanic, as their representation in the 2008 OVRs consumer population is somewhat lower than the 2008 ACS estimates of their prevalence among individuals ages 18 – 64 with any disability.

Youth in Transition

Data from the 2008 ACS (individuals ages 16 – 20 reporting any disability) was used to inform target population estimates shown in Table 42. It is likely that these figures overestimate the target population figures as the definitions used by the ACS do not identify those individual whose disabilities pose a barrier to employment.

Table 42 provides the number of consumers under age 20 served by OVRs as well as estimates related to youth in transition served by OVRs as a percentage of Oregon youth with ACS Any Disability.

	Oregonian youth with ACS any disability	
	Count	Percent
All Youth Consumers	942	5.5%

Table 42. Comparison of OVRs Population Served with ACS 2008 Population Figures for Individuals Ages 16 – 20 with Any Disability (sources: OVRs 2008 Case Service Data and 2008 ACS).

Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder

According to the Oregon Department of Special Education, 1,159 students between the ages of 16-21 years old had a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder in the 2008-2009 academic years.

Summary of Selected Findings

The following summary highlights some of the most commonly cited needs associated with achieving employment goals and accessing OVRs services derived from the surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. More detailed information can be found in the report sections addressing the complete findings of each of the data-collection methodologies.

Barriers to achieving employment goals.

Among the 408 individuals with disabilities who completed telephone interviews, respondents identified the following survey items most frequently as barriers to achieving their employment goals:

- Not enough jobs available (n = 229, 56.1%),
- Other health issues (n = 204, 50.0%),
- Mental health issues (n = 180, 44.1%), and
- Employer’s perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (n = 167, 40.9%).

Among the 46 partners who completed surveys, respondents identified the following survey items most frequently as barriers to achieving employment goals that were not adequately addressed by OVRS:

- Employer’s perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (n = 24, 54.5%),
- Not enough jobs available (n = 23, 53.5%),
- Not having education or training (n = 18, 51.2%), and
- Housing issues (n = 22, 50.0%).

Among the 101 OVRS staff who completed surveys, respondents identified the following survey items most frequently as barriers to achieving employment goals that were not adequately addressed by OVRS:

- Housing issues (n = 63, 62.4%),
- Employers’ perceptions about employing persons with disabilities n = 58, (57.4%),
- Not enough jobs available (n = 54, 53.5%), and
- Substance abuse issues (n = 51, 50.5%).

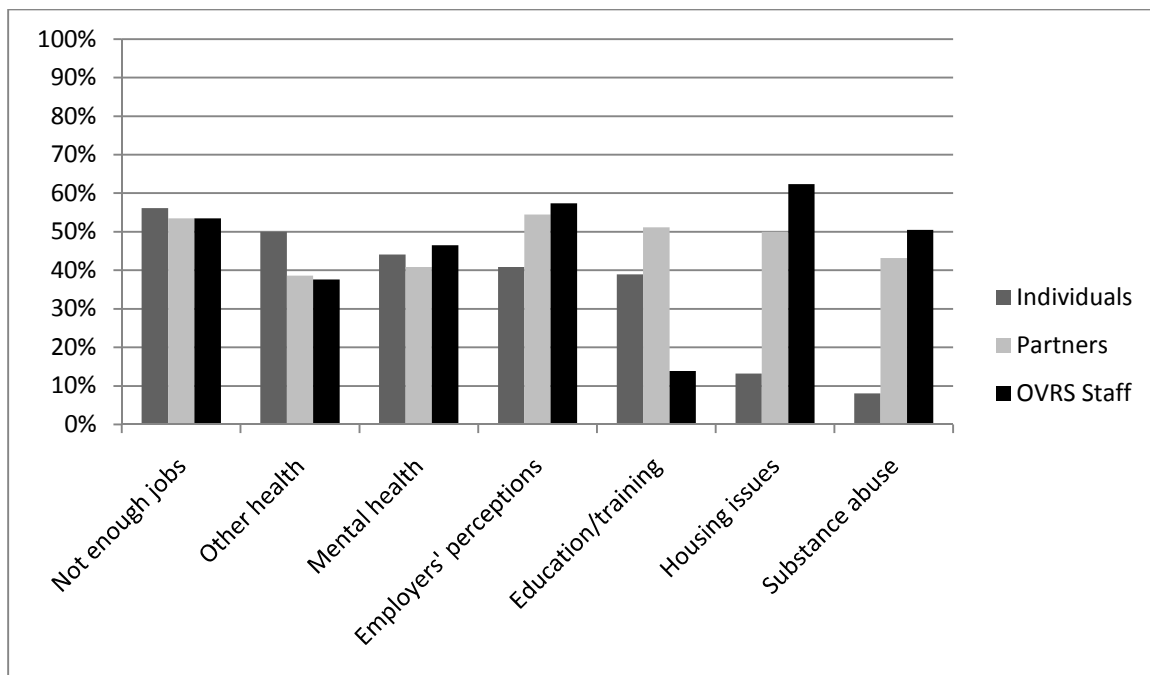


Figure 6. *Barriers to Employment Reported By Individuals, Partners, and OVRS Staff; All Clients.*

As Figure 6 illustrates, for all three groups, the lack of available jobs was a frequently-cited barrier to achieving employment goals. Similarly, employers’ perceptions about employing

persons with disabilities were also among the most frequently-identified barriers for all three respondent groups. Both partners and OVRs staff frequently identified housing issues as a barrier to achieving employment goals. Key informants identified the following as the top three barriers to employment encountered by people with disabilities:

- Attitudinal barriers,
- Accommodations, especially assistive technology, and
- Lack of available jobs.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities.

Partners were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities were different than the overall population. Thirty-eight of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for individuals with most significant disabilities and these 38 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities. The 38 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (n = 21, 55.2%),
- Not having job skills (n = 19, 50.0%),
- Not enough jobs available (n = 12, 31.6%), and
- Not having disability accommodations (n = 11, 28.9%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities were different than the overall population. Seventy-five of the 101 staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for individuals with most significant disabilities and these 75 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with most significant disabilities. The 75 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (n = 49, 65.3%),
- Mental health issues (n = 36, 48.0%),
- Not having job skills (n = 32, 42.7%), and
- Not enough jobs available (n = 26, 34.7%).

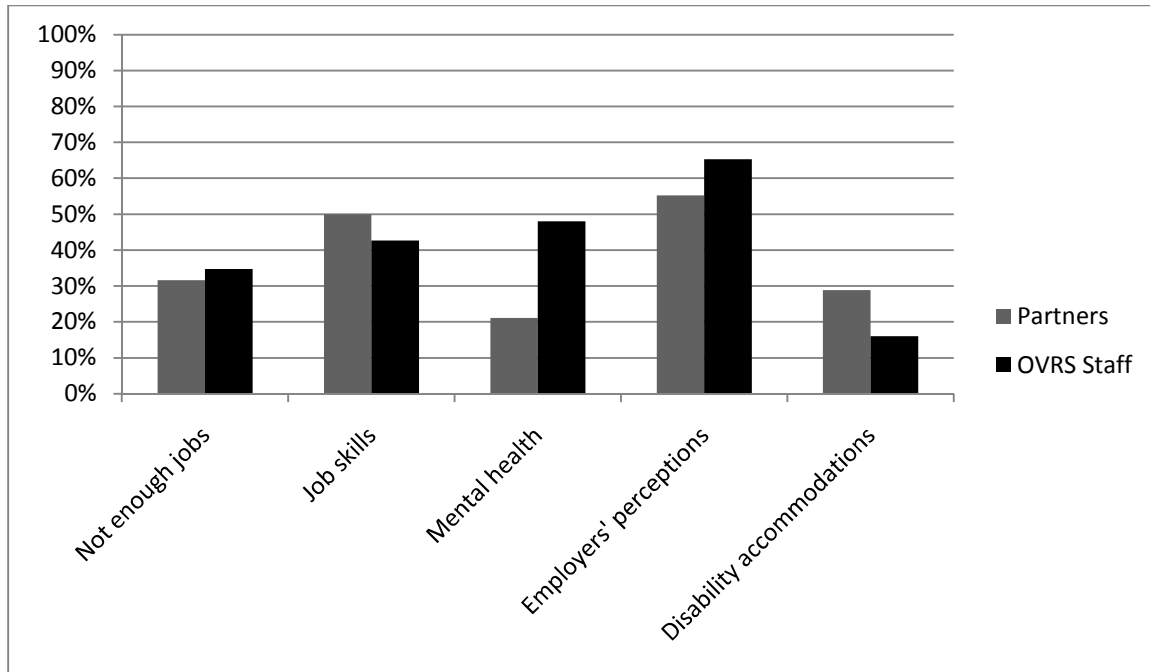


Figure 7. *Barriers to Employment for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

