



DirectConnect: Partnering to Expand and Train NH's Direct Care Workforce

March 1, 2010-June 30, 2013

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Program Evaluation Report

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Background	4
Evaluation Methods.....	6
Participant Recruitment and Eligibility	6
Data Collection.....	7
Research Consent	7
Data Quality Assurance.....	8
SPSS Data Sets.....	8
Outcomes.....	8
Projected Performance Outcomes	8
Recruitment and Enrollment Outcomes	9
Recruitment Outcomes.....	10
Demographic Information.....	11
Participants with a Disability.....	18
Training Outcomes.....	18
Credentials and Certificates	18
Employment Outcomes	20
Overall Employment Status of Participants	20
New Hire Employment Retention	20
Incumbent Worker Retention	21
DirectConnect Program Satisfaction Outcomes	22
CCSNH Satisfaction Survey Results	22
LSS Satisfaction Survey Results	23
CDS Satisfaction Survey Results	24
PHI Satisfaction Survey Results	26
Evaluation/Reporting Challenges.....	27
Appendix	29

Executive Summary

Based on projections that the need for direct care workers in home and community based settings would increase in the future, and demand will rapidly outpace supply, the Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) applied for, and was funded for, a three-year Department of Labor (DOL) grant to establish a workforce development program, *DirectConnect*. *Direct Connect* aimed to recruit and train individuals to serve in the direct care workforce in the state of New Hampshire. The *DirectConnect* funding began March 1, 2010 and ended June 30, 2013. This report provides a summary *DirectConnect* program, including the evaluation activities and key outcomes of the program (recruitment, training, and employment). In addition, it describes participant demographics and satisfaction.

New Hampshire's *DirectConnect* program demonstrated a number of successful outcomes, built on many strong partnerships. *DirectConnect* was created through work and guidance of the New Hampshire Coalition for the Direct Care Workforce (the Coalition). The Coalition was formed in 2007 by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. It expanded under *DirectConnect* to include a broad set of stakeholders, including New Hampshire Employment Securities and New Hampshire Office of Workforce Opportunity. The Coalition assisted the UNH team, and its contracted training organizations, in implementing *DirectConnect* in line with its goals to strengthen New Hampshire's direct care work force.

The training component of *DirectConnect* targeted a diverse group of direct care workers, each presenting with slightly different training needs. Therefore, a variety of training and education opportunities were woven into the project, with the goal of creating a higher standard of training for the workforce in the state. The project partnered with four training organizations: the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH), the College of Direct Support (CDS), Lutheran Social Services (LSS,) and PHI.

Over the life of the grant, a total of 2,537 individuals applied to participate in the *DirectConnect* program. Of those, 2,476 individuals met the eligibility requirements to participate in the program. Fifty (50) were found ineligible to participate and 11 were dropped from the *DirectConnect* program after their selective service status could not be verified. The majority of participants (68%) were enrolled between 7/1/2011 and 9/30/2013.

The program trained 1,692 individuals within the four training organizations. Individuals participated in 3,254 trainings, receiving 1,326 credentials and/or certifications. The majority of participants were white females between the ages of 20 and 29 years. Participants were most commonly New Hampshire (NH) residents residing in Hillsborough County. Overall, there was a 78% retention rate for newly-hired participants; this exceeds the projected goal of retaining 75% of newly-hired workers in their jobs over the life of the grant period.

Incumbent worker retention outcomes were collected directly from training partners. *DirectConnect* staff was able to follow up with incumbent workers from two of the four training organizations, CDS and PHI. Of those incumbent workers who were tracked by training organizations, there was a 93% retention rate. This aligns to the projected goal of retaining 90% of existing workers in their jobs over the life of the grant period.

In addition to outcomes related to training and employment/retention, *DirectConnect* evaluated participant satisfaction with program components. Training organizations took a varied approach to measuring participant satisfaction, aligned to the specific training mechanisms at each organization. Satisfaction was high across the training sites.

In summary, *DirectConnect* evaluation demonstrated that, overall, the program achieved its outcome goals and achieved high levels of participant satisfaction. Combined, these parameters indicate that *DirectConnect* was successful in its goals to improve the training and retention of the direct care workforce in New Hampshire.

Background

With a population that is aging faster than the national average¹, New Hampshire (NH) anticipates an increasing demand for healthcare and support services and a heavier reliance on home and community based services (HCBS) for long-term care. It is projected that the need for direct care workers in home and community based settings will increase in the near future, and demand will rapidly outpace supply. In response to this anticipated demand, the Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) applied for, and was funded for a three-year Department of Labor (DOL) grant to establish a workforce development program, *DirectConnect*. *Direct Connect* aimed to recruit and train individuals to serve in the direct care workforce in the state of New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Institute for Health Policy and Practice (NHIHPP) was subcontracted to provide evaluation support to the project.

DirectConnect was created through work and guidance of the New Hampshire Coalition for the Direct Care Workforce (the Coalition). The Coalition, created in 2007, is a cross-disability collaboration of providers, policy makers, legislators, educators, workforce specialists, and direct care workers, formed by the NH Department of Health and Human Services to address the needs of the direct care workforce in NH.

Based on needs identified from occupational growth projections from the NH Employment Security, *DirectConnect* focused on increasing the availability of trained home and community based direct care workers in the following categories: Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNA), Personal Care Service Providers (PCSP)/ Personal Care Attendants (PCA), Direct Support Professionals (DSP), and homemakers/companions. This effort was a two-fold effort involving both the recruitment of workers and the training of workers.

In 2010, the *DirectConnect* staff partnered with Millennium Integrated Marketing (<http://www.mill-im.com/>) to develop a comprehensive outreach and recruitment plan designed to recruit participants into the program and address a significant barrier to recruitment, namely, the public perception of direct care work. Market research was performed that identified several key characteristics of the direct care workforce, including (PHI, Who Are Direct Care Workers, February, 2011):

- 89% of direct care workers are female,
- The average age of all direct care workers is 42,
- 23% of direct care workers are foreign born.

¹ <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

Based on this market research, key target audiences were identified that included, and also expanded to, people who met the current demographic make-up of the workforce. For instance, individuals below the age of 30, men, and immigrants/refugees were targeted to allow for expansion of the workforce to meet projected future demands. Messaging to all target audiences focused on changing the public perception around direct care work by 1) increasing awareness of the need for direct care workers, 2) educating target audiences about the positive aspects of direct care work and the options available in the field, and 3) highlighting the emotionally fulfilling nature of direct care work and the significant positive impact direct care workers make on the lives of others.

The training component of *DirectConnect* targeted a diverse group of direct care workers, each presenting with slightly different training needs. Therefore, a variety of training and education opportunities were woven into the project, with the goal of creating a higher standard of training for the workforce in the state.

The project partnered with four training organizations: the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH), the College of Direct Support (CDS), Lutheran Social Services (LSS,) and PHI. Each organization is described below:

CCSNH is NH's statewide system of two-year colleges. CCSNH offers associate degrees, professional training, and transfer pathways to four-year degrees. CCSNH has seven campuses located throughout NH, plus online learning opportunities. These campuses are Nashua Community College (NCC), Manchester Community College (MCC), Lakes Region Community College (LRCC), NH Technical Institute (NHTI), River Valley Community College (RVCC), White Mountain Community College (WMCC,) and Great Bay Community College (GBCC). CCSNH provided scholarships to eligible participants to take courses to work toward degrees and/or certificate programs in the direct care service fields.

