

State of North Dakota
Vocational Rehabilitation
Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report

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North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities



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A summary of the NDVR needs assessment that was conducted by the NDCPD is included in the Executive Summary and six subsequent sections, as well as a set of Appendices that include survey and focus group documents. A brief description of what each section entails is provided in the Table of Contents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR), in partnership with the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) jointly assessed the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities who reside in the State of North Dakota (ND). Every three years, a comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) is mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The CSNA is designed to help inform the development of ND's state plan.

RATIONALE FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, 2014) requires a comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to identify the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities within the State. Using both existing and new information, the CSNA is designed to assist in the development of a state plan that aligns programs and services with statewide needs, goals, and priorities ([§361.29 Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Shell, 2009]. To comply with the needs assessment mandate, North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) in partnership with the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) jointly developed and implemented the CSNA to determine if adequate efforts are being made to support the diverse needs of people with disabilities in our state.

PURPOSE OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

One of the purposes of the North Dakota triennial CSNA is to describe the overall performance of NDVR as it relates to meeting the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the state by answering the following research questions:

- *What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?*
- *What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of minorities and those who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program?*
- *What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?*
- *What is the need for pre-transition and transition services for youth with disabilities?*
- *What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state?*

Data from the needs assessment activities will inform NDVR and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The information contained in this report will be used to provide guidance for writing the state plan and developing and enhancing future programs, outreach, and allocation of resources. Recommendations for NDVR and other stakeholders to address some of the needs that

were identified for each of the categories are also provided. Many of these recommendations will require partnerships with other agencies for ongoing collaboration and support.

<p style="text-align: center;">SECTION ONE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES (METHODOLOGY)</p>

For the methodology, the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) used a mixed methods approach. Qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry were used to complete North Dakota's CSNA. The methods that were used to gather assessment data are described below. In addition, the research methodology allows for the following triangulation of results:

- Data triangulation: Using data from various times, spaces, and people.
- Investigator triangulation: Involving multiple researchers in collecting and analyzing data.
- Methodological triangulation: Using different methodologies to approach the same topic.

Methodology for Surveys

Instrument. After reviewing other states' CSNA reports as samples, the project team used a web-based application (Microsoft Forms) to develop survey questions. Microsoft Forms provided an electronic platform for accessible dissemination of the individual surveys to consumers with disabilities, transition-age youth, community partner agencies, community rehabilitation programs, businesses, and NDVR staff. The survey versions that were developed for each category included questions that were relevant for the specific respondent group. Survey questions were refined to incorporate feedback from NDVR staff who reviewed the instruments. Survey questions were written in plain language. The finalized surveys with questions for each respondent group are included in Appendices A – G.

Survey Population. Several categories of individuals were identified to participate in this survey. These categories provide a representative sampling of statewide respondents from whom to collect data to answer the research questions outlined above. These individuals include: 1) People with disabilities who are current, former, or prospective consumers of NDVR; 2) Youth with disabilities between the ages of 14-21 who are eligible for pre-employment services; 3) Teachers who support transition-age youth and students; 4) Staff from community partner agencies/organizations that coordinate/provide services or are in an advocacy role for North Dakotans with disabilities; 5) Community Rehabilitation Providers who are authorized to provide employment services to NDVR consumers; 6) Representatives from North Dakota businesses; and 7) Staff from NDVR. Participation in the survey was voluntary.

Survey Distribution. Internet-based surveys were distributed to collect data from the different categories of respondents. Using respondent-driven sampling and a contact list for each category of respondents, an email with an invitation to complete the survey was sent along with a QR code for respondents to link to the appropriate version of the survey.

In collaboration with NDVR, the NDCPD team used a variety of sources (e.g., regional human service center contacts, Chamber of Commerce lists, NDCPD's email contacts, Google searches, etc.) to obtain email addresses for individuals with disabilities who are a current, former, or potential NDVR consumer, transition-age youth and their parents and teachers, community partner agencies, community rehabilitation programs, businesses, and NDVR staff. These email addresses were entered on an Excel spreadsheet. The NDCPD team and NDVR staff widely distributed the survey by sending an invitation and link to respondents by email.

Two weeks after the initial invitation to complete the survey, another notice was sent to individuals on the email list to thank those who had completed the survey and to remind those who had not yet participated. Additional reminders were sent to individuals on the contact list during the survey period, and a final reminder was sent toward the end of the time when the survey was open. These emails also included information about the focus group sessions and a link to register.

Data Collection. To collect the required information for the CSNA report, the survey versions were formatted similarly with three main sections for each respondent group. The first section of each survey asked questions about the respondents' demographics. Section two of the surveys asked questions about the respondents' experiences with NDVR services and supports. The third section of each survey version asked questions about respondents' experiences with accessing NDVR services and supports. Additionally, some of the survey versions included questions about pre-employment services as applicable for the various respondent groups.

Participant Anonymity. Respondents were not required to provide their name when completing the survey. Completed surveys were submitted anonymously via Microsoft Forms. Additionally, all data were aggregated to further protect participant anonymity.

Accessibility. An accessible, internet-based survey application was used to design the electronic surveys. Survey questions were written in plain language. Along with the electronic survey, respondents received an email with instructions about whom to contact to place requests for the survey in alternative formats such as paper/pencil versions. In addition, if an individual required assistance to complete the survey, another person (i.e., parent, teacher, or other professional) could provide support by helping the individual or completing it on his or her behalf.

Number of Completed Surveys. A total of 185 valid surveys were submitted by the various categories of respondents. The survey totals for each specific category are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Survey Totals for 2023 NDVR Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Survey Type	Number of Surveys Completed
Consumers (current, former, or prospective)	26
Transition-Age Youth/Students	7
Transition Professionals	45
Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	56
Community Rehabilitation Providers	4
Businesses	25
North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Staff	22

Data Analysis. Data gathered from the survey respondents were compiled and analyzed by the project team using Microsoft Forms, a web-based application for survey results analysis. For the questions on the survey with fixed response options, data were analyzed by computing frequencies and descriptive statistics. Percentages were calculated to the nearest whole number. To analyze narrative responses on open-ended survey questions, the researchers identified themes or concepts that were consistently noted by respondents. The common themes that emerged from each respondent group were identified and compared to each other to validate the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. Results from each category of survey respondents are highlighted in Section Two.

Methodology for Focus Groups

Four in-person focus groups were conducted across North Dakota in October 2023. A virtual option to participate in the focus groups was also provided during each of the in-person sessions via Microsoft Teams, so that rural North Dakotans, as well as others who preferred to participate remotely, could do so. The focus group sessions were open meetings where anyone with an interest in NDVR could attend.

Instrument. The instrument used to facilitate discussions at the focus groups was developed by the NDCPD project team using models from previous needs assessments used by other states in gathering these data. The finalized protocol (Appendix H) included a script with questions and served as a guide for the focus group process so that consistency would be maintained regardless of the category of respondents who participated.

The focus group protocol included the following components:

- Introductions
- Purpose statement
- Assurance of confidentiality

- Voluntary participation reminder
- Questions by category

Three categories of questions were asked during the focus groups. First, participants were asked questions to indicate their personal or professional affiliation with or knowledge of NDVR services and supports. Participants were then asked open-ended questions about their perceptions of the employment needs of individuals with disabilities in North Dakota. Finally, participants were asked to share feedback about how NDVR services and supports could be improved to help meet these needs, especially as they related to assisting consumers to obtain and retain employment. Additional questions about specific research areas (e.g., services and supports for people with disabilities from unserved/underserved population groups, CRPs, and businesses) were also asked.

Depending on the direction in which the focus group sessions went, the project staff also adapted the questions so that the scope of the discussion was not limited, and participants could expand their responses and provide additional feedback in areas not covered by the three questions.

Focus Group Population. The focus group participants included the same categories of participants as the survey respondents. These were: 1) People with disabilities who are current, former, or prospective consumers of NDVR; 2) Youth with disabilities between the ages of 14-21 who are eligible for pre-employment services; 3) Teachers who support transition-age youth and students; 4) Staff from community partner agencies/organizations that coordinate/provide services or are in an advocacy role for North Dakotans with disabilities; 5) Community Rehabilitation Providers who are authorized to provide employment services to NDVR consumers; 6) Representatives from North Dakota businesses; and 7) Staff from NDVR.

Recruitment of Focus Group Participants. A variety of strategies were used to recruit focus group participants. These included invitational postcards with a QR code to register, posters that were hung up in communities across the state, emails to survey respondents, listservs of professional constituents, and NDVR stakeholder groups. Staff from the NDVR regional offices also publicized the focus groups in the communities that they serve.

Participant Anonymity. Both in-person and virtual participants were only identified by region and affiliation/population group, not by name, and feedback from their participation was reported anonymously.

Accessibility. In-person focus groups were conducted in accessible NDVR offices in Fargo, Bismarck, and Minot. Virtual participants connected via Microsoft Teams. The focus group questions were presented in plain language on PowerPoint slides for in-person and virtual participants to see. The focus group facilitators also read the questions aloud at a pace that provided participants adequate time to process the questions and their responses. Additionally, handouts with the focus group questions written out in plain language were also available.

Data Collection. To collect data, focus groups were conducted during four sessions using both an in-person and virtual approach. The in-person focus groups were held at NDVR offices in Fargo, Bismarck, and Minot. Virtual participants connected to the focus group sessions using Microsoft Teams, as the electronic platform. Microsoft Teams was selected based on its capacity to record and transcribe participants' responses using Stream.

Using the focus group script as guidance for the facilitators, the participants were asked a series of questions to gather information in several required categories.

- Affiliation and experience with NDVR
- Employment needs of individuals with disabilities in North Dakota
 - Barriers to getting and keeping good jobs
 - Barriers to accessing NDVR services and supports
- Areas of improvement for NDVR
 - NDVR's overall performance
 - Suggestions for NDVR services and supports that would be helpful to address barriers
 - Recommendations for better ways to access NDVR services and supports

Specific questions that were asked during the focus group sessions included:

- 1) *How well do you think that NDVR is doing to help people with disabilities get and keep the jobs that they want?*
 - a) *What has your experience with NDVR been like?*
 - b) *What has been positive? What has been negative?*
- 2) *What barriers do people with disabilities in North Dakota face when they are trying to get and keep the jobs that they want?*
 - a) *What services do you need (or did you need) that aren't (weren't) available and why aren't (weren't) you able to get these services?*
- 3) *What can NDVR do to help people with disabilities get and keep good jobs?*
- 4) *What barriers do people with disabilities in our state face when they are trying to get (access) services from NDVR to meet their employment needs?*
- 5) *How can NDVR help people with disabilities to overcome these access barriers?*
- 6) *What can NDVR do to improve services to people with disabilities who are also part of other groups, so they can get and keep the jobs that they want?*
- 7) *What can NDVR do to improve services to youth with disabilities who are transition-age, to get and keep the jobs that they want?*
- 8) *What can North Dakota VR do to improve services to people with significant disabilities, so they can get and keep the jobs that they want?*
- 9) *Is there anything that NDVR can do to help the Community Rehabilitation Programs and workforce agencies in our state to better support the employment needs of people with disabilities?*
- 10) *What can NDVR do to support businesses in our state to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities?*

11) Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about what NDVR can do to improve the services that it provides to help people with disabilities in our state to get and keep good jobs or to have better access to its services?

To gather information about meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities who identify as members of unserved or underserved population groups, CRPs and businesses, some additional questions were asked.

Participants' responses to the questions were recorded and transcribed within Microsoft Teams. A notetaker in each focus group session also captured the participants' responses.

Number of Focus Group Participants. The number of individuals who participated in the focus groups (Table 1.2) was small despite the NDCPD project team's efforts to publicize the meetings and recruit participants using a variety of strategies (e.g., invitational postcards, posters, listservs, email contacts, professional connections, etc.). While 51 participants expressed interest in and registered to attend these focus group sessions, only 8 participants attended.

Table 1.2

Focus Group Participants for 2023 NDVR Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Type of Focus Group Participant	Number of Participants
Consumers (current, former, or prospective)	1
Transition-Age Youth/Students	0
Transition Professionals	1
Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	1
Community Rehabilitation Providers	0
Businesses	1
North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Staff	4
Total	8

Data Analysis. All qualitative data that was gathered from the focus group participants were converted into transcript form and analyzed for overall themes. Results from the focus group sessions were compiled, triangulated, and analyzed to answer the assessment questions, as well as to determine overall findings of the assessment associated with NDVR's performance related to meeting the employment needs of individuals with disabilities in North Dakota. From these results, the team developed a list of needs/concerns and recommendations to address them. Results from the focus group interview sessions are reported in Section Three and recommendations are presented in Section Six.

The NDCPD project team is confident that the information that was collected on the surveys and in the focus groups represents the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities and other stakeholders in North Dakota.