Figure 7 illustrates that both partners and OVRs staff identified employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities most frequently as a barrier to achieving employment goals for persons with the most significant disabilities. Both respondent groups also frequently identified not having job skills and the lack of available jobs as barriers to achieving employment goals for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Also, most key informants agreed that the barriers to employment are greater for people whom OVRs classifies as having the most significant disabilities. In general, the sentiment was that employment barriers increased proportionately to an individual's functional limitations.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition.

Partners were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition were different than the overall population. Thirty of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for youth in transition and these 30 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. The 30 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition:

- Not having job skills (n = 27, 90.0%),
- Not having education or training (n = 22, 73.3%),
- Not having job search skills (n = 11, 36.7%),
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities (n = 9, 30.0%), and
- Not enough jobs available (n = 9, 30.0%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition were different than the overall population. Sixty-four of the 101 staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for youth in transition and these 64 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. The 64 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition:

- Not having job skills (n = 51, 79.7%),
- Not having education or training (n = 37, 57.8%),
- Not having job search skills (n = 30, 46.9%), and
- Not enough jobs available (n = 26, 40.6%).

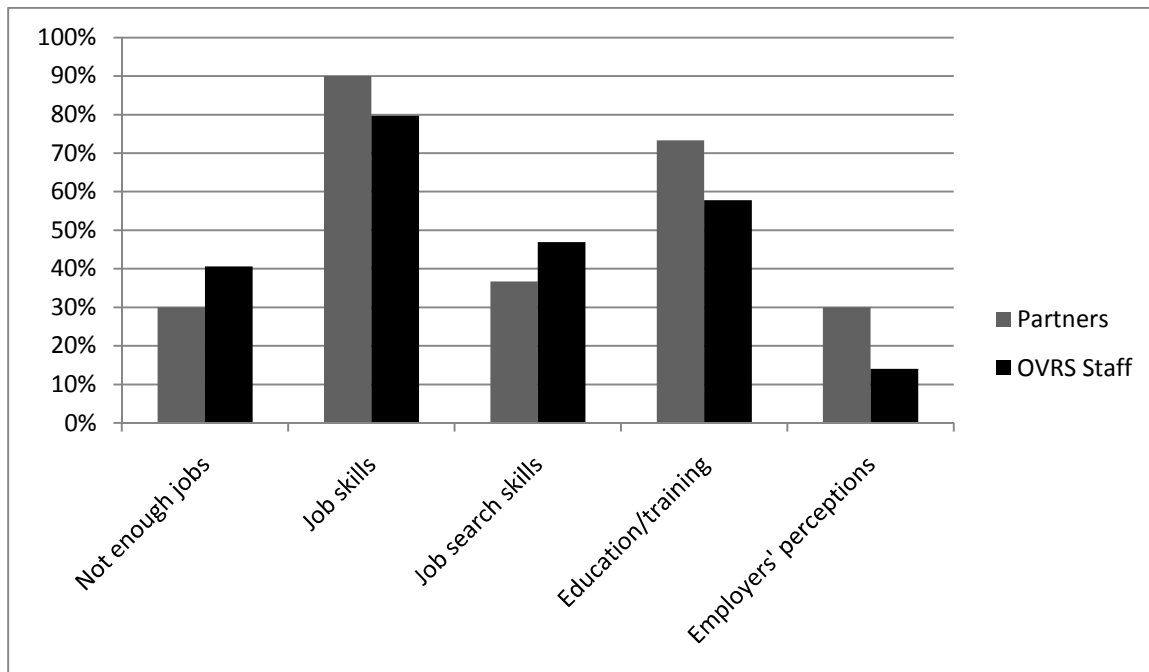


Figure 8. *Barriers to Employment for Youth in Transition Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

As Figure 8 depicts, there was noteworthy consistency between partners and OVRs staff with respect to the most frequently cited barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition. Both groups identified not having job skills, a lack of education or training, a lack of job search skills, and a lack of available jobs as among the top barriers for achieving employment goals for youth in transition. The general consensus among key informants was that the barriers to employment for youth with disabilities are unique. Many cited shortfalls in youth in transition programs. Others described youths' resistance to a diagnosis and their struggle with the stigma of disability.

Barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities.

Partners were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities were different than the overall population. Twenty-five of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for consumers who are racial or

ethnic minorities and these 25 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. The 25 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities:

- Not having education or training (n = 14, 56.0%),
- Language barriers (n = 13, 52.0%),
- Not having job skills (n = 8, 32.0%), and
- Not enough jobs available (n = 7, 28.0%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities were different than the overall population. Fifty of the 101 staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities and these 50 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. The 50 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to achieving employment for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities:

- Language barriers (n = 37, 74.0%),
- Not having education or training (n = 25, 50.0%),
- Not enough jobs available (n = 19, 38.0%), and
- Not having job skills (n = 16, 32.0%).

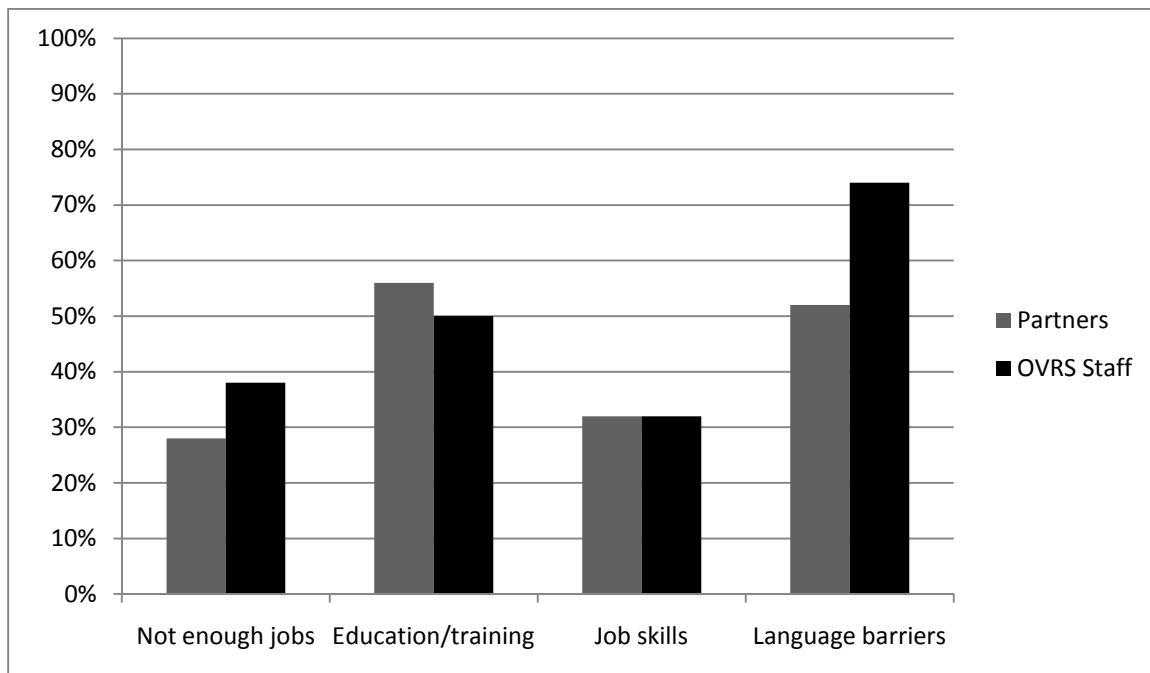


Figure 9. *Barriers to Employment for Consumers Who Are Racial or Ethnic Minorities Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