CDS is an interactive web-based curriculum encompassing a set of values and competencies to train Direct Support Professionals, and their supervisors and managers as they support people in community-based settings. Through *DirectConnect*, participants could receive a NH Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) Overviews Certificates (established by *DirectConnect* to meet the NH-BDS requirements for new staff training), as well as IOD/UNH Credentials (developed by *DirectConnect*). In an effort to make the learning experience as hands-on and relevant to each participant's daily work as possible, the certifications and credentials offered through CDS for *DirectConnect* was a blended training model, combining online coursework with face-to-face group discussions and on-the-job learning reinforcement tools. *DirectConnect* was able to create a number of training options to meet a variety of needs of our employer partners. Two certificates were established as part of this work specifically; one representing the successful completion of new employee curriculum and the other, a more rigorous, year-long program.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) is one of the largest social service organizations in New England. LSS delivers a broad variety of services to children, youth and families; persons with developmental disabilities, mental illness and Deafness; the economically disadvantaged; refugees and older adults. As a result of the marketing research indicating that the demographics of the direct care workforce would need to be expanded to meet future demand, a certificate program was developed specifically for the refugee population. This training was provided for unemployed or underemployed refugees and was designed to provide skills that will allow participants to enter into a Direct Care position. Participants received a minimum of

28 hours a week of training for 8 consecutive weeks. The training included vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), job skills and industry information, work readiness, and job shadowing/internship. Assistance with finding employment was provided post-training through this program.

PHI is a national leader in strengthening the direct care workforce through advocacy, public policy, workforce development, and training of direct care staff. The PHI training through *DirectConnect* focused on providing incumbent workers increased communication and problem solving skills with the goal of both improving quality of care and improving the work culture in organizations thus improving retention of frontline direct care staff. Through this training partnership, 5 sites were chosen through an extensive application process. Each of these sites received "Coaching Approach to Communication" and "Coaching Approach to Supervision" trainings. In addition to these core trainings, each organization received technical assistance in establishing a peer mentor program, and a train-the-trainer model to ensure sustainability of trainings.

This report describes the evaluation activities and key outcomes of the program, including recruitment, training, and employment. In addition, it describes demographics of those recruited, trained, and employed. The report also includes measures of participant satisfaction.

Evaluation Methods

Participant Recruitment and Eligibility

Recruitment into *DirectConnect* included a comprehensive career awareness campaign that focused on the value of the work, and highlighted the many benefits of direct care positions. The outreach campaign included the use of a dedicated website, posters, brochures, public service announcements, print advertisements, transit advertisements, radio advertisements, social media, billboard, and the development of a cross-sector career lattice in both a brochure format and an online interactive format. These tools were used for concentrated outreach efforts to employers of direct care workers across the state and the NH Works Employment Centers.

The method by which a participant entered (how they heard about) the *DirectConnect* program was self-reported by the individual during the application process.

Eligibility for participation in *DirectConnect* included two criteria. Individuals needed to be residents of New Hampshire or non-residents working in the state. Men born after December 31, 1959, were required to provide proof of selective service registration to be eligible to participate in the program. All prospective participants registered through an online registration tool (assistance was provided to anyone without access to a computer, disability preventing access, or language barriers). All applications were reviewed to ensure the relevant criteria were met prior to acceptance into the *DirectConnect* program. If someone was deemed ineligible, they were contacted for confirmation of the ineligibility finding, and given the opportunity to correct information submitted, if applicable. Over the two years of active applications to *DirectConnect*, 50 individuals were ineligible to participate, and 2,476 were eligible.

Data Collection

Throughout the program, *DirectConnect* leveraged a variety of tools for data collection:

***DirectConnect* Website and Database:** The *DirectConnect* website was the information hub for collecting and storing participant enrollment and training data. Potential participants applied to the program via an electronic, web-based application form which, upon submission, would prompt staff to verify eligibility. Once verified, participants received a *DirectConnect* ID (DCID) number that was used to track their training outcomes throughout the duration of their participation in the program. Training organizations provided monthly reports to grant staff members which detailed participant training information. Information included within these reports included the training name, training start date, status of training, training completion dates (if applicable) and any associated certificates or credentials obtained. Those reports were then merged to enrollment information using the DCID. Using this process, a longitudinal record for a participant was created and updated throughout the project.

Functionality was also built within the *DirectConnect* website that would auto-populate enrollment information from the *DirectConnect* database to the DOL's Recovery Act Data (RAD) System during the initial participant record creation. This functionality greatly decreased the amount of time necessary to create records in RAD.

***DirectConnect* Training Webform:** An Excel-based webform was developed and distributed to training organization administrators to capture monthly participant training outcomes; a copy of the training webform fields is available in Appendix 1. Once evaluators received a webform, the form was checked for errors, saved as a file as in a CSV format, and the data was uploaded into the *DirectConnect* database via the *DirectConnect* website.

***DirectConnect* Surveys:** The team leveraged two survey technology platforms during the duration of the grant: Survey Monkey® and Qualtrics®. Surveys were created to understand participant satisfaction in the program, and to gain employment status and retention information from participants.

Research Consent

U.S. DOL grant guidelines mandated reporting on all participants; therefore, this report contains information and outcomes for all participants of the program. Any future use of the data by UNH or the U.S. DOL outside the grant-specific reporting requirements will utilize only those individuals who agreed to Institutional Review Board Research (IRB) consent for research.

The IRB process, a committee that has been formally designated to approve, monitor, and review biomedical and behavioral research involving humans, was initiated because the application process for *DirectConnect* included personally identifiable information. Participants were required to indicate whether they would consent to provide their information for the purposes of published research following the completion of the grant study. Those that indicated that they would not consent to this research were still able to participate in the *DirectConnect* program, but are not part of the participant cohort from which research studies can be developed.

One hundred and thirty-five (135) individuals did not provide their research consent to have their outcomes reported publically. Outcome results that are limited to those who agreed to research are included in Appendix 6 for reference. The reporting in the body of this report is based on the full participant population.

Data Quality Assurance

The data collection portal was designed with several business rules in place to assure that complete and unduplicated data entered the system. Two specific business rules are detailed below.

- DCID validation. The system would compare the DCID detailed on webforms with the existing list of DCIDs in the system. If a discrepancy occurred during data submission, the file would be rejected for submission and an error detailing the incorrect DCID(s) would appear to the submitter for correction.
- Validation that each training was unique. Because participants could enroll in multiple trainings of varying lengths, the data collection system was created to reject a file submission if a training with the same name and start date associated with a user was submitted.

In addition to automated solutions, all data reported from training partners was first reviewed by *DirectConnect* staff members before data submission.

SPSS Data Sets

The *DirectConnect* database from the website was downloaded and converted into IBM SPSS Statistics 21 datasets for analysis. The data were formatted in two versions: (1) a participant-focused dataset, and (2) a training-focused dataset. The participant dataset (in which each record of the data set was a participant) allowed for analysis at the individual participant level. The training dataset (in which each record of the data set was a training session) allowed for analysis at the level of each training.

Outcomes

Projected Performance Outcomes

The *DirectConnect* project established performance outcomes goals focused on participation, training, certification, and employment/retention prior to the start of the project in 2010. The table below provides projections for the number of participants served, trained, and in employment settings by the various training components of the project (note: this does not include new hires who go through agency based training only). For the purposes of this report, incumbent workers (IW) are defined as those individuals who reported being employed at the time of enrollment who were participating in *DirectConnect* to advance in their career. A new hire (NH) is defined as an individual who reported at enrollment to the *DirectConnect* program that they were unemployed, and, as a result of their training through the program, were able to gain employment. The projections established at the start of the project were based on the following assumptions:

- Anticipated 10% of people beginning training will not complete training.
- Of those completing training, 90% will be hired; of those, 90% will be hired into a direct care job and 10% into a job in a different sector.
- The retention rate is estimated at 75% for new hire, and 90% for existing hires.

Table 1. 2010 projected participant outcomes by training organization prior as outlined in grant proposal

Type of Training	Total Participants Served	Number of Participants that Begin Training	Number of Participants that Complete Training	Number of Participants that Complete Training Who are Employed	Number of Participants that Complete Training Who are Employed into Direct Care	Number of Participants Who Retain Positions
PHI Coaching Supervision/ Peer Mentor Certificates	30	30	27	27	27	25
College of Direct Support (Certificate)	Total: 1000 IW:900 NH:100	Total: 1000 IW:900 NH:100	Total: 900 IW:810 NH:90	Total: 891 IW:810 NH:81	Total: 883 IW:810 NH:800	Total: 790 IW:729 NH:61
CCSNH (Certificate and Associate Degrees)	Total: 100 IW: 50 NH: 50	Total: 100 IW: 50 NH: 50	Total: 90 IW: 45 NH: 45	Total: 81 IW: 41 NH: 40	Total: 73 IW: 37 NH: 36	Total: 61 IW: 31 NH: 30
UNH (Nursing BS and MS Degrees)	3	3	3	3	3	2
Total	1133	1133	1020	1002	986	878

Early in the grant period, the UNH nursing BS and MS degree training option was dropped as it was not seen as a viable option for program participants due to cost. Also, the project did not have a mechanism for determining eligibility for and providing scholarship dollars to participants.