Analysis and Triangulation of Survey and Focus Group Data. The information gathered from the surveys and focus groups were analyzed by the researchers on the NDCPD project team. To authenticate the vocational rehabilitation needs of North Dakotas citizens with disabilities, as well as other State stakeholders, recurring themes from each category of respondents were identified and compared to each other. Overall themes are reported in Section Five.

Dissemination Plan. The NDCPD team will disseminate the CSNA report to NDVR to distribute among their stakeholder groups and publish electronically for access by the general public.

Study Limitations. Like any type of research effort, there may be limitations in this study that hinder the use of the findings that were obtained through the data analysis process. Some of these most significant issues may limit the ability to generalize the results of the CSNA report to larger populations. One of the limitations that is inherent when using a survey method to collect data is the potential for bias in selecting respondents. The results that are reported in the CSNA report represent only the responses of those who were reached by email and who were willing to participate in the survey or focus groups. The data collected from respondents may not entirely or accurately reflect the opinions or concerns of all potential stakeholders. For example, data collected from consumers who are currently receiving services may not reflect the needs of individuals who are not presently being served.

Although efforts were made to gather data from stakeholders from a wide variety of categories associated with NDVR, the sample size for each respondent group was limited. The NDCPD team recognizes that it is unlikely that the survey respondents and focus group participants represent all potential stakeholders in NDVR's services; making conclusions with absolute certainty is not possible.

In spite of the small sample size for the surveys and focus groups, however, the NDCPD project team believes that the results and findings are valuable to inform future plans and allocation of resources for NDVR.

<p style="text-align: center;">SECTION TWO: INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS</p>

The Individual Survey Results section includes general demographic information about each category of survey respondents, a summary of their responses to questions about the services and supports that NDVR provides, as well as how individuals with disabilities *access* them to meet their employment needs.

Using a variety of sources for contact information, approximately 16,000 individual surveys were disseminated to representatives from each category of respondents (e.g., NDVR consumers, transition-age youth/students, transition teachers, community partner agencies/organizations, community rehabilitation programs, businesses, and NDVR staff). A total of 185 individual

surveys were completed across the respondent groups. The total number of completed surveys for each respondent group is shown in Table 1.1 of Section One.

NDVR CONSUMERS

This section summarizes the responses of NDVR consumers who completed the survey. Twenty-six surveys were completed by consumer respondents. Of these respondents, 22 individuals with disabilities (85%) completed the survey themselves. Two of the respondents completed the survey with assistance from a professional. One respondent received assistance from his/her parents (or guardians) to complete the survey and one of the respondent's parents (or guardians) completed the survey for their son or daughter with disabilities.

Demographics of Consumers

The first part of the consumer survey asked questions about the *demographic characteristics* of the consumer respondents who currently or formerly received NDVR services.

The respondents' ages are shown in Table 2.1.1. The highest number of individuals surveyed were in the age range of 27-64 years (69%). While 27% of the consumer respondents noted that they were enrolled in some type of school (e.g., high school, college or university, or an alternative type of school such as home school, Job Corp, etc.), 73% of the consumer respondents reported that they were not currently in school.

Table 2.1.1

Age Categories and School Enrollment of Consumer Respondents

Age Categories	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
26 and under	6	23%
27-64	18	69%
65 or over	2	8%
Total	26	100%
Enrollment in School		
Middle school/junior high school	0	0%
High school	2	8%
College or University	4	15%
Alternative type of school (e.g., home school, Job Corp, etc.)	1	4%
Not currently in school	19	73%
Total	26	100%

Survey responses were received from consumers who lived in every geographic region of North Dakota as indicated in 2.1.2. The highest percentage of respondents lived in Minot (31%) followed by Grand Forks (15%). The fewest number of respondents reported that they lived in the Devils Lake and Dickinson area (4% each).

Table 2.1.2*Geographic Locations of Consumer Respondents*

Geographic Locations	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	2	8%
Region II: Minot	8	31%
Region III: Devils Lake	1	4%
Region IV: Grand Forks	4	15%
Region V: Fargo	2	8%
Region VI: Jamestown	3	12%
Region VII: Bismarck	5	19%
Region VIII: Dickinson	1	4%
Total	26	100%

Consumers who responded to the survey also noted their disability conditions (Table 2.1.3). For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability. Of the consumer respondents, the following types of disability conditions were most prevalent: physical disability (21%), intellectual disability (19%), mental health challenge (19%), and learning disability (14%). Two percent of the respondents indicated that they did not know their disability condition.

Table 2.1.3*Disability Conditions of Consumer Respondents*

Disability Conditions	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Intellectual disability	8	19%
Learning disability	6	14%
Developmental disability	2	5%
Most significant disability	1	2%
Communication disorder	2	5%
Deaf or hard of hearing	4	9%
Blindness or visually impaired	2	5%
Deaf and blind	0	0
Mental health challenges	8	19%
History of substance abuse	0	0
Physical disability	9	21%
Unknown	0	0
Other	1	2%
Prefer not to answer	0	0
Total *	43	-

***The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could indicate more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.**

The racial and ethnic groups of the consumer respondents are designated in Table 2.1.4. Of the consumer respondents, 100% indicated that they were Caucasian/White. One respondent also selected Asian as his/her racial or ethnic group. For this question, consumer respondents could select more than one racial or ethnic group as applicable.

The languages that consumer respondents reported that they spoke are also shown in Table 2.1.4. One hundred percent of the respondents indicated that they spoke English. No other languages were selected as being spoken by the consumer respondents even though they could choose more than one.

Table 2.1.4

Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Consumer Respondents

Racial or Ethnic Group	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	0	0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%
Asian	1	4%
Caucasian/White	26	100%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	0	0%
Total *	27	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could indicate more than one racial or ethnic group to which they belong. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	26	100%
Spanish	0	0%
American Sign Language	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total	26	100%

Consumer respondents were asked to identify the unserved or underserved population groups with which they identify. The population groups with which the respondents most commonly identified are shown in Table 2.1.5. The unserved or underserved population groups with which the consumer respondents most commonly identified include mental health challenges (34%) and

significant disabilities (21%). Fourteen percent of the respondents indicated that they preferred not to answer this question or that they did not know with which population groups they identified. For this question, consumer respondents could select more than one unserved or underserved population group with which they identified.

Table 2.1.5

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumer Respondents

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumer Respondents	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	8	21%
Transition-age youth with disability	2	5%
Racial or ethnic minority	1	3%
Immigrant/refugee	0	0%
Non-English speaker	0	0%
Transient	0	0%
Mental health challenges	13	34%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	1	3%
Veteran	1	3%
Homeless	0	0%
LGBTQIA+	2	5%
Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into community	0	0%
Unknown (I don't know)	1	3%
Other (None of the above or N/A)	5	13%
Prefer not to answer	4	11%
Total *	38	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could indicate more than one unserved or underserved population group to which they belong. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the consumer survey included questions about the services and supports that consumers receive from NDVR to get and keep the job that they want.

The ways in which consumer respondents were connected to NDVR varied (as summarized in Table 2.1.6). While 19% of respondents were currently receiving services from NDVR, 31% of the respondents had formerly received NDVR services. Some respondents (27%) noted that they had heard of NDVR but had never received their services; Eight percent indicated that they had never heard of NDVR.

Table 2.1.6 also shows the most common ways in which individuals with disabilities were referred for NDVR services. The ways in which most consumer respondents were referred to

NDVR include themselves (15%), a staff member at a college or vocational training program (12%), a disability support provider (8%), and job service (4%).

Table 2.1.6

Connection to NDVR and Referral Source for Consumer Respondents

Connection to NDVR	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Currently receive services from NDVR	5	19%
Used to receive services from NDVR but case is closed	8	31%
Heard of NDVR but haven't received their services	7	27%
Never heard of NDVR	2	8%
Unknown (I don't know; Expect would not qualify)	4	15%
Total	26	100%
Source of Referral to NDVR		
Self	4	15%
Family member	0	0%
Friend	0	0%
Teacher	1	4%
Disability support provider	2	8%
Social Security Administration	0	0%
Job Service	1	4%
Mental health program	0	0%
Healthcare professional	0	0%
Staff member at a college or vocational training program	3	12%
Parole officer or other court official	0	0%
Unknown	9	35%
Other (CAC, Transition Coordinator, Employer, Not Been Referred, No One)	6	23%
Total	26	100%

Current consumers with disabilities in North Dakota (as well as consumers who were formerly supported by NDVR) reported receiving several types of services from NDVR. These are depicted in Table 2.1.7 and include finding a job that matches their interests and strengths (35%), helping them to get more education (19%), job coaching (15%), and assistive technology (15%) as the most commonly received services by the NDVR consumer respondents. Twenty percent of the consumer respondents indicated that they did not know the types of services they received and 35% noted that they had never received services from NDVR. This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of services that applied.

Table 2.1.7*Types of Services Received by Consumer Respondents*

Types of Services Received	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	9	35%
Helping to get more education	5	19%
Learning about strengths and interests	2	8%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	2	8%
Training to get the right job skills	3	6%
Job coaching	4	15%
Connecting to natural supports	0	0%
Accommodations	2	8%
Assistive technology	4	15%
Training on communication skills	0	0%
Providing a language translator	0	0%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	0	0%
Support for mental health challenges	0	0%
Support for substance abuse issues	0	0%
Support for health issues	1	4%
Transportation assistance	1	4%
Childcare for their own children	0	0%
Benefits planning	0	0%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	0	0%
Unknown (I don't know)	6	20%
Other (None; Not receiving services; Never used services)	9	35%
Total *	48	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could select more than one type of NDVR service that they receive. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Table 2.1.8 shows barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want as cited by the consumer respondents. Of these barriers to employment, the three that were most commonly noted by consumer respondents include: health issues (35%), not having enough education (19%), not having a job coach (19%), not having necessary accommodations (19%), and mental health challenges (15%). Twenty-seven percent of the respondents noted that they are successfully employed (as specified by "Other") and 15% indicated that they do not know what types of barriers they have experienced related to getting and keeping the job that they want.

Table 2.1.8*Barriers to Employment for Consumer Respondents*

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	4	15%
Not having enough education	5	19%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	2	8%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	0	0%
Not having the right job skills	2	8%
Not having a job coach	5	19%
Not having natural supports	3	6%
Not having necessary accommodations	5	19%
Not having necessary assistive technology	1	4%
Not having good communication skills	1	4%
Not having a language translator	0	0%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	3	6%
Mental health challenges	4	15%
Substance abuse issues	0	0%
Health issues	9	35%
Lack of transportation	2	8%
Lack of childcare	0	0%
Lack of benefits planning	1	4%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	5	19%
Unknown	4	15%
Other (No barriers, self-employment works better because of health issues; No need for support right now; Have had a job for 20+ years)	7	27%
Total *	63	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could select more than one barrier that they encounter. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Related to how NDVR could help individuals with disabilities to overcome barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want; consumer respondents identified the following types of services (as shown in Table 2.1.9). Of these NDVR services, consumer respondents identified accommodations (27%), finding a job aligned with their interests and strengths (23%), helping to get more education (19%), learning about strengths and interests (19%), job coaching (19%), and assistive technology (19%) as being the most beneficial for helping them to get and keep the job that they wanted.

Table 2.1.9*Helpful NDVR Services for Consumer Respondents*

Types of Helpful NDVR Employment Services	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	6	23%
Helping to get more education	5	19%
Learning about strengths and interests	5	19%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	2	8%
Training to get the right job skills	4	15%
Job coaching	5	19%
Connecting to natural supports	2	8%
Accommodations	7	27%
Assistive technology	5	19%
Training on communication skills	2	8%
Providing a language translator	0	0%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	3	6%
Support for mental health challenges	3	6%
Support for substance abuse issues	0	0%
Support for health issues	2	8%
Transportation assistance	3	6%
Childcare for their own children	0	0%
Benefits planning	3	6%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	4	15%
Unknown	7	27%
Other (Already employed; No need for services right now)	6	23%
Total *	74	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could indicate more than one type of NDVR service that would help them get and keep the job that they want. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Access to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The final part of the consumer survey included questions about how individuals with disabilities *access* NDVR services and supports.

The locations in which the consumer respondents usually met their NDVR counselor included at a NDVR office, at their workplace, or over the phone (19% each). Four percent indicated that they met their NDVR counselor in the community. Additionally, 58% of the consumer respondents indicated that they do not currently have a NDVR counselor. The meeting locations are summarized in Table 2.1.10.