Figure 9 suggests that there was congruence between partners and OVRs staff with respect to the top barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic

minorities. A measure of caution, however, is advised when interpreting these findings because the number of partners and OVRs staff who responded to this question was considerably smaller than the complete respondent populations of both of these groups. Both groups identified the same four barriers – language barriers, not having education or training, not having job skills, and not enough jobs available – as among the top barriers to achieving employment goals for this group.

Most informants agreed that minority status is an additional complicating factor when attempting to secure employment. Informants stated that the service systems are inadequately equipped to address the needs of diverse individuals. Furthermore, cultures have different perceptions of disability and may not seek services, especially from state or federal agencies. Thus, there is a need to direct outreach campaigns to minority groups.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services.

When asked to identify barriers to accessing OVRs services, individuals with disabilities identified the following survey items most frequently:

- Difficulties scheduling meetings with counselors (n = 90, 22.1%),
- Other difficulties working with OVRs staff (n = 70, 17.2%),
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 56, 13.7%), and
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 54, 13.2%).

When asked to identify the top three reasons why people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services, the 46 partner respondents identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing services:

- Difficulties accessing training or education programs (n = 12, 26.1%),
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 12, 26.1%),
- Difficulties accessing assessment services (n = 11, 23.9%), and
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 10, 21.7%).

When asked to identify the top three reasons why people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services, the 101 OVRs staff respondents identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing services:

- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 35, 34.7%),
- Language barriers (n = 27, 26.7%),
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs (n = 22, 21.7%), and
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 21, 20.8%).

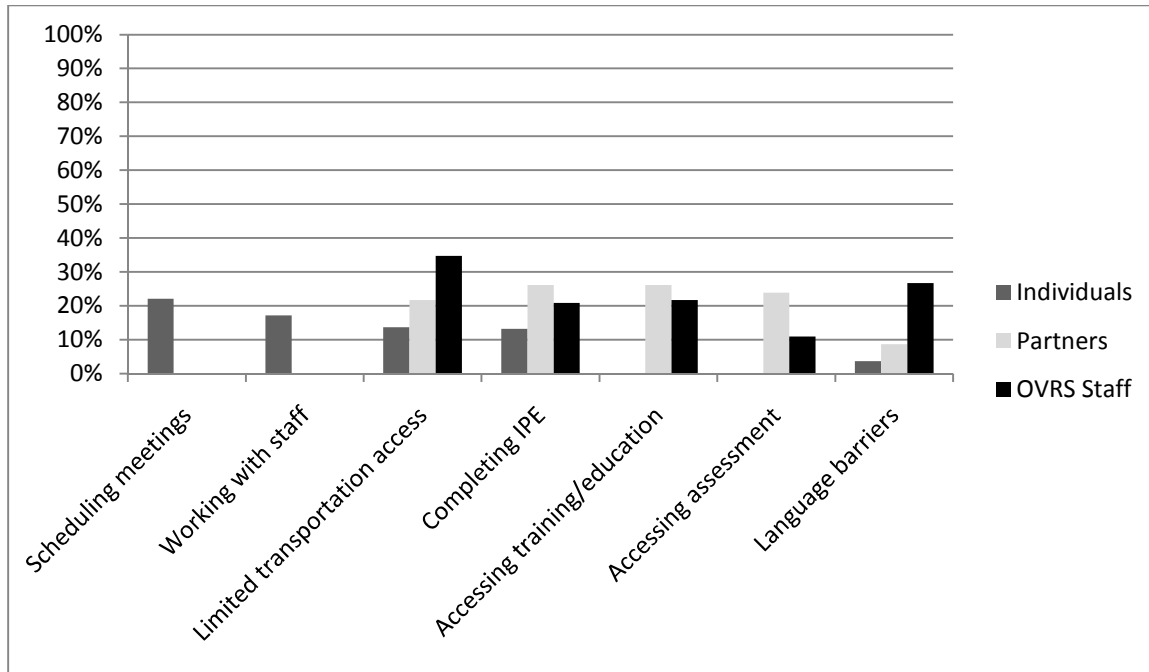


Figure 10. *Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services Reported By Individuals, Partners, and OVRs Staff; All Clients.*

As Figure 10 illustrates, all three respondent groups identified two items – limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation and difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment – as among the top barriers to accessing OVRs services. Both partner and OVRs staff respondents identified difficulties accessing training or education programs as among the top barriers to accessing services.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities.

Partners were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities were different than the overall population. Nineteen of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for individuals with most significant disabilities and these 19 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities. The 19 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities:

- Inadequate disability-related accommodations (n = 9, 47.7%),
- Difficulties accessing assessment services (n = 7, 36.8%),
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs (n = 6, 31.5%),
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 6, 31.5%), and
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 6, 31.5%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities were different than the overall population. Thirty-six of the 101 OVRs staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for individuals with most

significant disabilities and these 36 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities. The 36 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for individuals with most significant disabilities:

- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 17, 47.2%),
- Difficulties completing the OVRs application (n = 9, 25.0%),
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office (n = 9, 25.0%), and
- Inadequate disability-related accommodation (n = 9, 25.0%).