As mentioned earlier in the background section, a training partnership with LSS was added to meet the needs of a diverse workforce and allow for recruitment outside the current demographic to expand the workforce to meet future demand.

Recruitment and Enrollment Outcomes

Over the life of the grant, a total of 2,537 individuals applied to participate in the *DirectConnect* program. Of those, 2,476 individuals met the eligibility requirements to participate in the program. Fifty (50) were found ineligible to participate and 11 were dropped from the *DirectConnect* program after their selective serve status could not be verified. Table 2 below details the number of eligible individuals that applied to the program over the life of the grant, by quarter. The majority of participants (68%) were enrolled between 7/1/2011 and 9/30/2013.

Table 2. Total number of eligible individuals that applied to *DirectConnect* by quarter

Quarter	Number of participants enrolled	Percentage
10/1 - 12/31/2010	87	4%
1/1 - 3/31/2011	175	7%
4/1 - 6/30/2011	177	7%
7/1 - 9/30/2011	320	13%
10/1 - 12/31/2011	319	13%
1/1 - 3/31/2012	342	14%
4/1 - 6/30/2012	376	15%
7/1 - 9/30/2012	324	13%
10/1 - 12/31/2012	227	9%
01/01 - 02/28/2013	129	5%
Cumulative	2476	100%

Recruitment Outcomes

Participants had the opportunity to state how they heard about the *DirectConnect* program as part of the web-based application process. Outreach activities are described above.

Of the 2,476 participants, 2,136 indicated how they heard about the program. The majority of participants heard about the program from their employer (60%). Further details are provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Total and percentage of participants that heard about *DirectConnect* by recruitment sources and locations

Source	Number of Participants	Percentage
Employer	1284	60%
College of Direct Support (CDS)	278	13%
Community College System of NH (CCSNH)	243	11%
Marketing*	144	7%
PHI	64	3%
Lutheran Social Services (LSS)	52	2%
Family/Friend	37	2%
Other	34	2%
Total	2136	100%

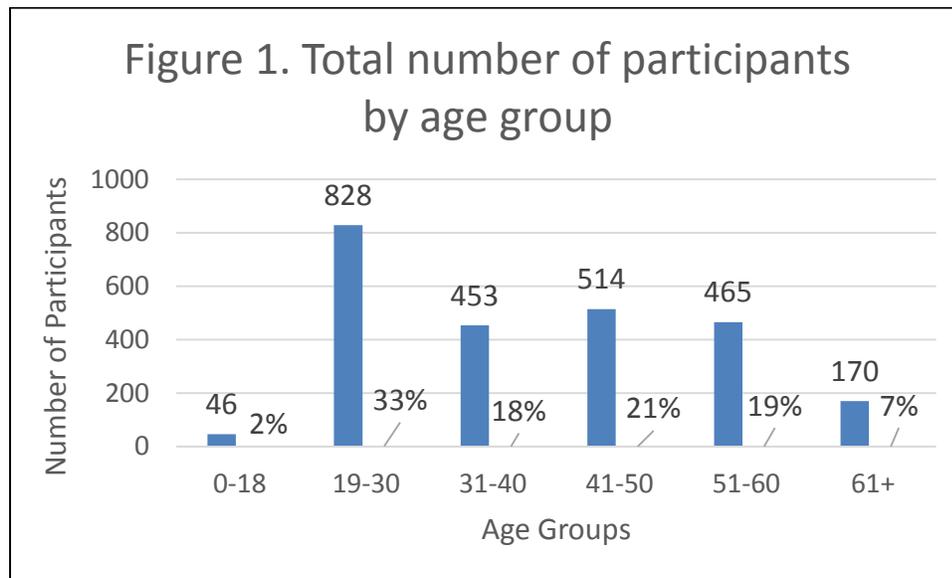
*Resources include: the *DirectConnect* website, posters, brochures, public service announcements, print advertisements, transit advertisements, radio advertisements, social media and billboards

Demographic Information

The following section details self-reported demographic information by participants at enrollment.

Age

Participant ages ranged from 16 to 100, with an average age of 39 years. As indicated in Figure 1, the majority of participants were in the 19-30 age group (33%), followed by the 41- 50 age group (21%). This compares to the national average age of the direct care workforce of 42².



The average age by training organization is detailed in Table 4. The oldest average age was seen with PHI participants, and the youngest average age was with LSS.

Table 4. Average age by training organization

Training Organizations	Average Age
CCSNH	38
CDS	39
LSS	28
PHI	44

Table 5 details, by employment status at time of enrollment, the age ranges of participants. The average age of those participants who reported that they were unemployed at time of enrollment was 35. Individuals in the 20-29 age group reported the highest percentage of unemployment (37%), while those 60 and over reported the lowest (6%). The average age of those participants who reported at time of enrollment that they were employed was 40 years of age. Individuals between the ages of 20 and 29 reported the highest percentage of employment (27%), while those under 20 reported the lowest (3%) followed by those 60 years of age and older (9%).

² <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmlk>

Table 5. Age range of participants by reported employment status at time of enrollment

Age Range	Employment Status at Time of Enrollment			
	Unemployed Participants	Percentage of Unemployed Participants	Employed Participants	Percentage of Employed Participants
0-19	29	7%	67	3%
20-29	155	37%	552	27%
30-39	88	21%	386	19%
40-49	72	17%	428	21%
50-59	51	12%	440	21%
60+	23	6%	179	9%
Total	418		2052	

Gender

Of the total *DirectConnect* participants, 1,983 (80%) participants were female and 493 (20%) participants were male. Comparatively, nationally, 89% of direct care workers are female³. Across all eligible participants, 16% of females and 19% of males reported unemployment. Of the 418 individuals who reported that they were unemployed, 78% were female and 22% were males. This mirrors the overall breakout of females (80%, 1978 individuals) to males (20%, 492 individuals) trained in the program.

Table 6 and 7 detail the number of trainings by gender and training organization. Note that an individual could attend a training in more than one location and attend more than one training in an organization, therefore, the total number of people by trainings is greater than the overall total number of people in the *DirectConnect* program. Table 6 highlights the gender distribution *within* training organizations. Females participated in 81% of trainings and males in 19% of trainings. CCSNH had the most uneven distribution of 93 to 7%, females to males, whereas LSS was more even at 56 to 44%, females to males.