Table 2.1.10*Locations for Meetings of NDVR Counselor and Consumer Respondents*

Meeting Locations	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
At school	0	0%
In the community	1	4%
At a NDVR Office	5	19%
Does not currently have an NDVR counselor	15	58%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (at the workplace; phone)	5	19%
Total	26	100%

Twenty three percent of the consumer respondents indicated that they are not experiencing any barriers to accessing NDVR services. Among the barriers related to *accessing* NDVR services, the following were noted by consumer respondents (Table 2.1.11). The barriers to accessing services that were most frequently cited by consumer respondents were lack of information about available NDVR services (23%) and other barriers that were not among those that they could choose (27%) such as sporadic meetings and not being aware of NDVR services. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents also noted that they do not know the types of access barriers that they encounter.

Table 2.1.11*Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services for Consumer Respondents*

Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Not experiencing any barriers currently	6	23%
Lack of information about available NDVR services	6	23%
Difficulty completing the NDVR application	1	4%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at inconvenient times/places	1	4%
Inaccessible locations for meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of transportation for meetings and trainings	1	4%
Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of a language translator	0	0%
Difficulty completing the individualized employment plan	2	8%
Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	1	4%
Unknown	7	27%
Other (Meetings are too sporadic; didn't know about NDVR; I don't meet with NDVR)	7	27%

Total *	32	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could select more than one access barrier that they encounter. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

A follow-up question to the barriers experienced by consumer respondents asked what types of supports these individuals needed to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.1.12. Of these responses, the three top types of support that consumer respondents believed would help them the most to *access* NDVR services included: information about available NDVR services (38%), meetings and trainings that are scheduled at convenient times/places (19%), and accessible meeting locations (15%). Twenty-three percent of the consumer respondents did not know what types of supports they needed to access NDVR services and 27% specified other types of access supports that would help them.

Table 2.1.12

Supports Needed to Access NDVR Services for Consumer Respondents

Supports Needed to Access NDVR Services	Consumer Respondents (26)	
	N	Percent
Information about available NDVR services	10	38%
Assistance completing the NDVR application	3	12%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at convenient times/places	5	19%
Accessible locations for meetings and trainings	4	15%
Transportation for meetings and trainings	2	8%
Childcare to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Support to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Accommodations during meetings and trainings	0	0%
A language translator	0	0%
Assistance completing the individualized employment plan	2	8%
Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	4	15%
Unknown	6	23%
Other (Pay for attending meetings and trainings; a counselor that will actually meet with me; unspecified)	7	27%
Total *	43	-
*The N is more than 26 because consumer respondents could select more than one type of support that would help them to access NDVR services. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question on the survey for consumers asked respondents to share additional thoughts about how they could be better supported to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are included in Table 2.1.13.

Table 2.1.13

Additional Thoughts on Accessing NDVR Services and Supports from Consumer Respondents

- The counselors I have met in the Minot office are excellent.
- Work with people who need more help at their job – not just those who can be independent.
- Haven't experienced any barriers as of yet.
- A better VR counselor.
- Until I have more information about NDVR services, I am unable to answer this question.
- I'm not sure why I'm even receiving this survey and who referred me. I have multiple disabilities but have not reached out to NDVR because I had never heard of them until this email survey. If it's the same thing as Voc. Rehab. at the Southeast Human Service Center then I guess I have heard of them, however, when I tried to use them before I created my company, they were absolutely useless. That was back in the late 2000s. Surprised to see anything like this coming from North Dakota State Government considering the red nature of the State and pretty much any Republican out there is constantly trying to defund programs to assist people with disabilities. Or straight up making fun of people as we saw with Trump. And none of the Republicans stood next to the people with disabilities to say that's not right.
- Better marketing and advertising on what services are available and where to go to sign up.
- Make information available to government employees.
- Follow-up with ex-clients.
- Make services known.

TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH AND STUDENTS

This section summarizes the responses of transition-age youth/students who completed the survey. Seven surveys were completed by transition-age youth/student respondents. Of these respondents, five of the seven surveys (71%) were completed by parents/guardians on behalf of their transition-age son or daughter and two of the seven (29%) were completed by a transition age-youth or student with assistance from their parent/guardian.

Demographics of Transition-Age Youth and Students

The first part of the survey asked questions about the demographic characteristics of the transition-age youth/student respondents who currently or formerly received NDVR services, or who are receiving pre-employment services.

The ages of the seven transition-age youth/students who responded to the survey are shown in Table 2.2.1. Most of the respondents were in the 14–17-year-old age category (71%). It was noted (in Table 2.2.1) that one hundred percent of the transition-age youth/student respondents were enrolled in some type of school (e.g., high school, college or university). Most of the transition-age youth/student respondents were in high school (86%).

Table 2.2.1*Age Categories and School Enrollment of Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Age Categories	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
14-17	5	71%
18-21	2	29%
Total	7	100.0%
Enrollment in School		
Middle school/junior high school	0	0%
High school	6	86%
College or University	1	14%
Does not currently attend school	0	0%
Total	7	100%

Transition-age youth/students who completed the survey lived in four geographic regions of North Dakota as indicated in Table 2.2.2. Among these four regions, the highest percentage of respondents lived in Minot (43%) followed by Grand Forks (29%). The fewest number of respondents reported that they lived in the Devils Lake and Bismarck regions (14% each).

Table 2.2.2*Geographic Locations of Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Geographic Locations	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	0	0%
Region II: Minot	3	43%
Region III: Devils Lake	1	14%
Region IV: Grand Forks	2	29%
Region V: Fargo	0	0%
Region VI: Jamestown	0	0%
Region VII: Bismarck	1	14%
Region VIII: Dickinson	0	0%
Total	7	100.0%

Of the transition-age youth/student respondents, the types of disability conditions that were selected are shown in Table 2.2.3. Fifty-seven percent of the transition-age youth/student respondents indicated that they had a developmental disability. A communication disorder was the second highest disability condition (29%) selected by the transition-age youth/student respondents. Many of the other types of disability conditions were evenly selected (at 14%) by

the respondents. For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability condition that was applicable.

Table 2.2.3

Disability Conditions of Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents

Disability Conditions	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Intellectual disability	1	14%
Learning disability	1	14%
Developmental disability	4	57%
Most significant disability	1	14%
Communication disorder	2	29%
Deaf or hard of hearing	0	0%
Blindness or visually impaired	1	14%
Deaf and blind	0	0%
Mental health challenges	1	14%
History of substance abuse	0	0%
Physical disability	0	0%
Unknown	1	14%
Other (Not specified)	1	14%
Total *	13	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could indicate more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the transition-age youth/student respondents are designated in Table 2.2.4. Of the transition-age youth/student respondents, one hundred percent indicated that they were Caucasian/White. Hispanic/Latino was the only other racial or ethnic groups that was represented (14%). For this question, respondents could select more than one applicable racial or ethnic group.

The languages that consumer respondents reported that they spoke are also shown in Table 2.2.4. English was the only language spoken by the respondents from the transition-age youth/student group although more than one language could have been chosen if relevant.

Table 2.2.4*Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Racial or Ethnic Group	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	0	0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Caucasian/White	7	100%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
Hispanic/Latino	1	14%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	8	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could select more than one racial or ethnic group to which they belong. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	7	100%
Spanish	0	0%
American Sign Language	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total	7	100%

Transition-age youth/student respondents were asked to identify all of the unserved or underserved population groups with which they identify as shown in Table 2.2.5. The unserved or underserved population group with which most of the transition-age youth/student respondents identified was “most significant disability.” One of the respondents (14%) indicated that they did not know with which population groups they identified, two of the respondents (29%) chose “Other” if they did not identify with one of these unserved or underserved population groups and 29% of the respondents indicated “Not applicable” to this question.

Table 2.2.5*Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	3	43%
Racial or ethnic minority	1	14%
Immigrant/refugee	0	0%
Non-English speaker	0	0%
Transient	0	0%
Mental health challenges	1	14%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	0	0%
Homeless	0	0%
LGBTQIA+	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	0	0%
Unknown	1	14%
Other (Not applicable)	2	29%
Total *	8	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could indicate more than one unserved or underserved population group to which they belong. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the transition-age youth/student survey included questions about the services and supports that they receive from NDVR to get and keep the job that they want.

The ways in which transition-age youth/student respondents were connected to NDVR varied (as summarized in Table 2.2.6). While 29% of the respondents were currently receiving services from NDVR, 14% of the respondents had formerly received NDVR services. Some respondents (29%) noted that they had heard of NDVR but had never received their services; 14% indicated that they had never heard of NDVR.

Table 2.2.6 also shows the most common ways in which individuals with disabilities were referred for NDVR services. Many of the transition-age youth/students (43%) were referred to NDVR by a family member.

Table 2.2.6*Connection to NDVR and Referral Source for Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Connection to NDVR	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Currently receive services from NDVR	2	29%
Used to receive services from NDVR but case is closed	1	14%
Heard of NDVR but haven't received their services	2	29%
Never heard of NDVR	1	14%
Unknown	1	14%
Other	0	0%
Total	7	100%
Source of Referral to NDVR		
Self	1	14%
Family member	3	43%
Friend	0	0%
Teacher	1	14%
Disability support provider	0	0%
Social Security Administration	0	0%
Job Service	0	0%
Mental health program	0	0%
Healthcare professional	0	0%
Staff member at a college or vocational training program	0	0%
Parole officer or other court official	0	0%
Unknown	1	14%
Other (Not applicable)	1	14%
Total	7	100%

Current transition-age youth/student respondents in North Dakota (as well as transition-age youth/students who were formerly supported by NDVR) reported receiving several types of services from NDVR. These are depicted in Table 2.2.7. The types of services that are most commonly received by the transition-age youth/student respondents are helping to get more education (29%), learning about strengths and interests (29%), and training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job (29%). This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of services that were relevant.

Table 2.2.7*Types of Services Received by Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Types of Services Received	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	1	14%
Helping to get more education	2	29%
Learning about strengths and interests	2	29%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	2	29%
Training to get the right job skills	2	29%
Job coaching	0	0%
Connecting to natural supports	0	0%
Accommodations	0	0%
Assistive technology	0	0%
Training on communication skills	0	0%
Providing a language translator	0	0%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	0	0%
Support for mental health challenges	0	0%
Support for substance abuse issues	0	0%
Support for health issues	0	0%
Transportation assistance	0	0%
Childcare for their own children	0	0%
Benefits planning	0	0%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	0	0%
Unknown	1	14%
Other (Was refused help without a job referral; none)	3	29%
Total *	13	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could select more than one type of NDVR service that they receive. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Table 2.2.8 shows barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want as cited by the transition-age youth/student respondents. Of these barriers to employment, the three that were most commonly noted by transition-age youth/student respondents included: not having a job coach and lack of transportation (both at 43%) and several barriers that were tied at 29% (i.e., not having enough education, not knowing their strengths and interests, not having necessary accommodations, and employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities). For respondents in this group, all of the barriers that were applicable could be selected.

Table 2.2.8*Barriers to Employment for Transition-Age Youth/Students*

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	1	14%
Not having enough education	2	29%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	2	29%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	1	14%
Not having the right job skills	1	14%
Not having a job coach	3	43%
Not having natural supports	1	14%
Not having necessary accommodations	2	29%
Not having necessary assistive technology	0	0%
Not having good communication skills	1	14%
Not having a language translator	0	0%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	1	14%
Mental health challenges	1	14%
Substance abuse issues	0	0%
Health issues	1	14%
Lack of transportation	3	43%
Lack of childcare	0	0%
Lack of benefits planning	0	0%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	2	29%
Unknown	1	14%
Other	0	0%
Total *	23	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could select more than one barrier that they encounter. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Related to how NDVR could support individuals with disabilities to overcome barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want, transition-age youth/student respondents believed that the following types of services would help them (as shown in Table 2.2.9). Of these NDVR services, transition-age youth/student respondents identified finding a job that matches their strengths and interests (57%), helping to get more education (57%), training to get the right skills (43%), and job coaching (43%) as being the most beneficial for helping them to get and keep the job that they wanted. Like other questions related to services, respondents were invited to select all of the choices that were applicable.

Table 2.2.9*Helpful NDVR Employment Services for Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Types of Helpful NDVR Employment Services	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	4	57%
Helping to get more education	4	57%
Learning about strengths and interests	3	43%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	2	29%
Training to get the right job skills	3	43%
Job coaching	3	43%
Connecting to natural supports	2	29%
Accommodations	3	43%
Assistive technology	2	29%
Training on communication skills	2	29%
Providing a language translator	0	0%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	1	14%
Support for mental health challenges	1	14%
Support for substance abuse issues	0	0%
Support for health issues	0	0%
Transportation assistance	2	29%
Childcare for their own children	0	0%
Benefits planning	0	0%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	1	14%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (Not specified)	1	14%
Total *	34	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could indicate more than one type of NDVR service that would help them get and keep the job that they want. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question in this part of the survey asked respondents to share additional thoughts about their experiences with NDVR services and supports. Their responses are summarized in Table 2.2.10 below.