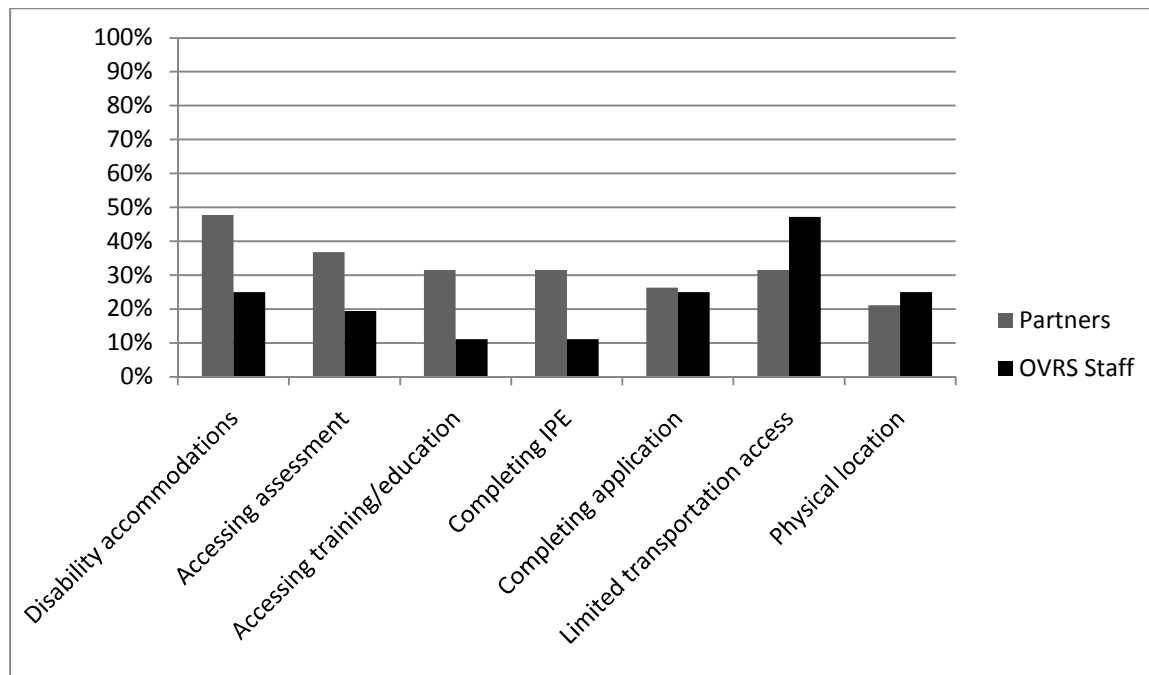


Figure 11. *Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

Caution is advised when interpreting these findings because the number of partners and OVRs staff who responded to this question was considerably smaller than the complete respondent populations of both of these groups. As Figure 11 depicts, both partners and OVRs staff identified two items – inadequate disability-related accommodations and limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation – as among the top barriers to accessing services for individuals with most significant disabilities.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition.

Partners were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition were different than the overall population. Thirteen of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for youth in transition and these 13 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition. The 13 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition:

- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 6, 46.2%),
- Difficulties completing the OVRs application (n = 5, 38.5%),
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 4, 30.8%), and
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office (n = 4, 30.8%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition were different than the overall population. Thirty-four of the 101 OVRs staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for youth in transition and these 34 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition. The 34 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition:

- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 13, 38.2%),
- Difficulties completing the OVRs application (n = 11, 32.4%),
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office (n = 8, 23.5%),
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs (n = 8, 23.5%), and
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 8, 23.5%).

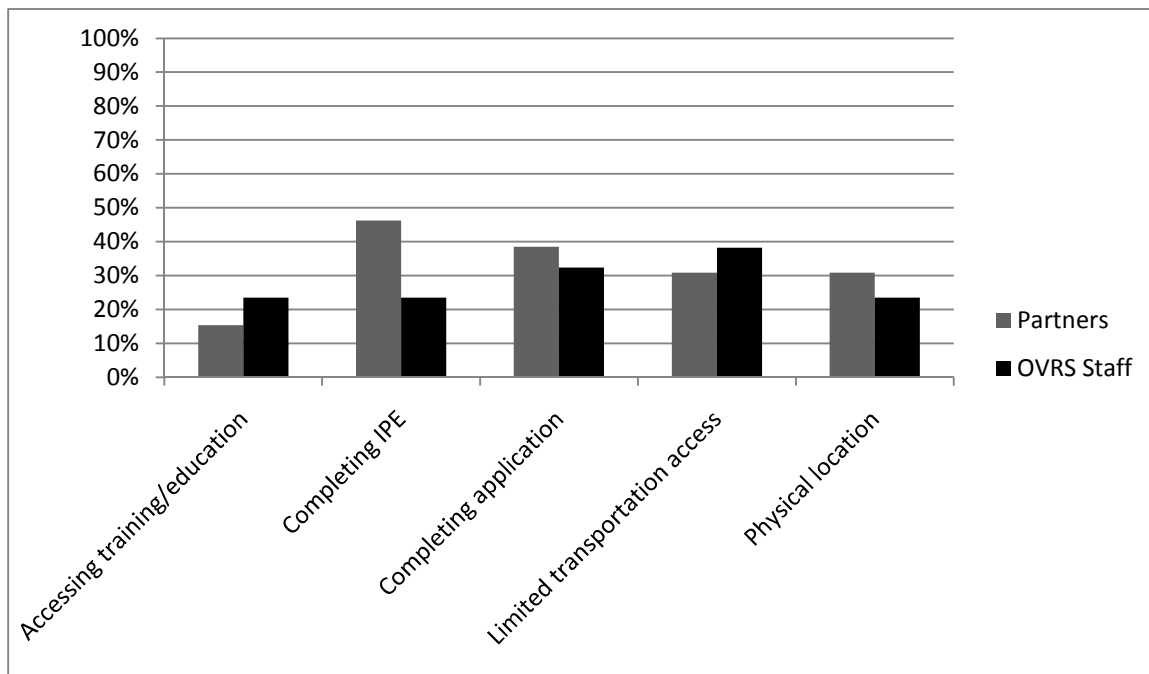


Figure 12. *Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Youth in Transition Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

It should be noted that the number of individuals responding to this particular question was relatively small, and as a result interpretation of these findings should take the small number of respondents into account. Figure 12 indicates that there was considerable consistency between partners and OVRs staff with respect to the barriers to accessing OVRs services for youth in transition. All four of the top barriers identified by partners – difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment, difficulties completing the OVRs application, limited

accessibility of OVRs via public transportation, and other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office – were also identified among the top barriers by OVRs staff.

Barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities.

Partners were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities were different than the overall population. Thirteen of the 46 partner respondents indicated that the barriers were different for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities and these 13 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. The 13 partners identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities:

- Language barriers (n = 11, 84.6%),
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (n = 4, 30.8%), and
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office (n = 4, 30.8%).

OVRs staff were asked if the barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities were different than the overall population. Forty of the 101 OVRs staff respondents indicated that the barriers were different for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities and these 40 respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities. The 40 OVRs staff identified the following survey items most frequently as among the top three barriers to accessing OVRs services for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities:

- Language barriers (n = 37, 92.5%),
- Difficulties completing the OVRs application (n = 13, 32.5%),
- Difficulties accessing assessment services (n = 9, 22.5%), and
- Limited accessibility of OVRs via public transportation (n = 7, 17.5%).

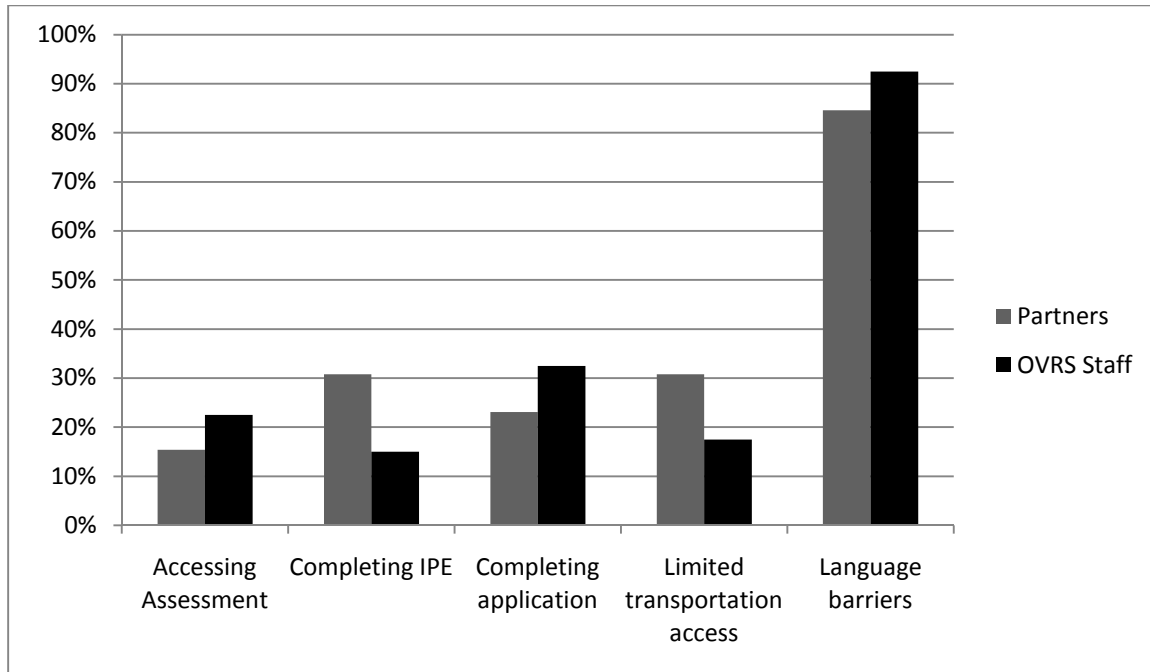


Figure 13. *Barriers to Accessing OVRs Services for Consumers Who Are Racial or Ethnic Minorities Reported By Partners and OVRs Staff.*