Table 6. Gender distribution *within* training organizations

			Training Organizations				Total
			CCSNH	CDS	LSS	PHI	
Gender	Female	Frequency	746	1020	39	870	2675
		Percent of Females within Training Organization	93%	78%	56%	79%	81%
	Male	Frequency	59	290	31	234	614
		Percent of Males within Training Organization	7%	22%	44%	21%	19%
Total of Trainings		Frequency	805	1310	70	1104	3289

³ <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmmk>

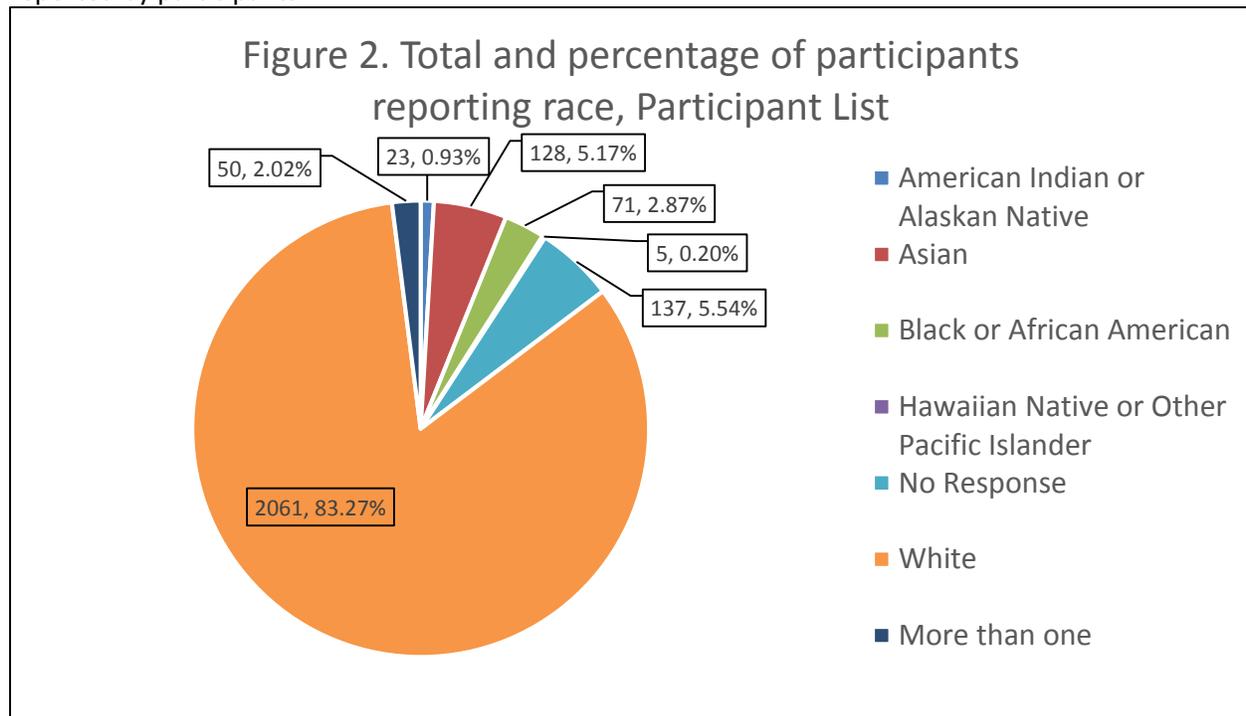
Table 7 highlights the distribution of gender *across* training organizations. Of all female participants, 28% participated in trainings through CCSNH. The highest percentage of males participated in trainings through CDS (47%).

Table 7. Gender distribution *across* training organizations

			Training Organizations				Total
			CCSNH	CDS	LSS	PHI	
Gender	Female	Frequency	746	1020	39	870	2675
		Percent of Females within Gender	28%	38%	1%	33%	100%
	Male	Frequency	59	290	31	234	614
		Percent of Males within Gender	10%	47%	5%	38%	100%
Total of Trainings		Frequency	805	1310	70	1104	3289
		% within Gender	24%	40%	2%	34%	100%

Race

The majority of participants, 2,061 individuals (83%), were white. This aligns to current population statistics for the state which report NH as 94% white⁴. Figure 2 below details the distribution of race reported by participants.



⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey

The next largest race group served by *DirectConnect* were those of Asian descent. Part of *DirectConnect*’s training efforts hoped to target the Refugee Resettlement Program through LSS, which supports training of individuals from countries in crisis around the world.

Ethnicity

The vast majority (95%, 2,354 participants) were non-Latino/non-Hispanic. Less than 5% (72 participants) participants were Latino/Hispanic. The remaining 2% (50 participants) gave no response.

Geography (Residency)

Participants residing in other states could apply and participate in the program as long as they worked in NH. Overall, the majority of all enrolled participants (92%) were residents of NH, followed by Vermont residents (4%), Maine (2%), Massachusetts (1%). Participants from other states were less than 1% of participants. Eighty-two percent (82%, 1878/2278) of participants that reported they were NH residents reported that they were employed at time of enrollment compared to 18% (400/2278) who reported that they were unemployed. Table 8 details the geographic breakdown by county of employment status for all NH participants.

Table 8. Geographic distribution (by county) of participants by employment status

County	Employment Status			
	Employed		Not Employed	
Belknap	240	13%	47	12%
Carroll	41	2%	14	4%
Cheshire	258	13%	13	3%
Coos	24	1%	13	3%
Grafton	130	7%	20	5%
Hillsborough	536	29%	137	34%
Merrimack	170	9%	70	18%
Rockingham	262	14%	48	12%
Strafford	180	10%	31	8%
Sullivan	37	2%	7	2%
Total	1878	100%	400	100%

To understand the geographic distribution of program trainings within the state, the data was analyzed by County (Table 8 and Map 1). At 29%, the majority of participants resided in Hillsborough County, the state’s most populated county. 25% of participants served were from rural NH counties (Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, Carroll, Sullivan); overall, 22% of NH’s population resides in these counties.⁵ This analysis suggests that targeted trainings to draw a mix of attendees from across the state were successful.

⁵ <http://www.census.gov/popfinder/?fl=33>

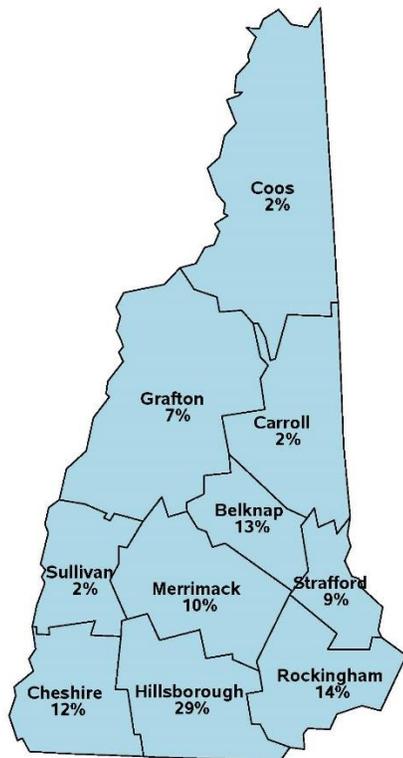
Table 9. Geographic distribution of participants

County	Number Participants	Percentage of Participants	Overall Population Percentage*
Belknap	288	13%	5%
Carroll	55	2%	4%
Cheshire	273	12%	6%
Coos	37	2%	3%
Grafton	150	7%	7%
Hillsborough	673	29%	30%
Merrimack	240	10%	11%
Rockingham	309	14%	22%
Strafford	213	9%	9%
Sullivan	44	2%	3%
Total	2282		

*Based on 2010 Census

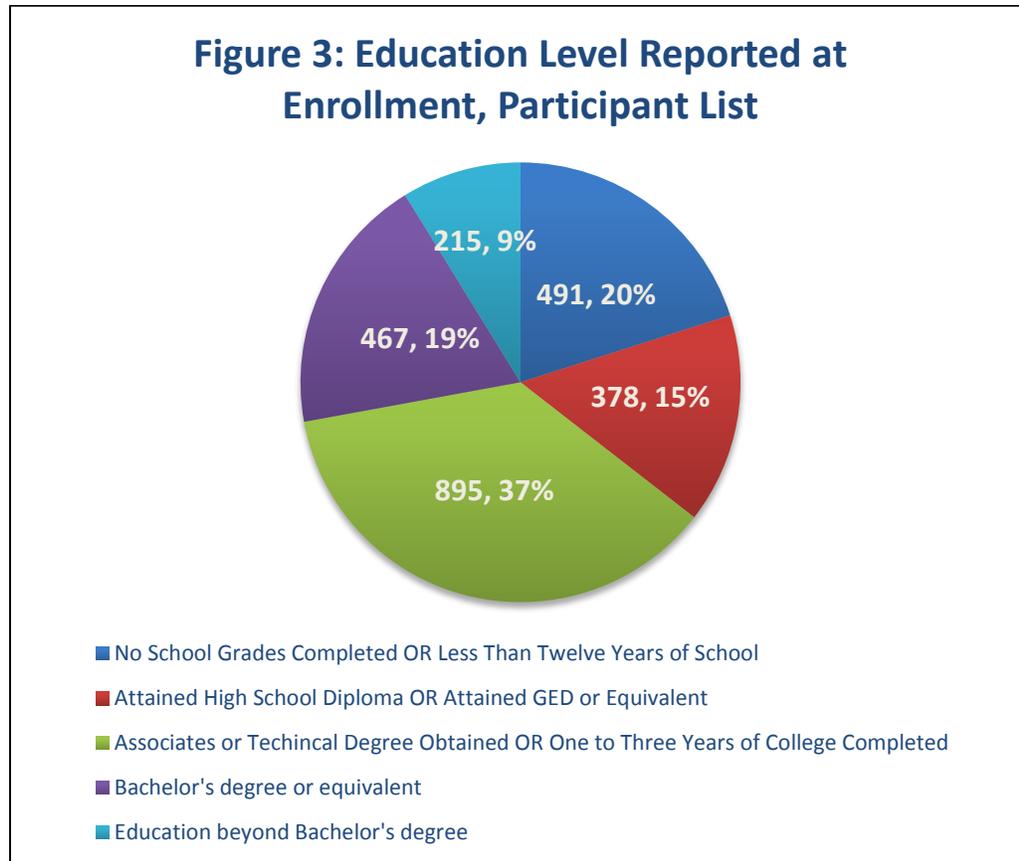
Map 1: Geographic Distribution of all DirectConnect Participants by County