Table 2.2.10*Additional Thoughts on NDVR Services and Supports from Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

- Communicate with parents about what is being done in school.
- We are not sure how to go about getting help through NDVR.
- I didn't know NDVR existed.
- I wish that NDVR would have been willing to meet without a school referral. By the time I was called, it was already May. It would have been difficult to get a meeting set up in order to get a referral from the school. So, I decided to forego receiving help but my first indication of NDVR is that it is not easy to receive services.

Access to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The final part of the transition-age youth/student survey included questions about how these young adults with disabilities *access* NDVR services and supports.

The locations in which the transition-age youth/student respondents usually met their NDVR counselor are summarized in Table 2.2.11. The only meeting location that respondents noted was at their school (29%). In addition, 71% of the transition-age youth/student respondents indicated that they do not have a NDVR counselor.

Table 2.2.11*Locations for Meeting of NDVR Counselor and Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Meeting Locations	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
At school	2	29%
In the community	0	0%
At a NDVR Office	0	0%
Don't have a NDVR counselor	5	71%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total	7	100%

Related to *access* barriers, 29% of the respondents noted that they do not currently experience any barriers. Fifty seven percent of the respondents noted that lack of information about available NDVR services was the biggest access barrier. Fourteen percent of the respondents also indicated that they do not know what access barriers they have encountered. Access barriers are shown in Table 2.2.12.

Table 2.2.12*Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services for Transition Age-Youth/Student Respondents*

Barriers to <i>Accessing</i> NDVR Services	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
No barriers experienced	2	29%
Lack of information about available NDVR services	4	57%
Difficulty completing the NDVR application	0	0%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at inconvenient times/places	0	0%
Inaccessible locations for meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of transportation for meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings	0	0%
Lack of a language translator	0	0%
Difficulty completing the individualized employment plan	0	0%
Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	0	0%
Unknown	1	14%
Other (Hard to access services)	1	14%
Total *	8	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could select more than one access barrier that they encounter. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

A follow-up question to the barriers experienced by transition-age youth/student respondents asked what types of supports these individuals needed to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.2.13. Of these responses, transition-age youth/student respondents (57%) believed that having information about available NDVR services would help them the most to *access* NDVR services.

Table 2.2.13*Supports Needed to Access NDVR Services for Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

Supports for Accessing NDVR Services	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Information about available NDVR services	4	57%
Assistance completing the NDVR application	0	0%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at convenient times/places	1	14%
Accessible locations for meetings and trainings	0	0%
Transportation for meetings and trainings	0	0%
Childcare to attend meetings and trainings	0	0%
Support to attend meetings and trainings	1	14%
Accommodations during meetings and trainings	0	0%
A language translator	0	0%
Assistance completing the individualized employment plan	0	0%
Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	1	14%
Unknown	3	43%
Other (It is too difficult to get an appointment or referral)	1	14%
Total *	11	-
*The N is more than 7 because transition-age youth/student respondents could select more than one access barrier that they encounter. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The survey for transition-age youth/students also included questions on pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Their responses to the types of pre-employment transition services that they are receiving during their school years are shown in Table 2.2.14. For each of the types of pre-employment transition services, the young adult respondents primarily noted that they did not know if they were offered (43%), they were provided by the school, district, or special education staff (29%), or they were not offered (29%). None of the respondents noted that these pre-employment transition services were provided by NDVR staff or through an online or electronic application.

Table 2.2.14

Pre-Employment Transition Services Received During School Years by Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents

	Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents (7)	
	N	Percent
Job Exploration Counseling		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	2	29%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	0	0%
This is not offered	2	29%
Unknown	3	43%
Total	7	100%
Work-Based Learning Experiences		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	2	29%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	0	0%
This is not offered	2	29%
Unknown	3	43%
Total	7	100%
Workplace Readiness Training		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	1	14%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	0	0%
This is not offered	2	29%
Unknown	4	57%
Total	7	100%
Counseling for Enrollment in a Postsecondary Education Program		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	1	14%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	0	0%
This is not offered	2	29%
Unknown	4	57%
Total	7	100%
Instruction in Self-Advocacy		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	1	14%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	0	0%
This is not offered	4	57%
Unknown	2	29%
Total	7	100%

The final open-ended question on the survey for transition-age youth/students asked respondents to share additional thoughts about how they could be better supported to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are included in Table 2.2.15.

Table 2.2.15

*Additional Thoughts on **Accessing** NDVR Services and Supports from Transition-Age Youth/Student Respondents*

- Make parents aware of what NDVR does and how to access those services.
- Let parents know what is being offered or done in the school setting and how NDVR can help after high school.
- Follow up with parents when they ask how to get help through NDVR.
- Provide information to parents when they request it and following up.
- We did not know that NDVR existed.

PROFESSIONALS WHO SUPPORT TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH/STUDENTS

This section summarizes the responses of professionals who support transition-age youth/students. Forty-five surveys were completed by transition professionals. Of these respondents, thirty-one of the forty-five surveys (69%) were completed by teachers who support transition age youth/students, and five of the forty-five surveys (11%) were completed by a case manager who supports transition age youth/students.

Demographics of Professionals who Support Transition-Age Youth/Students

The first part of the survey asked questions about the demographic characteristics of the professional respondents who support transition-age youth/students who currently or formerly received NDVR services, or who are receiving pre-employment services.

The ages of the 74 transition-age youth/students supported by the 45 transition professionals who responded to the survey are shown in Table 2.3.1. Most of the transition-age youth/students were in the 14–17-year-old age category (93%). For this question, professionals who support transition-age youth/students in both age groups could select both responses.

Table 2.3.1 also shows the settings in which the professional respondents supported young adults with disabilities. It was noted that one hundred percent of the professionals who support transition-age youth/student respondents were in some type of school setting (e.g., high school, college or university). Most of the professionals who support transition-age youth/student respondents were in the high school setting (84%). Transition professionals could select more than one setting in which they support young adults with disabilities.

Table 2.3.1

Age Categories of Students Supported and Settings in Which Transition-Age Youth/Students were Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Age Categories of Students Supported	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
14-17	42	93%
18-21	32	71%
Total *	74	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the transition professionals support youth/students from more than one age group. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Settings in Which Professionals Provide Support to Transition-Age Youth/Students	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Middle School/Junior High School	16	36%
High School	38	84%
College or University	2	4%
Other (a career and technology center)	3	7%
Total *	56	-
*The N is more than 45 because the professionals who support transition-age youth/students could select more than setting in which they provide services. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The regional settings in which transition professionals supported young adults with disabilities are shown in Table 2.3.2. For this question, transition professionals could select all the regions in which they provide services. Transition professionals from all eight regions in North Dakota responded to the survey.

Table 2.3.2

Geographic Locations of Transition Professional Respondents

Geographic Locations	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	4	9%
Region II: Minot	10	22%
Region III: Devils Lake	8	18%
Region IV: Grand Forks	4	9%
Region V: Fargo	14	31%
Region VI: Jamestown	3	7%

Region VII: Bismarck	6	13%
Region VIII: Dickinson	3	7%
Total *	52	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professionals who support transition-age youth/students in more than one geographical location. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The disability conditions of the transition-age youths/students who are supported by the 45 professionals who responded to the survey are noted in Table 2.3.3. Predominately, the professional respondents support transition-age youth with learning disabilities (84%), mental health challenges (76%), intellectual disabilities (60%), developmental disabilities (58%), physical disabilities (49%), and communication disorders (47%). Other disability conditions were also represented at lower percentages. For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability condition.

Table 2.3.3

Disability Conditions of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Disability Conditions of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professionals	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Intellectual disability	27	60%
Learning disability	38	84%
Developmental disability	26	58%
Most significant disability	12	27%
Communication disorder	21	47%
Deaf or hard of hearing	12	27%
Blindness or visually impaired	12	27%
Deaf and blind	4	9%
Mental health challenges	34	76%
History of substance abuse	11	24%
Physical disability	22	49%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (not specified)	2	4%
Total *	221	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professional respondents support transition-age youth/students with more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the transition-age youth/students who were supported by the 45 professionals who responded to the survey are designated in Table 2.3.4. Of the young adults who were supported by the transition professionals, their most prevalent racial or ethnic groups included the following: Caucasian/White (96%), American Indian or Alaska Native (69%),

African American/Black (60%), and Hispanic/Latino (58%). Transition professional respondents could select more than one racial or ethnic group for the young adults whom they support as relevant.

The languages that were spoken by the transition-age youth/students who were supported by the transition professionals who responded to the survey are also shown in Table 2.3.4. For this question, transition professionals could select more than one language that was spoken by the young adults whom they support. One hundred percent of the transition-age youth/students who were supported by the professional respondents speak English. Spanish (24%) and American Sign Language (13%) were also reported by the professional respondents as languages spoken by the transition-age youth/students who they support.

Table 2.3.4

Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Racial or Ethnic Group of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professionals	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	27	60%
American Indian or Alaska Native	31	69%
Asian	9	20%
Caucasian/White	43	96%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	4%
Hispanic/Latino	26	58%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	138	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professional respondents support multiple transition-age youth/students who come from a variety of racial or ethnic groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	45	100%
Spanish	11	24%
American Sign Language	6	13%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (communication device)	1	2%
Total *	63	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professional respondents support multiple transition-age youth/students who speak a variety of languages. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The professional respondents were asked to select all the unserved or underserved population groups with which the transition-age youth/students whom they support most commonly

identified. Table 2.3.5 shows the unserved or underserved population groups with which the transition-age youth/students most identified as reported by the transition professional respondents. The professional respondents indicated that the three unserved or underserved population groups with which the transition-age youth/students who they support primarily identified included: mental health challenges (78%), racial or ethnic minorities (56%), and LGBTQIA+ (42%). Identification with some other unserved or underserved population groups among the transition-age youth/students who they support were also noted by the professional respondents at lower percentages.

Table 2.3.5

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professionals	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	15	33%
Racial or ethnic minority	25	56%
Immigrant/refugee	9	20%
Non-English speaker	7	16%
Transient	3	7%
Mental health challenges	35	78%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	16	36%
Homeless	15	33%
LGBTQIA+	19	42%
Unknown	4	9%
Other (not specified)	1	2%
Total *	149	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professional respondents support multiple transition-age youth/students who identify as being a member of one or more unserved or underserved population groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals less than 100.		

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the survey for transition professionals included questions about the NDVR services and supports that their transition-age youth/students received to get and keep the job that they want.

The ways in which the transition-age youth/students (who are supported by the transition professionals who responded to the survey) were connected to NDVR varied (as summarized in Table 2.3.6). Transition professionals could indicate more than one way in which the young adults whom they support were connected to NDVR. Many of the transition professionals who responded to the survey (60%) were supporting transition-age youth/students who were currently receiving services from NDVR.

Table 2.3.6 also shows the most common ways in which the transition-age youth/students were referred for NDVR services as noted by the transition professionals who completed the survey. Many of the transition professionals (67%) noted that the transition-age youth/students who they support were referred to NDVR services by a teacher. For this question, respondents could select more than one answer.

Table 2.3.6

Connection to NDVR and Referral Source of Transition Age-Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Connection to NDVR of Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professionals	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Currently receive services from NDVR	27	60%
Used to receive services from NDVR but case is closed	1	2%
Heard of NDVR but haven't received their services	15	33%
Never heard of NDVR	10	22%
Unknown	4	9%
Other (students are too young, NDVR in their region does not serve students below grade 11 due to too many students on their caseload, students meet with NDVR once a month but nothing comes from it, students also receive VR services from their state of residence)	5	11%
Total *	62	-
*The N is more than 45 because some of the professional respondents support multiple transition-age youth/students whose connection to NDVR varies. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Source of Referral to NDVR for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professionals		
Self	1	2%
Family member	6	13%

Friend	0	0%
Teacher	30	67%
Disability support provider	9	20%
Social Security Administration	0	0%
Job Service	0	0%
Mental health program	1	2%
Healthcare professional	0	0%
Staff member at a college or vocational training program	3	7%
Parole officer or other court official	1	2%
Unknown	3	7%
Other (contacted by a NDVR representative or a transition coordinator)	14	31%
Total *	68	-
*The N is more than 45 because professional respondents could indicate more than one referral source for the transition-age youth/students they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The transition professionals who completed the survey reported that the transition-age youth/students in North Dakota whom they supported are currently receiving (or formerly received) several types of services from NDVR. These are depicted in Table 2.3.7. The three most common services received by the transition-age youth/students who were supported by the professional respondents were: finding a job that matches students' interests and strengths (58%), helping students to get more education (53%), and helping students to learn about their strengths and interests (51%). This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of services that their transition-age youth/students were receiving.