It should be noted that the number of individuals responding to this question was relatively small, and as a result interpretation of these findings should take into consideration the small number of respondents. Figure 13 illustrates that both partners and OVRs staff respondents identified one barrier – language barriers – with much greater frequency than the other barriers. In fact, this barrier was the only barrier in common among the most frequently cited barriers to accessing OVRs services identified by the two respondent groups.

Business needs, disability in the workplace.

With respect to disability in the workplace, the top needs indicated by respondents to the business survey were associated with financial incentives and training for workers with disabilities:

- Obtaining information on other incentives for employing workers with disabilities (n = 62, 48.1%),
- Obtaining information on other training programs available for workers with disabilities (n = 55, 42.6%), and
- Obtaining information on tax credits for employing workers with disabilities (n = 42, 33.1%).

Responses to needs associated with the applicants with disabilities section of the survey generally reflected a lower percentage of respondents indicating a need. The top responses pertained to needs for assistance recruiting and assessing worker characteristics:

- Assessing applicants' skills (n = 38, 29.7%),
- Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills (n = 37, 29.1%), and
- Recruiting applicants with good work habits (n = 35, 27.3%).

Focus groups

Most unmet needs were captured in three categories: service systems, other (needs), and mobility. A service system is defined as all agencies or organizations (in addition to OVRs) that provide vocational or independent living services to individuals with disabilities. The predominant unmet needs in this category included the following:

- Cooperation and information sharing amongst agencies/organizations,
- Health care services, and
- Employer outreach and education.

Next, a large proportion of unmet needs for people with disabilities were relegated to the "other" category. The needs expressed in this category do not succinctly fit into any one category yet are clearly related to unmet employment and independent living needs. The three unmet needs described most frequently included the following:

- Job placement (including more job developers and better coordination of services),
- Assistance navigating the various state and federal systems, and
- More housing in general and affordable housing in particular.

Finally, several unmet needs related to mobility were expressed. This category encompasses a wide array of needs including everything from public transportation to accessible housing. The unmet mobility needs included the following:

- Expanded public transportation routes,
- Expanded hours of operation for the regional public transportation systems, and
- Physically accessible buildings.

All of the needs described represent areas of high consensus within a region and across the state.

Conclusion

The needs assessment in the State of Oregon is the result of a cooperative effort between the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council. These efforts solicited information concerning the needs of persons with disabilities from persons with disabilities, service providers, OVRs staff and businesses for the purpose of providing OVRs and the SRC with direction for addressing structure and resource demands.

The results of the needs assessment efforts provide strategic planning information and offer stakeholders a means of communicating needs and educating service providers. Data resulting from the needs assessment effort suggest agreement between individuals with disabilities, partners, and OVRS staff with respect to some perceptions of need. Not surprisingly, the top priority of business respondents was related to the financial interests of their business enterprises. It is anticipated that the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council will use this information in a strategic manner that results in provision of vocational rehabilitation services designed to address current needs of individuals with disabilities who seek employment.

References

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Oregon Department of Education, *Office of Student Learning and Partnerships*. (2009). *Special Education Child Count, 2009* [Data file]. Provided by Teaching Research Institute Staff in September 2010.

Appendix A: Individual Survey Script

OVRs Client Telephone Survey

INT. Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling from the Social Science Research Lab at San Diego State University. We're conducting a study on behalf of the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs). The purpose of this survey is to learn more about the needs of individuals with disabilities and their experiences with the OVRs. Your participation is voluntary, and the information that you provide will help planners make decisions about programs and services for persons with disabilities.

INT2. We'd like to interview individuals with disabilities or a member of their family or their attendant. If you need assistance completing this survey or wish to complete the survey in a different format, please just let me know. In order for us to do this study, the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has provided us with some phone numbers only. We have no names, addresses or any other identifying information. Is there someone in this household who has a disability and is at least 18 years of age?

N – NO ONE IN HOUSEHOLD HAS DISABILITY → **NQR-DIS (4720)**

R – REFUSAL

IND. And may I ask, am I speaking with...

- 1 - the individual with a disability,
- 2 - a family member, or
- 3 - an attendant?

[USE INSTRUCTIONS TO DETERMINE IF SPEAKING WITH CORRECT PERSON]

STATUS: Which statement best describes your association with OVRs?

1. I have/My family member has/The person I attend has never used the services of OVRs → **NQR-STAT (4730)**
2. I am /My family member is/The person I attend is a current customer of the OVRs
3. I am/My family member was/The persons I attend was a previous customer of the OVRs
4. NO RESPONSE → **NQR-STAT (4730)**

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS/ATTENDANTS: Many of these questions are addressed to the person with disabilities, so often I will be using the word 'YOU'. Please answer on behalf of the individual with the disability during this interview.

AGE. Are you at least 18 years of age?

1. YES
2. NO → **NQR-AGE (4710)**
3. DK/REFUSED → **NQR-AGE (4710)**

QUALIFIED RESPONDENT FROM THIS POINT – QAL LINE

LAN. [IF INDICATED BY ACCENT] Would you prefer that we speak English or Spanish?

1. ENGLISH
2. SPANISH

INT3. Your opinion is very important to us and will be kept confidential. No phone numbers or identifying information will be associated with your answers. It should take about ten minutes to complete and I'd like to start now (if it is a good time for you).

CONTINUE OR RESCHEDULE

To ensure that my work is done honestly and correctly, this call may be monitored by my supervisor.
[IF ASKED ABOUT MONITORING:] (My supervisor randomly listens to interviews to make sure we're reading the questions exactly as written and not influencing answers in any way.)

INTRO 4. I'm going to ask you 2 sets of questions. One set will ask you about issues you may have with achieving employment goals. The other set asks about your experiences with accessing OVRs services. For most of the questions in the survey, your answer choices will be YES, NO, or DON'T KNOW.