Geographic Distribution of All DirectConnect Participants



Education Level

As detailed in Figure 3, the majority of participants (37%) reported that they had obtained an Associate's or technical degree or had completed one to three years of college. 20% of participants reported completing less than 12 years of school, 19% a Bachelor's degree or equivalent, 15% had attained a high school diploma, GED or equivalent, and 9% of participants reported attaining education beyond a Bachelor's degree.



As reported in Table 10, the majority of participants in *DirectConnect* trainings had an associates or technical degree or one to three years of college completed (39%).

Table 10. Education level reported at enrollment by training organization

Education Level	Training Organization				Total	Percentage of Trainings by Education Level
	CCSNH	CDS	LSS	PHI		
No School Grades Completed OR Less Than Twelve Years of School	111 (21%)	157 (30%)	13 (3%)	236 (46%)	517	16%
Attained High School Diploma OR Attained GED or Equivalent	126 (28%)	168 (37%)	30 (7%)	127 (28%)	451	14%
Associates or Technical Degree Obtained OR One to Three Years of College Completed	421 (33%)	515 (41%)	27 (2%)	302 (24%)	1265	39%
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	101 (14%)	319 (46%)	0 (0%)	277 (40%)	697	21%
Education beyond Bachelor's degree	30 (10%)	141 (45%)	0 (0%)	141 (45%)	312	10%
Total	789	1300	70	1083	3242	100%

Table 11 provides education by employment status. Participants who reported their education level as a Bachelor's degree or equivalent had the highest employment rate at 93%. The lowest employment rate was among participants who reported completing a high school diploma or equivalent.

Table 11. Education level reported at enrollment by employment status

Education Level Reported at Enrollment	Employment Status		Total
	Employed	Not Employed	
No School Grades Completed OR Less Than Twelve Years of School	399 (81%)	92 (19%)	491
Attained High School Diploma OR Attained GED or Equivalent	271 (72%)	106 (28%)	377
Associates or Technical Degree Obtained OR One to Three Years of College Completed	729 (82%)	162 (18%)	891
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	434 (93%)	33 (7%)	467
Education beyond Bachelor's degree	195 (91%)	20 (9%)	215
Total	2028	413	2441

Veterans

Overall, a total of 183 individuals, 7.4% of participants, reported at enrollment that they were veterans. 83% (152 individuals) of veterans reported employment at enrollment while 17% (31 individuals) reported unemployment. Participants who were veterans completed 45% of trainings at CDS, 35% at PHI and 21% at CCSNH. No veterans participated in trainings at LSS.

Participants with a Disability

Overall, a total of 96 individuals, or 3.9% of participants, reported at enrollment that they have a disability. 68% (65 individuals) of those individuals reported employment at enrollment while 32% (31 individuals) reported unemployment. Participants with a disability completed 106 trainings (training list); 34% were trainings at CDS, 34% at CCSNH, 31% at PHI and 1% at LSS.

Limited English Language

Overall, a total of 284 individuals, or 11.5% of participants, reported that they have limited English language proficiency.

Training Outcomes

Of the 2,476 found eligible to participate, 1,692 (68%) started at least one training. Because individuals could participate in more than one training across training organizations, the total number of participants when totaled across all training organizations exceeds 1,692. Of the total number of trainings started, 74% were completed, 25% were ongoing as of the grant closeout date, and 1% of trainings were dropped. A summary of training outcomes by training organization are detailed in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Summary of training status and credentialing and certificates by training organization

Training Organization	Total Number among Participants*	Percent of Participants by Training Organization	Number of Trainings Started	Percent of Trainings Started	Number of Completed Trainings	Percent of Trainings Completed	Credentials and Certificates Obtained	Percent of Credentials and Certificates Obtained
CDS	778	44%	1309	40%	734	30%	509	38%
PHI	665	38%	1104	34%	1104	46%	717	54%
CCSNH	247	14%	765	24%	501	21%	37	3%
LSS	70	4%	70	2%	70	3%	63	5%
Total	1760	100%	3248	100%	2409	100%	1326	100%

*If an individual participated in a training in more than one organization, he or she is counted in each organizations total.

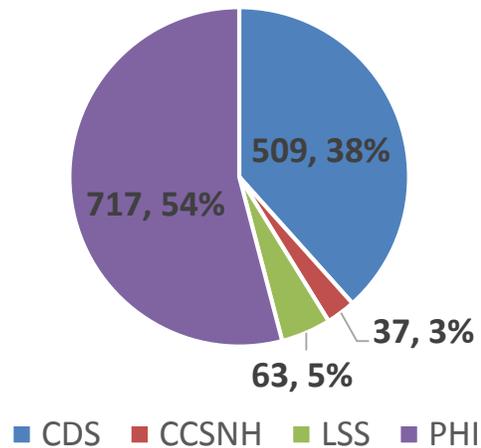
Credentials and Certificates

As detailed in Table 13 below, a total of 1,326 credentials and certificates were obtained in total for the duration of the grant program. Of the 1,326 credentials and certificates that were awarded, Figure 4 details the number and percent awarded by training organization. PHI awarded the majority of credentials and certificates (54%).

Table 13. Credentials and Certificates obtained

Credential and Certificates Name	Number of Credentials and Certificates Obtained	Percentage of Total Credentials and Certificates Obtained
PHI Certificates and Other	726	55%
Institute on Disability (IOD) Direct Support Professional (DSP) Credential	374	28%
Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) Orientation Certificate	133	10%
Health Care Training Certificate	46	3%
Personal Care Service Provider (PCSP) Certificate	34	3%
Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) Certificate	13	1%
Total	1326	100%

Figure 4: Number and percentage of total credentials and certificates by training organization



Employment Outcomes

The employment outcomes were collected through an Excel-based webform, which was developed for this project and distributed to training organization administrators to capture monthly participant training outcomes. The training webform fields are available in Appendix 1.

Overall Employment Status of Participants

Table 14 provides the number of projected trainings and the number of actual trainings, by self-reported employment status at the start of *DirectConnect* trainings, for participants in each training organization. An individual trained in more than one organization was counted by each organization.

Table 14. Employed participants at each training organization

Training Organization	Projected Incumbent Training Number for <i>DirectConnect</i> *	Number of Incumbent Participants
PHI	247	654
LSS	0	0
CDS	303	665
CCSNH	233	170
Total	783	1489

*Based on May 2011 enrollment projections

A “new hire” is a person who was required to participate in trainings as a condition of being hired. New hires were reported by training organizations. A total of 283 people were considered new hires (52 in LSS, and 231 in CDS).

New Hire Employment Retention

This section details the 283 “new hire” individuals from LSS and CDS that gained employment with the condition participation in *DirectConnect*.

