Executive Summary:
In 2021, Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) received concerns from support coordinators, providers, families, and other stakeholders, that Utah is experiencing direct support staffing shortage. DSPD developed the Direct Support Provider Survey to gather more information to understand the extent of the situation. All current support coordinators were emailed on January 11th, 2022 and asked to voluntarily participate in the survey. Due to the response rate (approximately 52%), we are confident that the survey results are representative of support coordinators (SCs). In fact, approximately two-thirds (64%) of DSPD clients were represented in this survey. Notable results are summarized below:

• Creating a total score from the survey items that used rating scales (Getting Worse: 0-Getting Better: 100), the average score was 9.8. The overall sentiment is that issues have gotten worse in the past six months.
• 68% of the clients represented in this survey have been reportedly impacted by at least one of the six general issues (see Figure 3).
• The top three issues rated as getting 'a lot worse' in the past 6 months include:
  i. Direct support professionals (DSPs) feeling frustrated or burned out (85% of responses; n=123)
  ii. Programs being understaffed (85% of responses; n=123)
  iii. DSPs working extra shifts to the point of exhaustion (83% of responses; n=120*)
• The services most impacted were day programs, residential, and in-home.
• The overwhelming majority of respondents suggested that an increase in compensation would help mitigate staffing shortages in the next six months.
• 18% of the clients represented have reportedly relocated to access services.
• 50% of clients represented have reportedly been unable to access services they are funded for.
• 19% of the clients represented have reportedly had to wait more than 90 days for a service they need.
• 3% of clients represented have been discharged from residential settings (75 clients).
• The total and sub scores did not significantly differ between experienced SCs (6+ years) versus less experienced SCs (1-5 years).
• Wasatch Front Counties’ (Davis, Weber, Morgan, Salt Lake, Utah) and non-Wasatch Front Counties’ total and sub scores were compared; the Wasatch Front group scored significantly worse on health and safety items and choice items compared to the non-Wasatch Front group.

Responses (N): 123 Support Coordinators
Median Duration (minutes): 12 [Min: 2, Max: 3951]

Limitations: This survey used a convenience sample and was available to fill out for less than a week; however the response rate was high and we are confident that the results are representative of the population. Much of the survey asks SCs about DSPs, and SCs may not accurately relay the true experiences and thoughts of DSPs. To further understand any inferences from the subsequent report, additional research may be required.

* 3 missing or not applicable responses
**Significance Level:** p<0.05

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### Demographics

**Figure 1: Support Coordination Experience (years)**

![Pie chart showing Support Coordination Experience](chart)

- Less than one year: 2%
- 1-2 years: 7%
- 3-5 years: 18%
- 6-9 years: 20%
- 10+ years: 54%

### Caseload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many clients do you have on your caseload?</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td>31.74</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>3904.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total clients in services (as of 1-17-2022): 6124
Approximately **64% of clients in services are represented** in this survey (3904).

Total SCEs (as of 1-17-2022): 232
Approximately **52% of SCEs are represented** in this survey (123).
76% of respondents serve mostly clients along the **Wasatch Front**.
7% of respondents serve mostly clients in **Northern, non-Wasatch counties**.
16% of respondents serve mostly clients in **Southern, non-Wasatch counties**.

Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.
General Questions

Figure 3: Over the past 6 months, the issue is getting...

123 Responses

- DSPs feeling frustrated or burned out
- Programs being understaffed
- Actual staffing ratios not appropriate to meet needs
- Supervisory staff needing to take DSP shifts
- Overall, lack of staffing leading to profound health & safety concerns
- Inexperienced DSPs without proper training

Field | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Responses | Sum
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
In the last 6 months, how many people on your caseload have been impacted by any of the issues you indicated above? | 1.00 | 46.00 | 21.55 | 12.61 | 123 | 2651.00

The majority of respondents reported all issues in Figure 3 as being a lot worse than 6 months ago. The General issues that the most respondents reported was “a lot worse” are **DSP burnout and understaffing**.

68% of the clients represented have been reportedly impacted by at least one of the issues in Figure 3.
Figure 4: In the last 6 months, which services were impacted by the issues indicated in above (see Figure 3)... 123 Responses

Figure 4 orders the most impacted services (left) to the least impacted services (right). The most impacted services are reportedly day programs, residential, and in-home supports, respectively.