And just to confirm, are you male or female? [NOTE RESPONSE AT END OF SURVEY]

WAITING1: Have you ever been notified by OVRs that you are on a waitlist for services?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

WAITING2: Have you been notified by OVRs that you are currently on a waitlist for services?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY1: Now, I would like to ask you some questions about your experience trying to achieve your employment goals. Do you have the education or training to achieve your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVRs1: Has OVRs helped you receive more education or training?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY2: Do you have the job skills to achieve your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVRs2: Has OVRs helped you develop job skills?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY3: Do you have the job search skills to achieve your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR3: Has OVRs helped you develop job search skills?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY4: Do you have the language skills to achieve your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR4: Has OVRs helped you develop language skills?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY5: Have you been prevented from achieving your employment goals because there were not enough jobs available?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR5: Have you received OVRs services that helped you address not enough jobs being available?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY6: Have employers' perceptions of people with disabilities prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR6: Has OVRs addressed employers' perceptions about employing people with disabilities?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY7: Has a lack of accommodations prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR57: Has OVRs helped you with accommodations?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY8: Has a lack of disability-related personal care prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR58: Has OVRs helped you with disability-related personal care?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY9: Have disability-related transportation issues prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR59: Has OVRs helped you with disability-related transportation?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY10: Have other transportation issues, such as not having a reliable means to go to and from work, prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR510: Has OVRs helped you with these other transportation issues?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY11: Have mental health issues prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR511: Has OVRS helped you address mental health issues?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY12: Have substance abuse issues prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR512: Has OVRS helped you address substance abuse issues?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY13: Besides mental health or substance abuse issues, have any other health issues prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES - SPECIFY
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLY13X. OTHER HEALTH ISSUES PREVENTED FROM ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT GOALS

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

OVR513: Has OVRS helped you with these health issues?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY14: Have issues with childcare prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR514: Has OVR5 helped you with childcare?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY15: Have issues with housing prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR515: Has OVR5 helped you with housing?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY17: Have concerns regarding the possible impact of employment on your benefits prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR517: Has OVR5 helped you with benefit concerns?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLOY18: Is there anything else that has prevented you from achieving your employment goals?

1. YES - SPECIFY
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

EMPLY18X. OTHER ISSUE PREVENTED FROM ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT GOALS

_____250_____
99 – DK/REF

OVR518: Has OVR5 helped you with these issues?

1. YES - SPECIFY
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

OVR518X. HOW OVR5 HELPED WITH THESE ISSUES

_____250_____
99 – DK/REF

EMPLOY₁₉: What is the most significant barrier to achieving your employment goals?

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

OVR_{S19_1}: What were the three most helpful services that you have received from OVR?
[FIRST RESPONSE]

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

OVR_{S19_2}: What were the three most helpful services that you have received from OVR?
[SECOND RESPONSE]

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

OVR_{S19_3}: What were the three most helpful services that you have received from OVR?
THIRD RESPONSE

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

ACCESS₁: Now I am going to read a list of reasons that persons with disabilities may find it difficult to access OVR services. For each of the following items, please tell me whether you have experienced it as a challenge to accessing OVR services. The first one is: [INSERT ITEM 1] [FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS YOU CAN SAY [How about...]] AND ADD "Has this made it difficult for you to access OVR services?" WHERE NEEDED.

Limited accessibility to OVR via public transportation. Has this made it difficult for you to access OVR services?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS₂: Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVR office?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS₃: A lack of disability-related accommodations?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS₄: Language barriers?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS5: Difficulties scheduling meetings with your counselor?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS6: Other difficulties working with OVRs staff?

1. YES - SPECIFY
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS6X. DIFFICULTIES WITH STAFF PREVENTING ACCESS

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

ACCESS7: Difficulties completing the OVRs application?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS8: Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment?

1. YES
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS9: Have you had any other challenges or barriers not already mentioned that have made it difficult for you to access OVRs services?

1. YES – SPECIFY
2. NO
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

ACCESS9X. OTHER CHALLENGES/BARRIERS TO ACCESSING OVRs SERVICES

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

CHANGE: What changes to OVRs services might improve your experience with OVRs and help you to achieve your employment goals?

_____250_____

99 – DK/REF

SEX: Are you male or female?

1. MALE
2. FEMALE
3. REFUSED
4. DON'T KNOW

YRBORN: In what year were you born?

9999=DK/REF

RACE: What is your racial or ethnic group? Would you say...

1. Caucasian/White,
2. African-American/Black,
3. Hispanic,
4. American Indian or Alaska Native,
5. Asian Or Pacific Islander,
6. or another ethnic group? - > SPECIFY
7. REFUSED
8. DON'T KNOW

RACEX.

OTHER RACE, SPECIFIED: _____
99- DK/REF

PRIMARY: Which of the following would you use to describe your primary disabling condition?

DC2. Do you have a secondary disabling condition? IF YES, Which of the following would you use to describe it?

DC3. Do you have a third disabling condition? IF YES, Which of the following would you use to describe it?

1. Blindness
2. Cognitive impairments
3. Communicative impairments
4. Deaf-blindness
5. Deafness, communication auditory
6. Deafness, communication visual
7. General physical debilitation
8. Hearing loss, communication auditory
9. Hearing loss, communication visual
10. Manipulation
11. Mobility
12. Mobility and manipulation
13. No impairment
14. Psychosocial impairments
15. Respiratory impairments
16. Other hearing impairments
17. Other mental impairments
18. Other orthopedic impairments
19. Other physical impairments
20. Other visual impairments
21. OTHER: SPECIFY
99. NONE/NO MORE

COMMENT: Is there anything else you'd like to add about OVRS or its services?

_____250_____
99 – DK/REF

THANKS. That is the end of the survey! Your information and feedback is valuable to OVRS and on their behalf, I'd like to thank you. Have a great (day/evening.)

LAN. LANGUAGE USED TO CONDUCT INTERVIEW

1. ENGLISH
2. SPANISH

TTD. WAS THIS A TTD/TTY INTERVIEW?

1. YES
2. NO

TIN. INTERVIEWER NUMBER

LEN. LENGTH OF INTERVIEW IN MINUTES

DAT. DATE OF INTERVIEW

REC. CATI RECORD NUMBER

Appendix B: Community Partner Survey

OVRs Community Partner Survey

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (often referred to as "VR" or "OVRs") is working collaboratively with the State Rehabilitation Council and staff at the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University in order to conduct an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities who live in the state of Oregon. The results of this needs assessment will inform the development of the OVRs State Plan for providing rehabilitation services and will help planners make decisions about programs and services for persons with disabilities.

The following survey includes questions that ask you about the unmet, employment-related needs of persons with disabilities. You will also be asked about the type of work you do and whether you work with specific disability populations. We anticipate that it will take about 20 minutes of your time to complete the survey.

Your participation in this needs assessment is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous - that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you (you will not be asked for your name anywhere in this survey).

This survey is also available in a text-only format for individuals who use screen-readers or other assistive computing technology. If you would prefer to use the text-only version of the survey please visit the following URL:

http://interwork.sdsu.edu/survey/OVRs/community_partner.html

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Mark Tucker at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address: mtucker@interwork.sdsu.edu.

You may also contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (619) 594-6622 to report problems or concerns related to this study.

1. What is your job title?

2. Do you specialize in any specific disabilities or client target populations?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

3. In what disabilities or client populations do you specialize?

- Spinal cord injuries
- Hearing impaired
- Diagnosed mental health issues
- Developmental disabilities
- Youth transition program
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

4. Here is a potential list of possible reasons why OVRs consumers might find it difficult to achieve their employment goals. For each potential barrier, please indicate whether you believe that:

It is a barrier, and OVRs services adequately address the barrier.

It is a barrier, and OVRs services do not adequately address the barrier.

It is not a barrier.

You do not know if it is a barrier.

	Barrier, adequately addressed by OVRs services	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed by OVRs services	Not a barrier	Don't know
Not having education or training	jn	jn	jn	jn
Not having job skills	jn	jn	jn	jn
Not having job search skills	jn	jn	jn	jn
Language barriers	jn	jn	jn	jn
Not enough jobs available	jn	jn	jn	jn
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	jn	jn	jn	jn
Not having disability accommodations	jn	jn	jn	jn
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	jn	jn	jn	jn
Disability-related transportation issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Other transportation issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Mental health issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Substance abuse issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Other health issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Childcare issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Housing issues	jn	jn	jn	jn
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	jn	jn	jn	jn

Other (please specify)

5

6

OVRs Community Partner Survey

5. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers overall? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits

OVRs Community Partner Survey

6. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers with the most significant disabilities different from the overall population?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

7. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Community Partner Survey

8. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall population?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

9. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Community Partner Survey

10. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the overall population?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

11. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Community Partner Survey

12. Is there anything else we should know about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers?

13. What would you say are the top three reasons that people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

14. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with the most significant disabilities different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

15. What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals with the most significant disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

16. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

17. What would you say are the top three reasons that youth in transition might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

18. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

19. What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals who are racial or ethnic minorities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

5

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OVRs Community Partner Survey

20. Is there anything else we should know about why individuals with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services?