LSS: As detailed in Table 15, 52 participants gained employment as a result of their training. Of those new hires, 50 participants achieved 1-quarter of employment retention following their training completion and 44 achieved 2-quarter of employment retention following training. At 85%, LSS met the employment 2- quarter retention goal of 75%.

Table 15. LSS new hire status and retention

Time Period	New Hires	Percentage
Baseline	52	100%
Retention – 1st Quarter	50	96%
Retention – 2nd Quarter	44	85%

CDS: In total, 231 participants that participated through CDS gained employment as a result of their training. Of those new hires, 215 participants achieved 1-quarter of employment retention following their training completion and 176 achieved a 2-quarter of employment retention following training. At 76%, CDS met the employment 2-quarter retention goal of 75%.

Table 16. CDS new hire status and retention

Time Period	New Hires	Percentage
Baseline	231	100%
Retention – 1st Quarter	215	93%
Retention – 2nd Quarter	176	76%

Overall, there was a 78% retention rate for total new hired participants; this exceeds the projected goal of retaining 75% of newly-hired workers in their jobs over the life of the grant period.

Incumbent Worker Retention

As noted in the data collection section, incumbent worker retention outcomes were collected directly from training partners. *DirectConnect* staff was able to follow up with incumbent workers from two of the four training organizations, CDS and PHI. Tables 17 and 18 provide details about incumbent worker retention. CDS tracked the retention of 184 incumbent workers following training completion. Of those, 164 (89%) retained their employment through two quarters. PHI tracked the retention of 505 incumbent workers following training completion. Of those, 476 (94%) retained their employment through two quarters.

Table 17. CDS incumbent worker retention

Incumbent Workers who Retained Position of Employment After Completion		Incumbent Workers who Retained Position of Employment in the 1st and 2nd Quarters Following Quarter of Initial Retained Position	
Current Quarter	Cumulative Grant-to-date	Current Quarter	Cumulative Grant-to-date
184	184	164	164
*Data reported is not duplicative of outcomes reported in RAD/GRAD and on the ETA-9153 Form			

Table 18. PHI incumbent worker retention

Incumbent Workers who Retained Position of Employment After Completion		Incumbent Workers who Retained Position of Employment in the 1st and 2nd Quarters Following Quarter of Initial Retained Position	
Current Quarter	Cumulative Grant-to-date	Current Quarter	Cumulative Grant-to-date
505	505	476	476
*Data reported is not duplicative of outcomes reported in RAD/GRAD and on the ETA-9153 Form			

Of those incumbent workers who were tracked by training organizations, there was a 93% retention rate. This aligns to the projected goal of retaining 90% of existing workers in their jobs over the life of the grant period. The retention rate of *DirectConnect* participants was well above national estimates. For example, 80-90% of home health aides leave their job within the first year⁶.

⁶ PHI and Institute for the Future of Aging Services. 2005. The role of training in improving the recruitment and retention of direct-care workers in long-term care. Workforce Strategies No. 3. Bronx, NY: PHI and IFAS

DirectConnect Program Satisfaction Outcomes

Because each training organization performed different types of trainings, satisfaction assessments were tailored to align with the organization's training methods and content. Each organization submitted survey results to evaluators for inclusion in this report.

CCSNH Satisfaction Survey Results

DirectConnect developed and implemented a web-based satisfaction survey for CCSNH participants; a PDF of the survey can be found in Appendix 2. Surveys were distributed to e-mail addresses associated with a registered community college course. A total of 805 e-mail requests for participation in this survey were distributed during the grant period; this includes duplicate requests of participants. A total of 96 people participated in the satisfaction survey. Two of the main highlights from the CCSNH satisfaction survey include:

- 85 people said they received the support needed throughout the *DirectConnect* program, 2 did not, and 9 said they didn't need it. (N=96)
- 50 people participated in the *DirectConnect* program to advance their current career, 32 used it to gain new skills to help with their current job, 2 said it was required by their current job, and 47 used the program to get a job. (N=96)

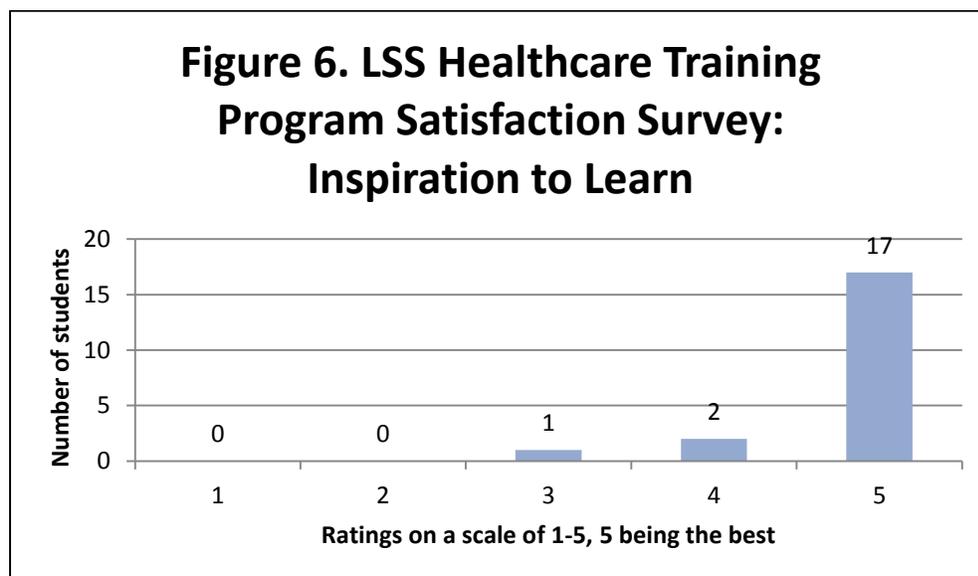
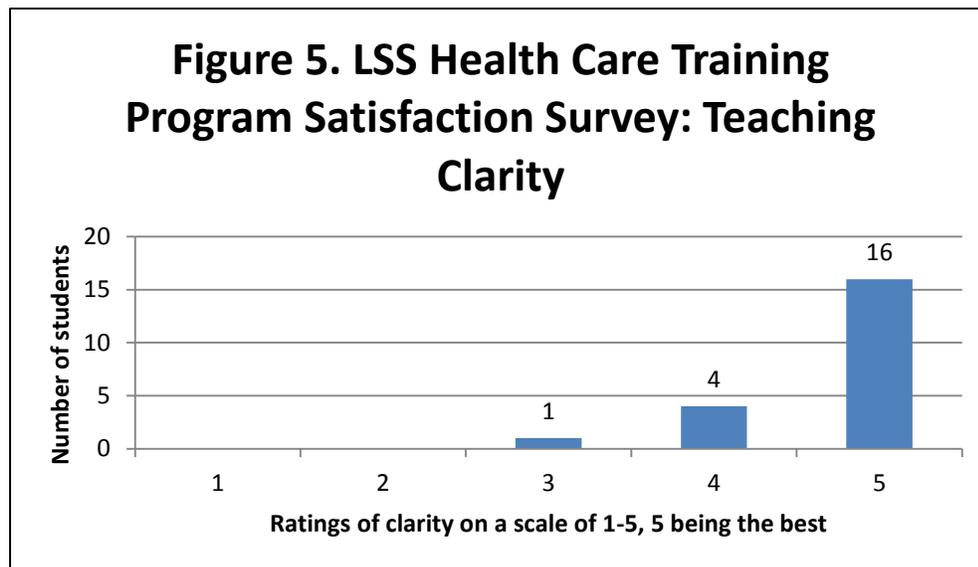
Other survey results include:

- The majority of participants in the CCSNH trainings heard about *DirectConnect* directly from CCSNH. 74 (77%) people heard about the *DirectConnect* Program through the NH Community College System, 2 (2%) from the CDS, 1 (1%) from LSS, 10 (10%) from their Employer, 2 (2%) from a Social Networking Group, 2 (2%) from the *DirectConnect* Website, and 13 (14%) from other locations. (N=96)
- Generally, the website, phone lines, and forms were easy for participants to use. 86 (90%) people thought the *DirectConnect* Website was easy to navigate and gave them the information they needed and 10 (10%) provided no response. (N=96)
- 16 people called the *DirectConnect* number for assistance, 65 did not call and 15 provided no response (N=96)
- 95 people said the application was easy to fill out, 1 did not. (N=96)
- There were a variety of backgrounds represented in the participant population. Prior to the program, 13 (14%) people worked in Care and/or support in a nursing home, hospital or facility-based program; 40 (42%) people worked in Care and/or support in a school, home or community setting; 27 (28%) did not provide care and/or support in a nursing home, hospital, facility, school, home or community based setting; and 16 (17%) were unemployed. (N=96)
- Since completing the program, 19 people worked in Care and/or support in a nursing home, hospital or facility-based program, 44 people worked in Care and/or support in a school, home or community setting, 14 did not provide care and/or support in a nursing home, hospital, facility, school, home or community based setting, and 19 were unemployed (N=96)

Overall, satisfaction with the *DirectConnect* program was very high. 99% of survey participants responded saying they would recommend *DirectConnect* to someone else. When rating the program, 75 (78%) said it was excellent, 17 (18%) said satisfactory, 3 (3%) answered fair, and 1 (1%) poor.

LSS Satisfaction Survey Results

LSS requested completion of a written satisfaction surveys (PDF of survey in Appendix 3) to 70 training participants post-training. Of the 70, 21 participants completed a survey. LSS trainers reported a low survey completion rate due to cultural preferences of the population. The trainers explained the benefits of completing the surveys to participants but were also careful to be sensitive to the cultural identities of the groups. Participants were asked to rate their program teacher through five questions on a scale of 1-5, 5 being the best. Participants rated the instructors highly on all five questions which are teacher's clarity, expertise in the subject, connection with students, response to individual needs, and inspiration to learn; the average answer for all five questions was 4. Figures 5 and 6 show the distribution of 2 overall measures.



Participants were also asked whether or not they have found employment since the class. Out of the 21 participants in the survey, 14 responded yes when asked if they have found employment since the class and 7 answered no. Participants of the satisfaction survey were asked how long it took to find a job after completing the class. The answers ranged from one month to two years, with one participant hired on the last day of training. Out of the 21 participants, 9 answered yes when asked if they are working in a healthcare field.

Participants were also able to provide specific comments about the program. Comments included:

- “We had class in an ideal venue, teacher was energetic and the staff of LSS was equally concerned with us.”
- “The most beneficial part of this course are CPR, AED, and give case to individual. Lots of thanks to all.”
- “It is a great opportunity for me to get this training. This course is just perfect for me and other people who want to work in the Health field in future.”
- “My teacher Beth is so kind, friendly and she explained all the terms in simple ways. She inspired me to learn more to be a great person.”

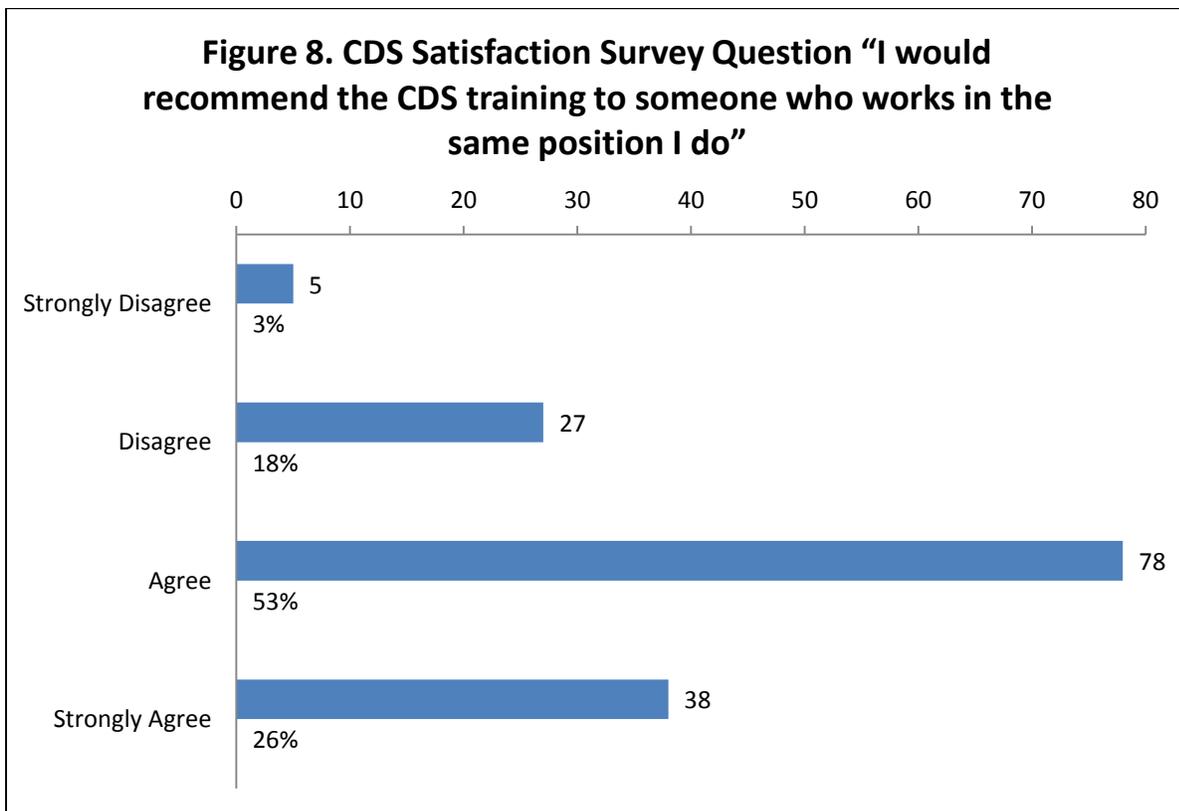
CDS Satisfaction Survey Results

The CDS administered a web-based survey, which participants were prompted to complete at the end of their training. The graphs below summarize the overall satisfaction of those participants that took trainings at CDS, except for those associated with a small set of trainings at EasterSeals. EasterSeals administered a slightly different survey, and the results of those are included in Appendix 4. In total, 778 participants (excluding EasterSeals participants) from CDS were asked to complete a satisfaction survey. Complete results are available in Appendix 4.

One-hundred and fifty-two (152) individuals responded to the questions regarding whether or not the CDS training inspired them to begin or continue a career as a DSP. Figure 7 below details responses.



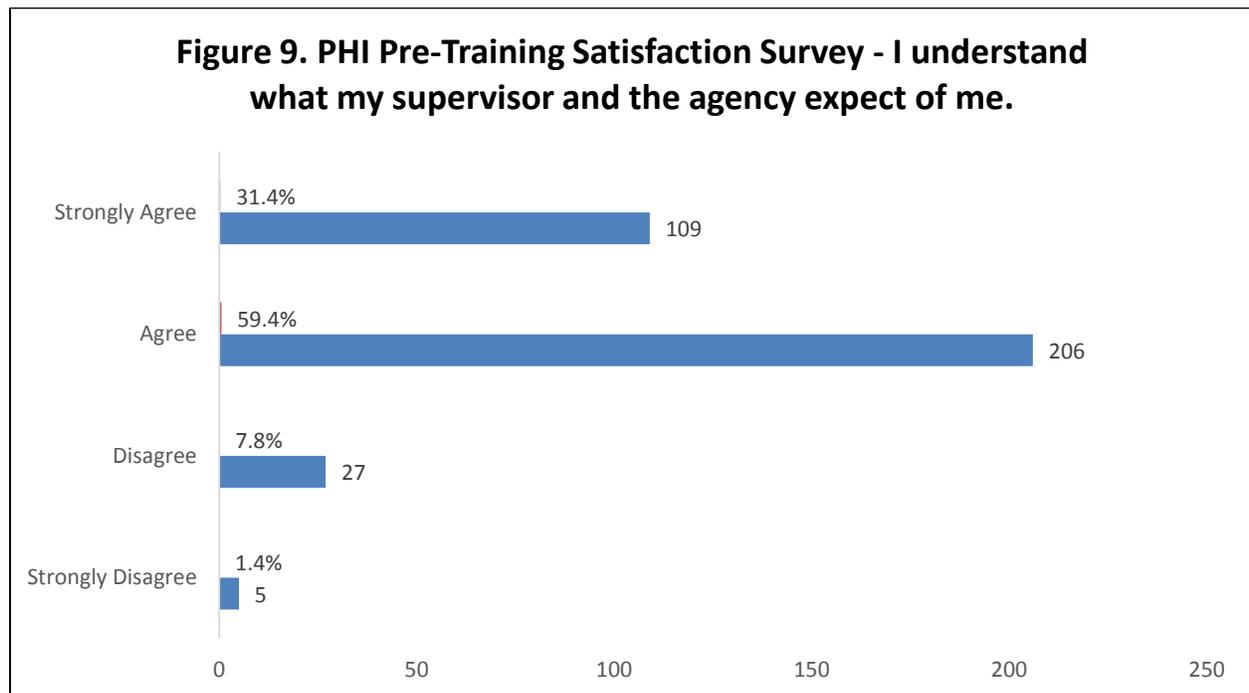
One-hundred and forty-eight (148) individuals responded to the questions regarding whether or not they would recommend the CDS training to someone in the same position in their career. Figure 8 below details responses.