Table 2.3.7

Types of Services Received by Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Types of Services Received	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	26	58%
Helping to get more education	24	53%
Learning about strengths and interests	23	51%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	12	27%
Training to get the right job skills	12	27%
Job coaching	12	27%
Connecting to natural supports	7	16%
Accommodations	14	31%
Assistive technology	9	20%
Training on communication skills	7	16%
Providing a language translator	2	4%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	9	20%
Support for mental health challenges	4	9%
Support for substance abuse issues	1	2%
Support for health issues	2	4%
Transportation assistance	9	20%
Childcare for their own children	0	0%
Benefits planning	1	2%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	5	11%
Unknown (not yet receiving services, have not been able to get NDVR involved in the transition process)	11	24%
Other (workplace adaptations)	8	18%
Total *	198	-
*The N is more than 45 because professional respondents could select more than one type of NDVR service that is received by the transition-age youth/students they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Table 2.3.8 shows the barriers to getting and keeping a job that were cited most frequently by transition professionals related to the transition-age youth/students whom they support. Of these barriers to employment, the ones that were most commonly noted by transition professionals included lack of social/interpersonal skills (60%), mental health challenges 60%), lack of transportation to the workplace (56%), not having a job coach (49%), inadequate job skills (47%), employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities (42%), and lack of natural supports in the workplace (40%). Other barriers were also identified at lower percentages. On this question, the transition professional respondents were instructed to select all of the barriers that were relevant for the transition-age youth/students who they support.

Table 2.3.8

Barriers to Employment for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	15	33%
Not having enough education	8	18%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	9	20%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	6	13%
Not having the right job skills	21	47%
Not having a job coach	22	49%
Not having natural supports	18	40%
Not having necessary accommodations	9	20%
Not having necessary assistive technology	4	9%
Not having good communication skills	14	31%
Not having a language translator	2	4%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	27	60%
Mental health challenges	27	60%
Substance abuse issues	9	20%
Health issues	3	7%
Lack of transportation	25	56%
Lack of childcare	3	7%
Lack of benefits planning	6	13%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	19	42%
Unknown	2	4%
Other (not specified)	1	2%
Total *	250	-
*The N is more than 45 because professional respondents could select more than one barrier that is encountered by the transition-age youth/students they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Compared to traditional youth/students with disabilities who are transition-age, 27% of the transition professionals who responded to the survey believed that their transition-age youth/students who identified as being from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group encountered the same barriers for getting and keeping the job that they want. Fifty-five percent of these same respondents believed their students from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group experienced the same barriers *plus* additional ones for getting and keeping the job that they want. One of the respondents (2%) believed that transition-age youth/students from traditionally unserved or underserved population groups experienced completely different barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want. Sixteen percent of the

professional respondents did not know if transition-age youth/students from non-traditional population groups experienced the same, additional, or completely different barriers.

For those respondents who indicated that transition-age youth/students who identify as being from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group experienced different or additional barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want, those that were noted included: 1) their parents/guardians influencing their employment decisions; 2) stigmas associated with their individual circumstances; 3) subtle bias, racism and ableism that deter some employers from hiring individuals from these population groups; 4) stereotypes; 5) lack of support and follow-up at home to help them follow through with VR services; 6) being lost in the system; 7) the barriers may be the same but they may be more frequent and have a bigger impact: and 8) lack of support from trusted adults.

Related to how NDVR could help transition-age youth/students (including those from unserved or underserved groups of the population) to overcome barriers to getting and keeping the job that they want, transition professionals who responded to the survey identified the types of services that are shown in Table 2.3.9 as being the most helpful. Of these services, respondents noted that assisting transition-age youth/students to find a job that matched their interests and strengths, and providing transportation support would be the most helpful (at 78% each). Like other questions related to services, respondents were invited to select all the choices that were applicable.

Table 2.3.9

Most Helpful NDVR Employment Services for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Types of Helpful NDVR Services	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	35	78%
Helping to get more education	20	44%
Learning about strengths and interests	18	40%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	18	40%
Training to get the right job skills	31	69%
Job coaching	28	62%
Connecting to natural supports	26	58%
Accommodations	22	49%
Assistive technology	13	29%
Training on communication skills	27	60%
Providing a language translator	9	20%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	32	71%
Support for mental health challenges	32	71%
Support for substance abuse issues	14	31%
Support for health issues	11	24%

Transportation assistance	35	78%
Childcare for their own children	10	22%
Benefits planning	9	20%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	28	62%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (not specified)	2	4%
Total *	420	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professionals could select more than one type of NDVR employment services that they believed would be the most helpful for the transition-age youth/students they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Of the NDVR employment services that the transition professionals who responded to the survey thought would be beneficial for the transition-age youth/students they support, their top three choices for most beneficial included: meetings with NDVR staff in their own communities (40%), information about available services through NDVR (22%), and assistance to complete the applications for NDVR services (22%).

The respondents who are transition professionals were also asked to share their additional thoughts about gaps in the services that NDVR provides to support transition-age youth/students. Whereas 6% of the respondents do not believe that there are gaps in the services provided by NDVR, 36% of the respondents indicated that they do believe that these gaps exist. Many of the respondents (51%) were unsure if there were gaps in NDVR services.

The types of gaps that were noted by the transition professionals were varied as were their suggestions for addressing these gaps (which are both highlighted in Table 2.3.10).

Table 2.3.10

Additional Thoughts on Gaps in NDVR Services and Suggestions to Address the Gaps for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

<p>Gaps in NDVR Services for Transition-Age Youth/Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of parent/guardian buy-in and follow-through for NDVR services. • Lengthy time frame for NDVR services to start. • Lack of NDVR involvement with transition students. • Students get lost in the NDVR turnover. • Lack of VR counselors to work with transition students in rural areas. • Inconsistent staffing. • Lack of follow-up from NDVR staff. • Too many individuals on caseloads of NDVR staff. • Lack of job coaches. • Lack of finding the right fit for employment. • Lack of effort in determining client's needs and making a plan to address them. • Lack of support from NDVR.

- Poor communication between NDVR staff and special education case managers.

Suggestions for Addressing Gaps

- More job coaching.
- Visit with families about services.
- Provide transportation options.
- Lower caseload; hire with intentionality; Hire staff who look like populations they serve (e.g., visible and hidden disabilities, racially diverse); Provide training and support to employers on benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities; Don't let disability label define a vocational path – customize it to the student's strengths and abilities; Think outside the box.
- More options need to be presented for students with developmental disabilities and high medical needs. I would love to have a relationship with NDVR to help support my students to plan for their post-high school life.
- Encouraging families to be more engaged in their child's work experience and training.
- Staff consistency.
- More treatment options.
- There are not enough VR counselors to make it out to all the schools that need their supports.
- The students need information on how to communicate with others at their job; help employers know the benefits of hiring people with disabilities; have on-the-job training for staff and student working.
- Continued support and assistance.
- Attend the school biweekly; serve students right when they turn 16.
- I am unsure because I am not familiar with the services provided for older students transitioning into the workplace.
- The state paying a stipend for employers to learn or hire students to get work experience and learn how to be a good worker; Hiring work coaches that can work during the evening with students to aid them in learning work-related skills they will need for life.
- Employ job coaches. Advertise for these positions so people know they can coach.
- I think going to "Back to School" night and having all parents of those in special education meet with VR so it is in the back of their mind before their IEP meeting. I feel like we just spring it on them, and they never have questions or really understand what VR does for those with disabilities after they graduate high school.
- Offer the supports in the list.
- Increase communication with SPED case managers and attend IEP meetings. It is currently not happening, and this is affecting the ability to get a job because the two aren't working together.
- Provide more support to the employers and the employees.
- More outreach with clients. As a case manager, I should not have to reach out to have the counselor meet with someone on caseload especially if the student is 18 and their own guardian. I would like to see VR being more proactive with the students' needs and checking in to see how things are going.

Access to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The final part of the survey for professionals who support transition-age youth/students included questions about how NDVR services are *accessed* by these young adults with disabilities whom they support.

The locations in which the transition-age youth/students (who are supported by the transition professionals who completed the survey) usually met their NDVR counselor are summarized in Table 2.3.11. The most common location was at the students' schools (73%). In addition, 16% of the transition professionals indicated that the students who they support do not have a NDVR counselor or that they did not know where they met (11%).

Table 2.3.11

Locations for Meetings of NDVR Counselor and Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

Meeting Locations	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
At school	33	73%
In the community	4	9%
At a NDVR Office	8	18%
No NDVR Counselor	7	16%
Unknown	5	11%
Other (virtually or by phone)	3	7%
Total *	60	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professionals could select more than one location in which their students meet with their NDVR counselor. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Among the barriers related to *accessing* NDVR services that are encountered by the transition-age youth/students who they support, the following were most noted by the transition professional respondents: lack of information about available NDVR services (42%), lack of support to attend NDVR meetings and trainings (33%), and lack of transportation for NDVR meetings and trainings (29%). Other barriers are represented at lower percentages. For this question, transition professionals could select all of the applicable barriers that are encountered by the young adults whom they support. These *access* barriers are shown in Table 2.3.12.

Table 2.3.12

*Barriers to **Accessing** NDVR Services for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents*

Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
No barriers to accessing NDVR services	8	18%
Lack of information about available NDVR services	19	42%
Difficulty completing the NDVR application	5	11%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at inconvenient times/places	5	11%
Inaccessible locations for meetings and trainings	2	4%
Lack of transportation for NDVR meetings and trainings	13	29%
Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings	1	2%
Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings	15	33%
Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings	1	2%
Lack of a language translator	2	4%
Difficulty completing the individualized employment plan	3	7%
Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	4	9%
Unknown	6	13%
Other (students' lack of motivation, difficulty understanding how NDVR will benefit them, poor self-esteem for getting a job, home school and private school students don't know about NDVR, lack of connections made to get set up with NDVR, parents do not attend meetings or refuse services, inconsistent counselor representation, NDVR counselors don't attend IEP meetings or don't engage in the IEP meetings if they do attend, poor advertisements about upcoming events such as Career Expos)	11	24%
Total *	95	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professionals could select more than one access barrier that is encountered by the transition-age youth/students they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Compared to traditional youth/students with disabilities who are transition-age, 49% of the transition professionals who responded to the survey believed that their transition-age youth/students who identify as being from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group encountered the same barriers to accessing NDVR services and supports. Twenty-nine percent of these same respondents believed their students from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group experienced the same access barriers *plus* additional ones. One of the respondents believed that transition-age youth/students from traditionally unserved or underserved population groups experienced completely different barriers to access NDVR services and supports but did not specify what it was. Twenty percent of the professional respondents did not know if transition-age youth/students from non-traditional population groups

experienced the same, additional, or completely different access barriers (mostly because they noted that they do not support students from most of these groups).

For those respondents who indicated that transition-age youth/students who identified as being from a traditionally unserved or underserved population group experienced different or additional access barriers, those that were noted included: 1) fewer services for members of these population groups to access in rural areas of the state; 2) teachers may have fewer resources to help students from these unserved or underserved populations get set-up with NDVR services; 3) lack of parental support for these students to access services; 4) fewer options; and 5) overall lack of services in rural ND areas but even more so for students from unserved or underserved population groups.

A follow-up question to the accessibility barriers experienced by transition-age youth/students asked the transition professionals what types of supports these individuals would need to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.3.13. Respondents could select more than one type of support for this question. Of these responses, the top three types of support that transition professionals believed would help transition-age youth/students the most to access NDVR services included: information about available NDVR services (69%), assistance completing the NDVR application (69%), and support to attend meetings in their own communities (42%).

Table 2.3.13

*Most Helpful Supports for **Accessing** NDVR Services for Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents*

Most Helpful Supports for <i>Accessing</i> NDVR Services	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Information about available NDVR services	31	69%
Assistance completing the NDVR application	31	69%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at convenient times/places	26	58%
Meetings with individuals in their own communities	19	42%
Accessible locations for meetings and trainings	15	33%
Transportation for meetings and trainings	20	44%
Childcare to attend meetings and trainings	4	9%
Support to attend meetings and trainings	19	42%
Accommodations during meetings and trainings	14	31%
A language translator	7	16%
Assistance completing the individualized employment plan	17	38%
Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	13	29%
Unknown	4	9%
Other (attending IEP meetings)	1	2%
Total *	221	-

***The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one type of support that they believe would help the transition-age youth/students they support to access NDVR services. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.**

Pre-Employment Transition Services

The survey for transition professionals also included questions on pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Their responses to the types of pre-employment transition services that the young adults who they support are receiving during their school years is shown in Table 2.3.14. For the most part, the transition professionals who responded to the survey believed that these types of pre-employment transition services were being provided by their school, district, or special education staff, as well as by NDVR staff.