21. What services are readily available to OVRs consumers? By “readily available”, we mean that services are available in the area to individuals with a range of disabilities.

Please indicate which of the following services are readily available to eligible consumers:

- Job search services
- Job training services
- Other education services
- Assistive technology
- Vehicle modification assistance
- Other transportation assistance
- Income assistance
- Medical treatment
- Mental health treatment
- Substance abuse treatment
- Personal care attendants
- Health insurance
- Housing
- Benefit planning assistance
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

22. In your experience, is the network of rehabilitation service providers in Oregon able to meet the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Community Partner Survey

23. What vocational rehabilitation service needs is the network of rehabilitation service providers in Oregon unable to meet?

24. What are the primary reasons that vocational rehabilitation service providers are generally unable to meet the needs of persons with disabilities?

- No providers in the area
- Not enough providers available in area
- Low quality of provider services
- Client barriers prevent successful interactions with providers
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Community Partner Survey

25. What is the most important change that OVRs could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

26. What is the most important change that community partners could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

OVRs Community Partner Survey

27. How long did it take you to complete this survey?

- 0-5 minutes
- 6-10 minutes
- 11-15 minutes
- 16-20 minutes
- 21-25 minutes
- 26-30 minutes
- More than 30 minutes
- Don't know

Your feedback is valuable to OVRs, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

Please select the "Done" button below to submit your responses.

Appendix C: OVRs Staff Survey

OVRs Staff Survey

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is working collaboratively with the State Rehabilitation Council and staff at the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University in order to conduct an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities who live in the state of Oregon. The results of this needs assessment will inform the development of the OVRs State Plan for providing rehabilitation services and will help planners make decisions about programs and services for persons with disabilities.

The following survey includes questions that ask you about the unmet, employment-related needs of persons with disabilities. You will also be asked about the type of work you do and whether you work with specific disability populations. We anticipate that it will take about 20 minutes of your time to complete the survey.

This survey is also available in a text-only format for individuals who use screen-readers or other assistive computing technology. If you would prefer to use the text-only version of the survey please visit the following URL:

<http://interwork.sdsu.edu/survey/OVRs/staff.html>

Your participation in this needs assessment is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous - that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you (you will not be asked for your name anywhere in this survey).

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Mark Tucker at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address: mtucker@interwork.sdsu.edu.

You may also contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (619) 594-6622 to report problems or concerns related to this study.

1. What is your job title?

Branch Manager

Counselor

Counselor Specialist

Office Specialist

Human Service Assistant

Business Manager – OVRs Administration (in field)

Field Technician – OVRs Administration (in field)

Support Staff -- OVRs Administration Staff (in DHS Building)

Management and Professional Staff -- OVRs Administration (in DHS Building)

Other (please specify)

2. Do you specialize in any specific disabilities or client target populations?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Staff Survey

3. In what disabilities or client populations do you specialize?

- Spinal cord injuries
- Hearing impaired
- Diagnosed mental health issues
- Developmental disabilities
- Youth transition program
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Staff Survey

4. Here is a potential list of possible reasons why OVRs consumers might find it difficult to achieve their employment goals. For each potential barrier, please indicate whether you believe that:

It is a barrier, and OVRs services adequately address the barrier.

It is a barrier, and OVRs services do not adequately address the barrier.

It is not a barrier.

You do not know if it is a barrier.

	Barrier, adequately addressed by OVRs services	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed by OVRs services	Not a barrier	Don't know
Not having education or training	€	€	€	€
Not having job skills	€	€	€	€
Not having job search skills	€	€	€	€
Language barriers	€	€	€	€
Not enough jobs available	€	€	€	€
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	€	€	€	€
Not having disability accommodations	€	€	€	€
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	€	€	€	€
Disability-related transportation issues	€	€	€	€
Other transportation issues	€	€	€	€
Mental health issues	€	€	€	€
Substance abuse issues	€	€	€	€
Other health issues	€	€	€	€
Childcare issues	€	€	€	€
Housing issues	€	€	€	€
Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits	€	€	€	€

Other (please specify)

5
 6

5. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers overall? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

6. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers with the most significant disabilities different from the overall population?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

7. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers with the most significant disabilities? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Staff Survey

8. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall population?

Yes

No

Don't Know

9. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Staff Survey

10. Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the overall population?

Yes

No

Don't Know

11. What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities? (Please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals.)

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Language barriers
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding impact of income on benefits
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Staff Survey

12. Is there anything else we should know about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for OVRs consumers?

13. What would you say are the top three reasons that people with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Staff Survey

14. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by individuals with the most significant disabilities different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Staff Survey

15. What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals with the most significant disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

5

6

OVRs Staff Survey

16. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by youth in transition different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Staff Survey

17. What would you say are the top three reasons that youth in transition might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

	5
	6

OVRs Staff Survey

18. Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access OVRs services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the general population of people with disabilities?

Yes

No

Don't Know

OVRs Staff Survey

19. What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals who are racial or ethnic minorities might find it difficult to access OVRs services? (Please select a maximum of three reasons.)

- Limited accessibility of the OVRs via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the OVRs office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Difficulties accessing Assessment Services
- Difficulties accessing Plan Services
- Difficulties accessing Training or Education Programs
- Other (please specify)

5

6

OVRs Staff Survey

20. Is there anything else we should know about why individuals with disabilities might find it difficult to access OVRs services?

21. What services are readily available to OVRs consumers? By “readily available,” we mean that services are available in the area to individuals with a range of disabilities.

Please indicate which of the following services are readily available to eligible consumers:

- Job search services
- Job training services
- Other education services
- Assistive technology
- Vehicle modification assistance
- Other transportation assistance
- Income assistance
- Medical treatment
- Mental health treatment
- Substance abuse treatment
- Personal care attendants
- Health insurance
- Housing
- Benefit planning assistance
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Staff Survey

22. In your experience, are vendors able to meet OVRs consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs?

Yes

No

Don't Know

23. What service needs are vendors unable to meet?

24. What are the primary reasons that vendors are generally unable to meet consumers' service needs?

- No vendors in the area
- Not enough vendors available in area
- Low quality of vendor services
- Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Staff Survey

25. What is the most important change that OVRs could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

26. What is the most important change that vendors could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

27. What are the top three staff-focused changes that would enable you to better assist your OVRs consumers? (Please select a maximum of three changes.)

- Smaller caseload
- Less paperwork
- Better data management tools
- Better assessment tools
- Additional training
- Job coaching/mentoring
- More administrative support
- More supervisor support
- More interaction with community-based service providers
- Other (please specify)

OVRs Staff Survey

28. What are the top three consumer-focused changes that would enable you to better assist your OVRs consumers? (Please select a maximum of three changes.)

- More time to provide job development services to your consumers
- Better job development skills
- Confidence approaching employers
- More time to provide job coaching services to your consumers
- Better communication with your consumers
- Other (please specify)

29. How long did it take you to complete this survey?

- 0-5 minutes
- 6-10 minutes
- 11-15 minutes
- 16-20 minutes
- 21-25 minutes
- 26-30 minutes
- More than 30 minutes
- Don't know

Your feedback is valuable to us, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

Please select the "Done" button below to submit your responses.