Figure 5: What ideas do you have to address the issues you indicated above in the next 6 months? 99 Responses

The majority of the ideas mentioned higher pay, benefits, mileage, bonuses, etc.--increase compensation to be more competitive with other jobs requiring similar or lower skill and stress (e.g. fast-food). Other ideas included simplify and speed up documentation/processes; reduce duplication of work; increase training and "professionalization"; partner with the community (e.g. increase partnerships with universities to create internships and pipelines for employment.)
The majority of respondents reported all issues in Figure 6 as being a lot or a little worse than 6 months ago. The Health & Safety issues that the most respondents reported was "a lot worse" are DSP working to exhaustion and new providers are unequipped to handle complex issues.
The majority of respondents reported all issues in Figure 7 as being a lot or a little worse than 6 months ago. The Quality of Service issues that the most respondents reported was “a lot worse” are lack of ability to access community and lack of person-centered plan goals.
The majority of respondents reported all issues in Figure 8 as being a lot or a little worse than 6 months ago. The Choice issues that the most respondents reported was "a lot worse" are limited provider choice and limited site/setting choice.
Provider Access

Figure 9: Over the past 6 months, the issue is getting...

The majority of respondents reported all issues in Figure 9 as being a lot or a little worse than 6 months ago. The Provider Access issues that the most respondents reported was “a lot worse” are unable to find in-home support providers and ISOs going unanswered.
Field | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Responses | Sum
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
In the last 6 months, how many Individuals on your caseload have been relocated to be able to access the services they need? | 0.00 | 35.00 | 3.84 | 5.54 | 123 | 472.00
18% of the clients represented have reportedly relocated to access services.

Field | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Responses | Sum
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
In the last 6 months, how many Individuals on your caseload have not been able to access the services that they are funded for? | 0.00 | 40.00 | 10.72 | 8.58 | 123 | 1319.00
50% of client represented have reportedly been unable to access service they are funded for.

Field | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Responses | Sum
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
In the last 6 months, how many Individuals on your caseload had to wait more than 90 days to be placed in a service that they need? | 0.00 | 24.00 | 4.12 | 4.95 | 123 | 507.00
19% of the clients represented have reportedly had to wait more than 90 days for a service they need.

Figure 10: In the last 6 months have you observed individuals in residential settings....

3% of clients represented have been discharged from residential settings (75).
Scores

Scores were created by adding the item response values for each subcategory. The total and sub scores did not significantly differ between experienced SCs (6+ years) versus less experienced SCs (1-5 years). Two sub scores significantly differed between Wasatch Front Counties (Davis, Weber, Morgan, Salt Lake, Utah) versus non-Wasatch Front Counties: Health & Safety Scores (p=0.017) were worse for Wasatch Front Counties and Choice Scores were worse for Wasatch Front Counties (p=0.003).

Health & Safety: The Wasatch Front group had significantly lower scores (mean=6.10) compared to the non-Wasatch Front group (mean=7.18). This suggests that the health and safety of the Wasatch Front group has gotten worse than the non-Wasatch Front group in the past 6 months.

Choice: The Wasatch Front group had significantly lower scores (mean=3.78) compared to the non-Wasatch Front group (mean=5.07). This suggests that the issues related to choice has gotten worse among the Wasatch Front group in relation to the non-Wasatch Front group in the past 6 months.

Figure 11 (below) demonstrates the relationships between the total and sub scores. The total score and general sub score had the highest correlation coefficient (r=0.86), but all scores are significantly related. This suggests that future surveys could use the general questions only and be confident it would capture a general picture of the status of the issues in the other sub sections.

Figure 11: Heatmap of Total and Subtotal Scores
Mean values: Red; Score indicating no change is issue over last 6 months: Yellow
Scores less than (left of) the Yellow bar indicates issues are getting worse.

Figure 12: Total Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>71.00</td>
<td>42.46</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The score indicating that issues are staying the same is not is not included on the histogram (Figure 12). This suggests that all respondents reported overall that issues presented in this survey have gotten worse in the last 6 months.

Figure 13: General Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General score</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mean values: **Red**; Score indicating no change is issue over last 6 months: **Yellow**
Scores less than (left of) the **Yellow** bar indicates issues are getting worse.

**Figure 14: Health & Safety Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Safety score</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 15: Choice Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice score</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>121</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mean values: Red; Score indicating no change is issue over last 6 months: Yellow
Scores less than (left of) the Yellow bar indicates issues are getting worse.

**Figure 16: Provider Access Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider Access</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 17: Quality of Services Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Services</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>122</td>
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