Table 2.3.14

Pre-Employment Transition Services Received During School Years by Transition-Age Youth/Students Supported by Transition Professional Respondents

	Transition Professional Respondents (45)	
	N	Percent
Job Exploration Counseling		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	27	60%
Provided through an online or electronic application	2	4%
Provided by NDVR staff	11	24%
This is not offered	4	9%
Unknown	8	18%
Other	5	11%
Total *	57	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one way that the transition-age youth/students they support receive job exploration counseling. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Work-Based Learning Experiences		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	32	71%
Provided through an online or electronic application	1	2%
Provided by NDVR staff	9	20%
This is not offered	5	11%
Unknown	5	11%
Other	5	11%
Total *	57	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one way that the transition-age youth/students they support receive work-based learning experiences. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Workplace Readiness Training		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	28	62%

Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	6	13%
This is not offered	3	7%
Unknown	12	27%
Total *	49	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one way that the transition-age youth/students they support receive work readiness training. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Counseling for Enrollment in a Postsecondary Education Program		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	25	56%
Provided through an online or electronic application	1	2%
Provided by NDVR staff	10	22%
This is not offered	4	9%
Unknown	12	27%
Other	3	7%
Total *	55	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one way that the transition-age youth/students they support receive counseling for enrollment in a postsecondary education program. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Instruction in Self-Advocacy		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	31	69%
Provided through an online or electronic application	0	0%
Provided by NDVR staff	3	7%
This is not offered	2	4%
Unknown	7	16%
Other	6	13%
Total *	49	-
*The N is more than 45 because transition professional respondents could select more than one way that the transition-age youth/students they support receive instruction in self-advocacy. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question on the survey for transition professionals asked respondents to share additional thoughts about how their transition-age youth/students could be better supported to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are included in Table 2.3.15.

Table 2.3.15

Additional Thoughts from Transition Professional Respondents on Ways to Better Support Transition-Age Youth/Students to Access NDVR Services and Supports

- It would be beneficial to have VR counselors who are closer in age to the students. I've noticed a huge difference in how students relate to older and younger VR counselors.
- Meeting at school has made accessing services very simple and available.
- Having the NDVR reps more involved with the school as a whole and not making students with disabilities who use the services feel like they have a target. I feel like the community does not know about the services available to not only school aged but adults as well.
- I think we should be introducing them to NDVR early on by making pre-ETS services a priority.
- Communication is the key.
- More information to families.
- Improved outreach to private schools and home school communities.
- I think NDVR should play a huge role in the high school setting. This ensures students are aware of their options post-secondary and allows for teachers to create targeted plans to best support their post-secondary goals. There are very limited options to support individuals with developmental disabilities.
- I think the biggest barrier is having a meeting time/place that works for the parents. They are often working during the day, do not have transportation to get to a specified location, or forget about the meeting.
- Consistency through the program especially with counselors.
- Mental health services are key to helping students as well.
- A short video about VR that is not boring (well-made).
- More access to counselors.
- We have an excellent VR representative for our region. She has been active with all of my students and actively checks in with their progress.
- Hire more people in rural areas to provide assistance.
- I would like better education for teachers and staff about VR services.
- Getting school more willing to support the NDVR staff and more welcoming to have them come into the school systems.
- I just think having more awareness of VR and what there is to offer. I don't think a lot of people have ever really heard of it.
- By having either their case manager or another individual present at their meetings to help provide clarification to them or represent them when working with NDVR.
- NDVR counselor comes to our school to present however it is not engaging nor is the counselor prepared to present anything other than the bare minimum. None of my students coming back from the presentation state they are interested in applying. I attended the teacher internship one year, so I share additional information I learned which sways students into applying.
- There is no NDVR counselor that comes to the school, and no one meets with the students. Even if they did meet with the students, it would be difficult to get them to their meetings and work because they do not have access to transportation.
- They just need someone to guide them.

- Whatever change was made after a particular case manager left the Fargo VR Office was not a good one. It has had such a negative impact on the students' needs being met. Having a different case manager from year to year means there isn't a relationship developed and honestly the case managers seem to be too busy to even support the students who receive services. I am not sure the referral to VR is even worthwhile anymore.
- NDVR needs to be more pronounced in rural areas.

PROFESSIONALS FROM COMMUNITY PARTNER AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

This section summarizes the responses of professionals who support individuals with disabilities at community partner agencies/organizations. Fifty-six surveys were completed by professionals from these partner agencies/organizations. Of these respondents, twelve of the fifty-six surveys (21%) were completed by directors and nine of the fifty-six surveys (4%) were completed by a manager from a community partner agency/organization.

Demographics of Professionals from Partner Agencies/Organizations

The first part of the survey asked questions about the demographic characteristics of the respondents who are professionals at community agencies/organizations that partner with NDVR to provide employment services and supports.

A breakdown of the types of community partner agencies/organizations is provided in Table 2.4.1. The community partner respondents described their agencies/organizations as private non-profits (32%), individual service providers (11%), or something other than those from which they could choose (11%). The survey was completed by respondents from community partner agencies/organizations in all eight regions of the State. Some of the community partner agencies/organizations provided services to individuals with disabilities in more than one region of the state.

The number of individuals supported by each community partner agency/organization is also shown in Table 2.4.1.

Table 2.4.1*Types, Geographic Locations, and Sizes of Community Partner Agencies/Organizations*

Types of Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Secondary Education	2	4%
Postsecondary Education	5	9%
Department of Public Instruction	0	0%
Regional Human Service Center	0	0%
Client Advocacy Organization	1	2%
Veteran's Administration	2	4%
Workforce Development Agency	4	7%
City, County, or State Government	4	7%
Other State Agency	5	9%
Other Federal Agency	3	5%
Other Private Non-Profit	18	32%
Individual Service Provider	6	11%
Other (health care agency, elementary education)	6	11%
Total	56	100%
Geographic Locations of Community Partner Agencies/Organizations		
Region I: Williston	8	14%
Region II: Minot	12	21%
Region III: Devils Lake	8	14%
Region IV: Grand Forks	18	32%
Region V: Fargo	25	45%
Region VI: Jamestown	11	20%
Region VII: Bismarck	14	25%
Region VIII: Dickinson	9	16%
Total *	105	-
*The N is more than 56 because some of the professionals at community partner agencies/organizations support individuals with disabilities in more than one geographical location. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Number of Individuals with Disabilities Supported by Community Partner Agencies		
1 - 15	6	11%
16 - 50	9	16%
51 - 250	17	30%
251 - 999	13	23%
1000 or more	11	20%
Total	56	100%

The disability conditions of the consumers who are supported by the 56-partner agency/organization professionals who responded to the survey are noted in Table 2.4.2. The three most common disability conditions of the consumers who were supported by the respondents included physical disabilities (80%), mental health challenges (77%), and developmental disabilities (70%). For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability condition.

Table 2.4.2

Disability Conditions of Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Disability Conditions of Consumers Supported by Professionals at Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	38	68%
Intellectual disability	38	68%
Learning disability	34	61%
Developmental disability	39	70%
Communication disorder	30	54%
Deaf or hard of hearing	32	57%
Blindness or visually impaired	29	52%
Deaf and blind	17	30%
Mental health challenges	43	77%
History of substance abuse	29	52%
Physical disability	45	80%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (not specified)	2	4%
Total *	376	-
*The N is more than 56 because some of the professional respondents at community partner agencies/organizations support individuals with more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the consumers who are supported by the 56 professionals from community partner agencies/organizations who responded to the survey are designated in Table 2.4.3. Of the consumers who are supported by these professionals, their two primary racial or ethnic groups included the following: Caucasian/White (89%) or American Indian or Alaska Native (80%). Respondents from community partner agencies/organizations could select multiple racial or ethnic groups as applicable for the consumers who they support.

The languages that are spoken by the consumers who are supported by the community partner professionals who responded to the survey are also shown in Table 2.4.3. Ninety-six percent of the professional respondents from the community partner agencies/organizations noted that

English was the main language spoken by their consumers. Other languages were also identified as the professional respondents could select all that apply to the individuals who they support.

Table 2.4.3

Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Racial or Ethnic Group of Consumers Supported by Professionals at Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	37	66%
American Indian or Alaska Native	45	80%
Asian	31	55%
Caucasian/White	50	89%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	19	33%
Hispanic/Latino	32	57%
Unknown	6	11%
Other	0	0%
Total *	220	-
*The N is more than 56 because some of the professionals at community partner agencies/organizations support multiple individuals with disabilities who come from a variety of racial or ethnic groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	54	96%
Spanish	27	48%
American Sign Language	25	45%
Unknown	3	5%
Other (Somali, Nepali, Arabic, Dari and Pashto)	9	16%
Total *	118	-
*The N is more than 56 because some of the professionals at community partner agencies/organizations support multiple individuals with disabilities who may speak more than one language. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The professional respondents were asked to select all the traditionally unserved or underserved population groups with which the consumers whom they support most commonly identified as shown in Table 2.4.4. The professional respondents noted that the top three unserved or underserved population groups to which their consumers identified included mental health challenges (79%), racial or ethnic minorities (75%), and most significant disabilities (68%).

Table 2.4.4

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by Professionals from Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	38	68%
Transition-age student with disabilities	29	52%
Racial or ethnic minority	42	75%
Immigrant/refugee	25	45%
Non-English speaker	25	45%
Transient	17	30%
Mental health challenges	44	79%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	27	48%
Veterans	27	48%
Homeless	25	45%
LGBTQIA+	30	54%
Previously incarcerated or transition back into their community	21	38%
Unknown	4	7%
Other	0	0%
Total *	354	-
*The N is more than 56 because some of the professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations support multiple individuals with disabilities who identify as being a member of one or more unserved or underserved population groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals less than 100.		

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the survey for professionals at community partner agencies/organizations included questions about *NDVR* services and supports for individuals with disabilities to get and keep the job that they want.

Of the individuals with disabilities who are supported by community partner agencies/organizations, there are several ways in which they are referred for NDVR services. Table 2.4.5 shows the most common ways in which individuals with disabilities were referred for NDVR services as noted by the partner agency/organization professionals who completed the survey. These professional respondents identified disability service providers (48%), family members (46%), and self-referrals (43%) as the three most common referral sources for their consumers. For this question, respondents could select more than one answer for their consumers who are referred via multiple referral sources.

Table 2.4.5

Source of Referral to NDVR for Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Source of Referral to NDVR	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Self	24	43%
Family member	26	46%
Friend	9	16%
Teacher	13	23%
Disability support provider	27	48%
Social Security Administration	5	9%
Job Service	16	29%
Mental health program	11	20%
Healthcare professional	13	23%
Staff member at a college or vocational training program	14	25%
Parole officer or other court official	5	9%
Unknown	16	29%
Other (Not specified)	4	7%
Total *	183	-
*The N is more than 56 because professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations could indicate more than one referral source for the individuals with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Professionals from community partner agencies/organizations who completed the survey rated their knowledge of NDVR and its services to support the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. Most of the respondents were either somewhat (39%) or a little bit knowledgeable (29%) about NDVR services. Twenty percent of the respondents indicated that they were very knowledgeable of NDVR services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.4.6.

Table 2.4.6*Knowledge of NDVR by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations*

Knowledge of NDVR and its services to support employment needs of individuals with disabilities	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Very knowledgeable	11	20%
Somewhat knowledgeable	22	39%
A little bit knowledgeable	16	29%
Not knowledgeable at all	7	13%
Total	56	100%

Respondents from this category also indicated whether their community partner agency/organization had utilized the services that NDVR provides to support individuals with disabilities to get and keep the jobs that they want. Many of the respondents (73%) reported that their agency/organization had utilized NDVR services to support the employment of individuals with disabilities. Responses from this question are captured in Table 2.4.7.

Table 2.4.7*Utilization of NDVR Employment Services by Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations*

Utilization of NDVR employment services by community partner agencies/organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Yes	41	73%
No	6	11%
I don't know	9	16%
Total	56	100%

Professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations also noted the types of services that are readily available through NDVR for the individuals with disabilities whom they support. These are shown in Table 2.4.8. The four types of services that are most readily available for the consumers who are supported by the professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations included finding a job that matches their consumers' interests and strengths (57%), helping consumers to learn about their interests and strengths (54%), providing training to consumers to help them gain the right job skills (54%), and assistive technology (54%). For this question, respondents could select more than one type of service.

Table 2.4.8

Readily Available NDVR Services for Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Readily Available NDVR Services for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	32	57%
Helping to get more education	28	50%
Learning about strengths and interests	30	54%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	28	50%
Training to get the right job skills	30	54%
Job coaching	29	52%
Connecting to natural supports	19	34%
Accommodations	26	46%
Assistive technology	30	54%
Training on communication skills	20	36%
Providing a language translator	15	27%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	21	38%
Support for mental health challenges	18	32%
Support for substance abuse issues	15	27%
Support for health issues	20	36%
Transportation assistance	24	43%
Childcare for their own children	12	22%
Benefits planning	14	25%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	19	34%
Unknown	15	27%
Other (Not specified)	1	2%
Total *	446	-
*The N is more than 56 because professional respondents from community agencies/organizations could select more than one type of NDVR service that is readily available for the individuals with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Conversely, professionals also selected services that are not readily available through NDVR for the individuals who are supported by their community partner agency/organization. Their responses are shown in Table 2.4.9. The four least readily available services that were noted by the professional respondents included support for their consumers' substance abuse challenges (29%), mental health challenges (23%), and health issues (23%), as well as providing a language translator (23%).