Appendix D: Business Survey

Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Business Survey

The purpose of this survey is to learn more about the needs of businesses and employers with respect to workers with disabilities. The information that you provide will help influence the planning and delivery of services to persons with disabilities. For the purposes of our survey, an individual with a disability is a person who:

Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and you will not be asked for your name or the name of your organization anywhere on the survey.

Please circle an answer for every question according to your needs at this time. Please complete and mail this survey in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope within five business days. **Thank you** for your time and input!

1. Disability in the Workplace: Does your business need help... (circle one for each)

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| a) obtaining information on tax credits for employing workers with disabilities?..... | Yes | No |
| b) obtaining information on other incentives for employing workers with disabilities? | Yes | No |
| c) implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act?..... | Yes | No |
| d) obtaining information on insurance or liability issues?..... | Yes | No |
| e) identifying possible job accommodations for workers with disabilities?..... | Yes | No |
| f) helping workers with disabilities to retain employment? | Yes | No |
| g) obtaining training on disabilities in general? | Yes | No |
| h) obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with disabilities? .. | Yes | No |
| i) obtaining information on training programs available for workers with disabilities? | Yes | No |

(continued on back of page)

2. Applicants with Disabilities: With respect to applicants with disabilities, does your business need help... **(circle one for each)**

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| a) recruiting applicants who meet the job qualifications?..... | Yes | No |
| b) recruiting applicants with good work habits? | Yes | No |
| c) recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills? | Yes | No |
| d) assessing applicants' skills? | Yes | No |
| e) discussing reasonable job accommodations with applicants? | Yes | No |
| f) identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants?... | Yes | No |

What other types of assistance regarding workers with disabilities are needed?

3. Public Awareness Campaign:

- a) Are you familiar with the "Think Beyond the Label" media campaign that encourages employers to hire workers with disabilities? **Yes No**

4. About Your Business:

- a) Which best describes your type of business? **(circle one)**
- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1 - service | 6 - government |
| 2 - retail | 7 - education |
| 3 - manufacturing | 8 - health care |
| 4 - agriculture/forestry/fishing | 9 - banking/finance |
| 5 - construction | 10 - other: _____ |
- b) How many years has this business been in operation? _____ **years**
- c) Total number of employees: **(circle one)** 1-15 16-50 51-250 251-999 1000+
- d) The five-digit zip code of your primary business location: _____

Please return completed forms either by mail or FAX to:

Interwork Institute/San Diego State University
Attn: Mark Tucker
3590 Camino Del Rio North
San Diego, CA 92108
FAX: (619) 594-4208

Appendix E: Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Guidebook

Purpose: Examine in detail the unmet employment-related needs of individuals with disabilities in the community.

Welcome

Introductions/informed consent statement/purpose of the group

Explain concept of unmet need

Central question: “What are the most important employment-related needs encountered by people with disabilities?”

Additional prompts:

- Unmet needs associated with preparing for employment?
- Unmet needs associated with obtaining employment?
- Unmet needs associated with staying employed?
- Other unmet needs?
- What are the most important things that can be done to increase the employment of people with disabilities?

Additional questions for OVRS staff group and partner groups:

- Unmet needs of persons with most significant disabilities?
- Unmet needs of individuals from racial, cultural, or ethnic minority groups?
- Unmet needs of youth with disabilities in transition from high school?

Wrap-up/thank you

Appendix F: Key Informant Interview Protocol

Key Informant Interview Guide

OVRS Stakeholder Telephone Interview Guide

Respondent Name: _____
Respondent Organization: _____
Date of Interview: _____
Interviewer Name: _____
Stakeholder Type(s): _____

Introduction

My name is _____ and I am a Research Associate with the San Diego State University Research Foundation. I am working cooperatively with the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council to identify the unmet vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities who live in the state of Oregon. We are asking you to participate in an interview about the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the state. The results will be used by the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to develop their state plan for providing rehabilitation services.

The interview will consist of questions that ask you to share your perceptions of the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities in the state.

You will be asked to share your impressions of the barriers to employment faced by persons with disabilities as well as your thoughts about how the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous - that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at (619) 594-3498. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board at SDSU (619) 594-6622 to report problems or concerns related to this study.

I would like to ask you some questions about your perceptions of the employment barriers and service needs for persons with disabilities and about what you think OVRS can do to increase the employment of jobseekers with disabilities.

First I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your experience with OVRS.

1. Please tell me about your position and role at your agency. How long have you worked in this capacity?
2. Please tell me about your experience working with persons with disabilities and with ORVS. Do you regularly work with persons with disabilities or interact with OVRS?

Now I'd like to ask you about your perception of barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

3. What do you think are the top three barriers to employment encountered by people with disabilities?

4. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think barriers are any different for people with significant disabilities? If so, what are the differences?
5. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think the barriers are any different for people with disabilities from racial, cultural, or ethnic minority groups? If so, what are the differences?
6. *Ask as necessary, according to stakeholder category:* In comparison to all people with disabilities, do you think the barriers are any different for youth with disabilities in transition from High School? If so, what are the differences?
7. Are there any consumers who have difficulty accessing and benefiting from OVRs services?
8. If so, why? (possible probes: location of office, cultural barriers, language barriers, accessibility barriers, takes too long to obtain services)

Now I'd like to ask you about your experience with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and your thoughts on how the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

9. How well does OVRs partner with your agency when serving persons with disabilities? What could be done to improve this partnership?
10. How well do OVRs counselor qualifications, specialization, and communication methods meet the needs of OVRs consumers. What could be done to improve OVRs counselors' abilities to meet those needs? Eliminate this question.
11. Are you aware of model programs or evidence-based practices that help individuals with disabilities successfully achieve employment? If so, what are the model programs or evidence-based practices?
12. What could OVRs do to better help people with disabilities prepare for and meet employer expectations for new workers?
13. What specific kinds of supports and services would help people with disabilities retain their positions?
14. What is the most important thing that can be done to increase the employment of individuals with disabilities?
15. What two things would you want OVRs to change, and why?

Thank you for your time and input. Is there anything else you think we should know about the needs of persons with disabilities or the services provided by OVRs?

Appendix G: Employer Interview Protocol

Key Informant Interview Guides

OVRs Employer Interview Guide

Respondent Name: _____

Respondent Organization: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

My name is _____ and I am a Research Associate with the San Diego State University Research Foundation. I am working cooperatively with the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council to identify the unmet vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities who live in the state of Oregon. We are asking you to participate in an interview about the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the state. The results will be used by the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to develop their state plan for providing rehabilitation services.

The interview will consist of questions that ask you to share your perceptions of the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities in the state.

You will be asked to share your impressions of the barriers to employment faced by persons with disabilities as well as your thoughts about how the Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous - that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at (619) 594-3498. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board at SDSU (619) 594-6622 to report problems or concerns related to this study.

First I'd like to ask you a little about yourself and your experience with OVRs.

1. Please tell me about your position and role at your agency/company. How long have you worked in this capacity?
2. Please tell me about your experience working with persons with disabilities and with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Do you regularly work with persons with disabilities or interact with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services on behalf of your employees?

Now I'd like to ask you about your perception of barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

3. What are the challenges you face in hiring people with disabilities?

Now I'd like to ask you about your experience with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and your thoughts on how the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services could help improve employment for persons with disabilities.

4. How well does the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services partner with employers to facilitate employment for jobseekers with disabilities? What could be done to improve this partnership?

5. What could the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services do better to help people with disabilities prepare for and meet employer expectations for new workers?
6. What specific kinds of assistance would help you retain employees with disabilities?
7. Is there anything else that would make it easier for you to work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services?

Thank you for your time and input. Is there anything else you think we should know about the employment needs of persons with disabilities or the services provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services?