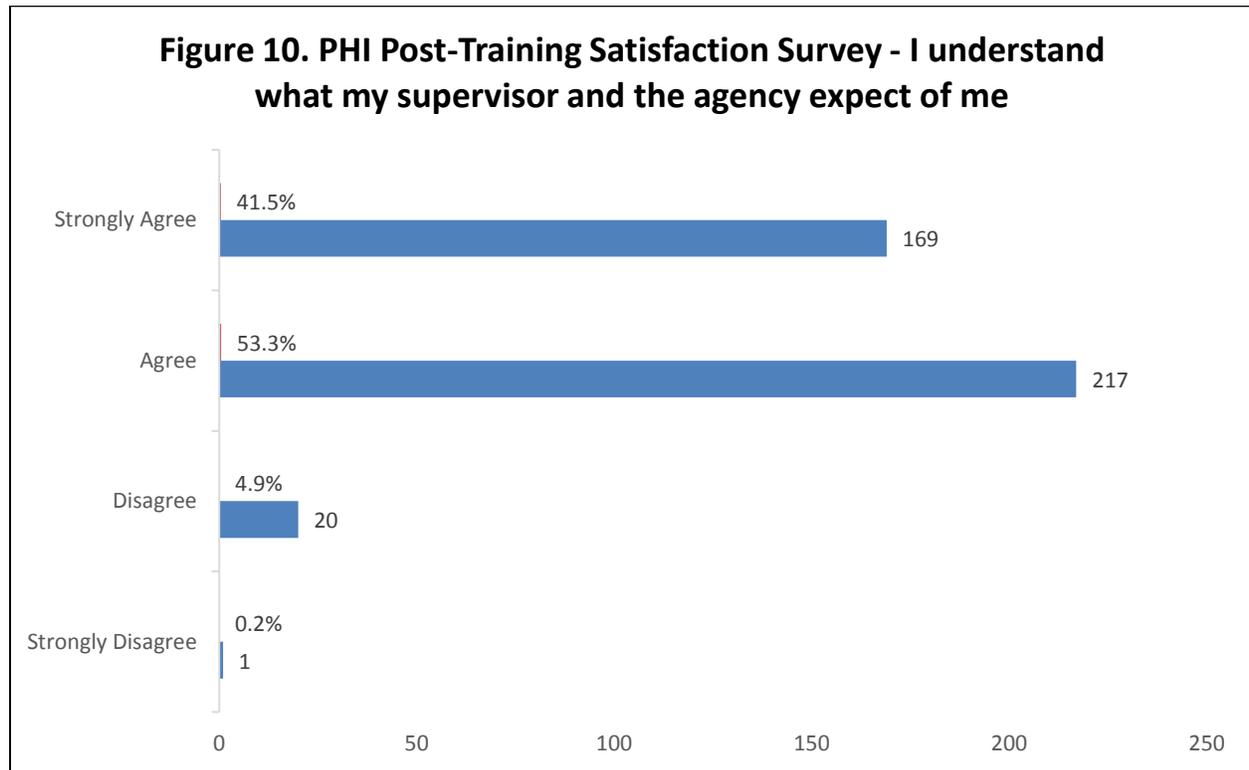


PHI Satisfaction Survey Results

All 665 individuals participating in PHI trainings were asked to participate in a paper-based job satisfaction survey before and after their training. This was done in an effort by employer organizations to understand the effect of trainings on job satisfaction. The same survey questions and format was used for the pre and post survey administration. Participants were asked information about their job location, job title and employment and then administered 25 questions related to their place of employment, supervisor and co-workers.

A total of 352 individuals (a survey retention rate of 53% of PHI trainees) participated in the pre-training satisfaction survey. A total of 416 surveys (a survey retention rate of 63% of PHI trainees) participated in the post-training satisfaction survey. Figure 9 and 10 detail the pre and post training responses the question "I understand what my supervisor and the agency expect of me." Results indicate that an increased number of affirmative answers were reported after the trainings. Complete results are available in Appendix 5.





Evaluation/Reporting Challenges

This section details the specific challenges faced throughout the grant period.

Data reporting using the U.S. DOL RAD System: The most significant evaluation challenge of the program was in reporting our outcomes in a timely manner in the U.S. DOL RAD system. RAD would not allow for participant data to be added incrementally during the program evolution; instead, RAD only allowed submission of credentials and employment information at the time of a participant's program completion. However, *DirectConnect* allowed a participant to take multiple trainings and achieve multiple credentials over the course of the grant period. Participants who took many trainings and received various credentialing over the course of many quarters were documented in the notes section quarterly, but not counted in RAD. In addition, participants may have gained employment during the program, not just at completion. However, participants had on-going participation in *DirectConnect*, but the hire date could not be submitted until the person fully completed *DirectConnect*. In order for us to accurately reflect outcomes, *DirectConnect* has leveraged the notes section of each participant's record in RAD, as well as the project's database for tracking outcomes.

Multiple grant partners: *DirectConnect* had many community partners and programs, which posed a challenge for consistent reporting of data. Given the variation between systems and staffing, *DirectConnect* created webforms (see Appendix 1) to consistently collect data. This added consistency to the types of data being reported, and allowed for a quality assurance mechanism to be created at data intake.

Data security: One of the requirements of the grant was to collect social security numbers (SSNs), in order for DOL to perform long-term tracking of participant outcomes. The collection and storage of SSNs was a security concern for UNH's IRB. To address these concerns, the *DirectConnect* website and database were built to store SSNs separate from other participant data. Because the only time the SSN needed to be accessed was during the process of creating a participant record in the RAD System, our team created a feature that would extract the SSN from the participant database (using an auto-populate process) and report it to the RAD system. SSN were then removed from the *DirectConnect* database completely.

Self-Reported Data: All enrollment information, including demographic information, was self-reported. While the impact of this is likely minimal, it is important to note that there may be some information that is not as accurate as if documentation of the participant's education, employment, or other information was required.

Incumbent worker employment retention reporting: Training outcome reporting for all self-reported incumbent workers has occurred throughout the entirety of the grant; however, training outcome reporting for incumbent workers participating in *DirectConnect* through the *DirectConnect* employer partners did not begin under late 2012 as it was not initially a grant reporting requirement. Further, our team was unable to track whether or not these individuals entered a new position of employment after completing training, as tracking was not set up nor part of the initial contract with our employer partners.

Appendix

Appendix 1: *DirectConnect* Webform Template Fields

Appendix 2: CCSNH Satisfaction Survey

Appendix 3: LSS Satisfaction Survey

Appendix 4: CDS Satisfaction Survey

Appendix 5: PHI Satisfaction Survey

Appendix 6: Program Outcomes, Research Consent