Table 2.4.9

Services That Are Not Readily Available Through NDVR for Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

NDVR Services That Are Not Readily Available for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	5	9%
Helping to get more education	10	18%
Learning about strengths and interests	4	7%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	4	7%
Training to get the right job skills	8	14%
Job coaching	8	14%
Connecting to natural supports	10	18%
Accommodations	10	18%
Assistive technology	10	18%
Training on communication skills	10	18%
Providing a language translator	13	23%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	11	20%
Support for mental health challenges	13	23%
Support for substance abuse issues	16	29%
Support for health issues	13	23%
Transportation assistance	10	18%
Childcare for their own children	11	20%
Benefits planning	10	18%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	6	11%
Unknown	33	59%
Other (Not specified)	1	2%
Total *	216	-
*The N is more than 56 because professional respondents from community agencies/organizations could select more than one type of NDVR service that is not readily available for the individuals with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Related to the question “How frequently is NDVR able to meet the employment needs of individuals with disabilities?” respondents’ answers are shown in Table 2.4.10. Many of the respondents (52%) from the community partner agencies/organizations indicated that NDVR meets the employment needs of individuals with disabilities “some of the time.”

Table 2.4.10

Frequency of NDVR Meeting Employment Needs of Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

How Often NDVR Meets the Employment Needs of Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
All of the time	7	13%
Some of the time	29	52%
None of the time	2	4%
Unknown	18	32%
Total	56	100%

The professionals from community partner agencies/organizations who completed the survey reported that the individuals with disabilities whom they support face a variety of barriers to getting and keeping the jobs that they want. These are depicted in Table 2.4.11. Among these barriers, professional respondents from the community partner agencies/organizations indicated that lack of transportation (50%), mental health challenges (48%), lack of job coaches (43%), and not having the right job skills were most prevalent for the consumers they support. This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of barriers that were applicable.

Table 2.4.11

Barriers to Employment for Consumers Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Barriers to Employment for Consumers	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	23	41%
Not having enough education	17	30%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	16	29%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	10	18%
Not having the right job skills	24	43%
Not having a job coach	24	43%
Not having natural supports	18	32%
Not having necessary accommodations	15	27%
Not having necessary assistive technology	11	20%
Not having good communication skills	17	30%
Not having a language translator	9	16%

Not having good social/interpersonal skills	18	32%
Mental health challenges	27	48%
Substance abuse issues	19	34%
Health issues	14	25%
Lack of transportation	28	50%
Lack of childcare	16	29%
Lack of benefits planning	11	20%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	16	29%
Unknown	9	16%
Other	3	5%
Total *	345	-
*The N is more than 56 because professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations could select more than one barrier that is encountered by the individuals with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Professionals from community partner agencies/organizations also identified barriers encountered by individuals with disabilities who identified as being a member of an unserved or underserved group of people. For each of these groups, the three most common barriers are shown in Table 2.4.12.

Table 2.4.12

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job for Members of Unserved or Underserved Population Groups Supported by Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

Barriers to Employment for Consumers who are Members of Unserved or Underserved Population Groups	Community Partner Agency/Organization Professional Respondents (56)	
	N	Percent
Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities		
Not having the right job skills	27	48%
Lack of transportation	22	39%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	21	38%
Transition-Age Youth (ages 14-21)		
Not having the right job skills	20	36%
Interests and strengths have not been identified	18	32%
Lack of job coaches	17	30%
Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities		
Language barriers	23	41%
Lack of transportation	21	38%
Not having good communication skills	18	32%
Immigrants/Refugees		
Language barriers	21	38%

Lack of transportation	17	30%
Unknown	17	30%
Non-English Speakers		
Language barriers	28	50%
Not having good communication skills	15	27%
Unknown	13	23%
Transient		
Unknown	18	32%
Lack of transportation	12	21%
Lack of natural supports	12	21%
Individuals Who Struggle with Mental Health Challenges		
Mental health challenges	30	30%
Lack of transportation	19	34%
Lack of natural supports	19	34%
Individuals Who Have a History of Alcohol or Drug Abuse		
Substance abuse issues	25	45%
Mental health challenges	21	38%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with substance abuse issues	19	34%
Veterans		
Mental health challenges	17	30%
Unknown	17	30%
Substance abuse issues	15	27%
Homeless		
Lack of transportation; mental health challenges	21	38%
Substance abuse issues	20	36%
Lack of natural supports	17	30%
Individuals Who Identify as LGBTQIA+		
Unknown	19	34%
Lack of natural supports	16	29%
Employers' concerns about hiring people who identify as LGBTQIA+; Lack of transportation	11	20%
Individuals Who Were Previously Incarcerated or Are Transitioning Back into Their Community		
Lack of transportation	21	38%
Mental health challenges	20	36%
Employers' concerns about hiring people who were previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community	19	34%

For all these unserved or underserved categories (as well as individuals with disabilities who do not identify as a member of one of these groups), professional respondents from community partner agencies/organizations believed that the three NDVR services which would be the most beneficial for their consumers include: job coaching, transportation, and mental health supports. While these three supports were noted as being the most valuable, many of the respondents

indicated that the other types of supports that NDVR provides would also be beneficial for their consumers.

The final open-ended question on this part of the survey asked respondents from community partner agencies and organizations to share their additional thoughts about how their consumers could be better supported by NDVR to get and keep the job that they want. Their responses are captured in Table 2.4.13.

Table 2.4.13

Additional Thoughts on NDVR Services and Supports from Professional Respondents at Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

- Make the intake process easier and quicker; be more engaging with clients.
- More support for further education for persons with intellectual disabilities so they can be competitively employed and living as independently as possible (especially for those who have limited income or ability to pay for further education).
- More on-the-job training opportunities, job coaches, and people to assist with reasonable accommodation requests.
- Job coaches, transportation, and teaching social skills would be beneficial.
- Don't feel valued or heard.
- More awareness of services offered.
- Move more quickly.
- Flexible work schedules and ability to work temporary jobs but with benefits.
- Services seem to assist a small subset of those that need assistance. Would be nice to see expanded services.
- Pay providers higher rates for customized employment, help people with disabilities pay for post-secondary education programs, and provide training and support for those who want to be self-employed.
- When supporting mental health, it might be good to have a workforce pool so if a person calls in there are others that can do the job (like a temp service).
- I don't understand why someone who is disabled does not qualify for grants to be able to go to school in what interests them. Who can afford higher education on \$841 a month?
- Case managers for individuals with mental health/substance abuse issues.
- Finding new ways to partner with post-secondary education programs who support students and prepare them for future employment.
- Helping them identify what they would be successful in; trying a few different jobs.
- In Region X, I think we do a good job of partnering with VR to assist people in achieving their employment goals. We can always do better though. We have a unique opportunity as partners to address the workforce shortage our community is facing. CRPs and VR could be partnering together on job development with businesses to create new and unique opportunities for people from these populations in non-traditional jobs. The people we work with have the capacity to be dedicated long-term employees when matched with the right employers. Job development can be a lot of work when you are trying to break into nontraditional fields. I think we need to look at ways we can partner together to make that happen. I also wonder if there is a way to partner together to ease the employee

shortages CRPs are currently experiencing. For example, there may be people served by VR who may be able to work as DSPs. These individuals would not be from the category of “Most Severely Disabled”, but I know a lot of people come to VR for services who are not referred to CRPs for assistance.

- Basic job skills (dressing appropriately, showing up on time, communication with employers, customers, budgeting their paycheck) are needed supports
- Continue to educate other professionals about NDVR services available can go a long way. With all the turnover happening at places, information gets lost, and referrals are getting missed. Continue to share information!
- Support individuals with more significant disabilities to get and keep a job even if they require ongoing, long-term support. It seems like if people need long-term support to be employed, then NDVR is less likely to work with them because they aren't seen as having the capacity to work independently someday.
- Accountability; removing barriers (transportation, childcare).
- Here in our county, we don't have a ton of unserved population groups that partake in our services.
- It appears for many that people have to jump through VR hoops instead of VR meeting them where they are at. Oftentimes, there is a grumpiness and resistance to help those that are high maintenance and especially on the spectrum where it takes repeated answers and dealing with the mental health needs.
- Many of the people I work with who receive services from VR explain that they don't know who their VR contact is. Communication with those they serve would be beneficial. It would be wonderful if they could do "check ins" with those they serve too to make sure they don't have questions, are doing well, assess if their needs have changed, etc.
- Providing job training, job supports, and transportation.
- Once they are able to identify their job that interests them, provide them some training so that they can be able to perform well in their jobs.
- People with disabilities have many talents and can do the same things regular people do. They should work and be pushed to their fullest potential. It starts in the home with parents. If they don't have discipline, routine, feed their children junk food, bring them up in church, and have a woe as me attitude, the person with a disability will grow up to be nothing just like a person who doesn't have a disability would. You want people with disabilities to be successful, it all starts in the home.
- For harder to serve people, more assistance with job coaching and housing.
- Just having enough time to spend one on one with a Job Coach. Finding the right fit is important for your client to succeed and want to remain in the position long term.
- Do planning for long-term career goals and provide education and training to assist with obtaining the most appropriate job.
- Helping individuals connect with a group that promotes the strengthening of self-advocacy skills and supports.
- Our agency is looking at hiring a full-time translator to assist in the community (Spanish). Overall case management and helping them access the skills training and their basic needs.
- The biggest problem I see is that they can't get the education they need as they can't afford it and was told there is no help for people with disabilities to get a free education.

- More substance abuse programs.
- The VR counselors I work with are very helpful and willing to help their clients and are available to answer question that I have.

PROFESSIONALS FROM COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Section Five of the Findings summarizes the responses of professionals who support consumers with disabilities at Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) that are authorized by NDVR to provide employment services. Four surveys were completed by professionals from CRPs. Of these respondents, two of the four surveys (50%) were completed by business managers and two of the four surveys (50%) were completed by a director from a community rehabilitation program.

Demographics of Professionals from Community Rehabilitation Programs

The first part of the survey asked questions about the *demographic characteristics* of the respondents who are professionals at CRPs that are authorized by NDVR to provide employment services and supports to consumers with disabilities.

Professionals from community rehabilitation programs who completed the survey have programs in four geographic regions of North Dakota as indicated in Table 2.5.1. The highest percentage of respondents have programs in Grand Forks and Jamestown (50%) followed by Minot and Fargo (25%). For this question, respondents could select more than one region in which their CRP supports consumers with disabilities.

Table 2.5.1 also shows how many individuals with disabilities are supported by the Community Rehabilitation Programs at which the CRP professional respondents are employed.

Table 2.5.1

Geographic Locations of CRPs and Number of Consumers Supported by CRPs

Geographic Locations of Community Rehabilitation Programs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	0	0%
Region II: Minot	1	25%
Region III: Devils Lake	0	0%
Region IV: Grand Forks	2	50%
Region V: Fargo	1	25%
Region VI: Jamestown	2	50%
Region VII: Bismarck	0	0%
Region VIII: Dickinson	0	0%
Total *	6	-

*The N is more than 4 because some of the CRP professionals support consumers with disabilities in more than one geographical location. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Number of Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs		
1 - 15	0	0%
16 - 50	2	50%
51 - 250	2	50%
251 - 999	0	0%
1000 or more	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The disability conditions of the consumers who are supported by the four professionals from CRPs who responded to the survey are noted in Table 2.5.2. The three most common disability conditions of the consumers who are supported by the CRP professional respondents included intellectual disabilities (100%), developmental disabilities (100%), and mental health challenges (100%). For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability condition.

Table 2.5.2

Disability Conditions of Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

Disability Conditions of Consumers Supported by Professionals from Community Rehabilitation Programs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	3	75%
Intellectual disability	4	100%
Learning disability	3	75%
Developmental disability	4	100%
Communication disorder	1	25%
Deaf or hard of hearing	1	25%
Blindness or visually impaired	3	75%
Deaf and blind	0	0%
Mental health challenges	4	100%
History of substance abuse	2	50%
Physical disability	2	50%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	27	-
*The N is more than 4 because some of the professional respondents at CRPs support consumers with disabilities who have more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the consumers who are supported by the four professionals from Community Rehabilitation Programs who responded to the survey are designated in Table 2.5.3. Of the consumers who are supported by these professionals, their racial or ethnic groups

included the following: Caucasian/White (100%), American Indian or Alaska Native (75%), and African American/Black (50%).

For this respondent group, it was reported that 100% of the consumers supported by the CRP professionals spoke English as also shown in Table 2.5.3.

Table 2.5.3

Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

Racial or Ethnic Group of Consumers Supported by Professionals from Community Partner Agencies/Organizations	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	2	50%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	75%
Asian	0	0%
Caucasian/White	4	100%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	15	-
*The N is more than 4 because some of the professional respondents at CRPS support multiple consumers with disabilities who come from a variety of racial or ethnic groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	4	100%
Spanish	0	0%
American Sign Language	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The professional respondents from the CRPs were asked to select the unserved or underserved population groups with which the consumers whom they support most commonly identify as shown in Table 2.5.4. Most significant disabilities (100%), mental health challenges (100%), and transition-age students (75%) were the most frequently cited unserved or underserved population groups with which the CRP professional respondents' consumers identified. Respondents could select all the applicable population groups with which their consumers identify for this question.

Table 2.5.4

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by Professionals from Community Rehabilitation Programs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	4	100%
Transition-age student with disabilities	3	75%
Racial or ethnic minority	1	25%
Immigrant/refugee	0	0%
Non-English speaker	0	0%
Transient	0	0%
Mental health challenges	4	100%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	2	50%
Veterans	1	25%
Homeless	1	25%
LGBTQIA+	1	25%
Previously incarcerated or transition back into their community	1	25%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	18	-
*The N is more than 4 because some of the professional respondents from CRPs support multiple individuals with disabilities who identify as being a member of one or more unserved or underserved population groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals less than 100.		

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the survey for professionals at Community Rehabilitation Programs included questions about NDVR services and supports for consumers with disabilities to get and keep the job that they want.

Professionals from CRPs who completed the survey rated their knowledge of NDVR and its services to support the employment needs of their consumers with disabilities. Most respondents (75%) said that they were very knowledgeable about NDVR and its services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.5.5.

Table 2.5.5*Knowledge of NDVR and its Services by Community Rehabilitation Programs*

Knowledge of NDVR and its services to support employment needs of consumers with disabilities	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Very knowledgeable	3	75%
Somewhat knowledgeable	1	25%
A little bit knowledgeable	0	0%
Not knowledgeable at all	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 2.5.6 shows that all four respondents (100%) from this category indicated that their CRP is authorized by NDVR to help consumers with disabilities to get and keep the job that they want.

Table 2.5.6*NDVR Authorization for Community Rehabilitation Programs to Provide Employment Services*

Authorized by NDVR to help consumers get and keep jobs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Yes	4	100%
No	0	0%
Unknown	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Professional respondents from CRPs also noted the types of services that are *readily available* through their CRP by NDVR authorization for the consumers with disabilities whom they support. The types of readily available services are shown in Table 2.5.7. Of the services that are readily available for the consumers with disabilities who are supported by their CRPs, assistance to find a job that matches their consumers' interests and strengths (100%), job coaching (100%), assistive technology (100%), and transportation assistance (100%) were most frequently cited. For this question, respondents could select more than one type of service that was readily available.

Table 2.5.7*Readily Available NDVR Services for Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs*

Readily Available NDVR Services for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	4	100%
Helping to get more education	1	25%
Learning about strengths and interests	3	75%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	3	75%
Training to get the right job skills	3	75%
Job coaching	4	100%
Connecting to natural supports	3	75%
Accommodations	2	50%
Assistive technology	4	100%
Training on communication skills	3	75%
Providing a language translator	0	0%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	3	75%
Support for health issues	1	25%
Transportation assistance	4	100%
Childcare for their own children	1	25%
Benefits planning	1	25%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	1	25%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	41	-
*The N is more than 4 because professional respondents from CRPs could select more than one type of NDVR service that is readily available for the consumers with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Conversely, professionals also selected services that are *not readily* available through NDVR for the consumers with disabilities who their CRP is authorized by NDVR to support. Their responses are shown in Table 2.5.8. Of the services that are not readily available for the consumers with disabilities who are supported by their CRPs, providing a language translator (75%), benefits planning (75%), and teaching employers about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities (75%) were most frequently cited. For this question, respondents could select more than one type of service that was not readily available.

Table 2.5.8

NDVR Services That Are Not Readily Available for Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

NDVR Services That Are Not Readily Available for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs	CRP Professional Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	0	0%
Helping to get more education	1	25%
Learning about strengths and interests	0	0%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	0	0%
Training to get the right job skills	0	0%
Job coaching	0	0%
Connecting to natural supports	0	0%
Accommodations	1	25%
Assistive technology	0	0%
Training on communication skills	0	0%
Providing a language translator	3	75%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	0	0%
Support for health issues	2	50%
Transportation assistance	0	0%
Childcare for their own children	2	50%
Benefits planning	3	75%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	3	75%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	15	-
*The N is more than 4 because professional respondents from CRPs could select more than one type of NDVR service that is not readily available for the consumers with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The professionals from the CRPs who completed the survey reported that the consumers with disabilities who are authorized by NDVR to support faced a variety of barriers to getting and keeping the jobs that they want. These are depicted in Table 2.5.9 and included their consumers not having the right job skills (75%), their consumers not having good social/interpersonal skills (75%), and employers' concerns about hiring individuals with disabilities (75%) as the three most cited barriers. This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of barriers that were applicable.

Table 2.5.9*Barriers to Employment for Consumers Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs*

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job	Professional CRP Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	1	25%
Not having enough education	1	25%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	1	25%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	2	50%
Not having the right job skills	3	75%
Not having a job coach	2	50%
Not having natural supports	1	25%
Not having necessary accommodations	1	25%
Not having necessary assistive technology	0	0%
Not having good communication skills	1	25%
Not having a language translator	0	0%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	3	75%
Health issues	0	0%
Lack of transportation	2	50%
Lack of childcare	1	25%
Lack of benefits planning	2	50%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	3	75%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	24	-
*The N is more than 4 because professional respondents from CRPs could select more than one barrier that is encountered by the consumers with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Professionals from the CRPs also identified barriers encountered by consumers with disabilities who also identify as being a member of a traditionally unserved or underserved group of people. For each of these groups, the most cited barriers are shown in Table 2.5.10. The response rate for these questions is low because many of the respondents' CRPs do not support consumers who identify as being a member of some of these unserved or underserved groups. This question allowed the respondents to select all of the types of barriers that were applicable.

Table 2.5.10

*Barriers to Employment for Members of Unserved or Underserved Population Groups
Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs*

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job for Individuals with Disabilities from Unserved or Underserved Population Groups	Professional CRP Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities		
Not having the right job skills	2	50%
Lack of transportation	2	50%
Health issues that are not being addressed	2	50%
Employers' concerns about hiring members of this group	2	50%
Transition-Age Youth (ages 14-21)		
Lack of transportation	2	50%
Barriers with one response each were lack of education, interests and strengths have not been identified, lack of job coaches, lack of accommodations, lack of assistive technology, lack of social/interpersonal skills, and health issues	1	25%
Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities		
Unknown	2	50%
Barriers with one response each were not enough jobs to match interests and strengths, lack of education, interests and strengths have not been identified, inadequate job skills, lack of job coaches, lack of natural supports, lack of accommodations, lack of assistive technology, limited communication skills, language barriers, lack of social/interpersonal skills, lack of transportation, lack of childcare, concerns about impact of job on benefits, employers concerns about hiring	1	25%
Immigrants/Refugees		
Unknown	1	25%
The CRP does not currently support immigrants/refugees	3	75%
Non-English Speakers		
Language barriers	1	25%
Unknown	1	25%
The CRP does not currently support non-English speakers	3	75%
Transient		
Unknown	1	25%
The CRP does not currently support people who are transient	3	75%
Individuals Who Struggle with Mental Health Challenges		
Lack of accommodations	3	75%
Challenges are not being supported at the workplace	3	75%
Lack of transportation	3	75%
Individuals Who Have a History of Alcohol or Drug Abuse		
Lack of accommodations	3	75%

Challenges are not being supported at the workplace	3	75%
Lack of transportation	3	75%
Veterans		
Lack of job coaches	2	50%
Lack of natural supports	2	50%
Lack of accommodations	2	50%
Lack of transportation	2	50%
Unknown	2	50%
Homeless		
Unknown	1	25%
The CRP does not currently support people who are homeless	3	75%
Individuals Who Identify as LGBTQIA+		
All barriers had 1 response each (not enough jobs to match interests and strengths, lack of education, interests and strengths have not been identified, lack of training to develop resume and interview, inadequate job skills, lack of job coaches, lack of natural supports, lack of accommodations, lack of assistive technology, limited communication skills, language barriers, lack of social/interpersonal skills, challenges are not being supported, lack of transportation, lack of childcare, concerns about impact of job on benefits, employers concerns about hiring, unknown, not applicable, and other)	1	25%
Individuals Who Were Previously Incarcerated or Are Transitioning Back into Their Community		
Employers' concerns about hiring people who were previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community	3	75%
Lack of job coaches	2	50%
Lack of natural supports	2	50%
Lack of accommodations	2	50%
Limited social/interpersonal skills	2	50%
Challenges are not being supported at the workplace	2	50%
Lack of transportation	2	50%

Professional respondents who work at CRPs that are authorized by NDVR to provide services most commonly identified the following types of services to help consumers with disabilities (including those who are members of an underserved or unserved population group) to get and keep the job that they want: helping consumers with disabilities to find jobs that match their interests and strengths (100%), helping their consumers to learn about the interests and strengths (100%), offering job skill training (100%), providing job coaching (100%), facilitating connections to natural supports (100%), helping consumers access assistive technology (100%), completing assessments on strengths and interests (100%), and providing assistance with transportation (100%). All the responses from professionals at CRPs who completed the survey are shown in Table 2.5.11.

Table 2.5.11

Helpful NDVR Employment Services for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

Helpful NDVR Employment Services	Professional CRP Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Finding a job that matches interests and strengths	4	100%
Helping to get more education	3	75%
Learning about strengths and interests	4	100%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	3	75%
Training to get the right job skills	4	100%
Job coaching	4	100%
Connecting to natural supports	4	100%
Accommodations	3	75%
Assistive technology	4	100%
Training on communication skills	3	75%
Providing a language translator	2	50%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	X	X
Support for health issues	3	75%
Transportation assistance	4	100%
Childcare for their own children	2	50%
Benefits planning	3	75%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	3	75%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	53	-
*The N is more than 4 because CRP professionals could select more than one type of NDVR employment services that they believed would help the consumers with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Of the services noted in the previous question, the professional respondents indicated the services that they believed would be most helpful for the consumers with disabilities (including members of unserved or underserved population groups) who are supported by their CRPs through NDVR authorization. Seventy-five percent of the CRP professional respondents chose job coaching, connecting to natural supports, and assessing strengths and interests as the supports that they believed would be most helpful for their consumers. Accommodations and assistive technology were also noted. These responses are compiled in Table 2.5.12.

Table 2.5.12

Most Helpful Employment Services for Consumers with Disabilities Supported by Community Rehabilitation Programs

Most Helpful NDVR Services for Consumers with Disabilities (including those from underserved or unserved groups)	Professional CRP Respondents (4)	
	N	Percent
Job coaching	3	75%
Connecting to natural supports	3	75%
Assessing strengths and interests	3	75%
Accommodations	2	50%
Assistive technology	1	25%
Total *	12	-
*The N is more than 4 because CRP professionals could select more than one type of NDVR employment services that they believed would help their consumers the most. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question asked the CRP respondents to share additional thoughts about how their consumers with disabilities (including those from unserved and underserved populations) could be better supported to get and keep the jobs that they want. Their responses are recorded in Table 2.5.13.

Table 2.5.13

Additional Thoughts on NDVR Services and Supports from Professional Respondents at Community Rehabilitation Programs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education about benefits planning. • Allow training opportunities/assessments. • Find better job matches instead of placing people into jobs at places that are known to hire without considering fit or the person's desires. • Enable providers to hire and retain competent employees.

NORTH DAKOTA BUSINESSES

This section summarizes the responses of business representatives who completed the survey. Twenty-five surveys were completed by representatives of a variety of North Dakota businesses.

Demographics of North Dakota Businesses

The first part of the survey asks questions about the *demographic characteristics* of the respondents and their North Dakota businesses.

The 25 respondents from North Dakota businesses held a variety of job titles/roles including presidents, chiefs of operations, owners, managers, directors, agents, financial administrators, and marketing and sales personnel. Many of the respondents were in a leadership position at their business. These job titles/roles, as well as each respondent's type of business, are shown in Table 2.6.1. For these two questions, respondents could choose more than one job title/role and type of business.

Table 2.6.1

Job Titles/Roles and Types of Business Respondents

Job Titles/Roles of Business Respondents	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Owner	6	24%
Part Owner	1	4%
Business Partner	1	4%
President	1	4%
Chief of Operations	2	8%
Vice President	1	4%
Manager (including general, office, and store managers)	6	24%
Director	5	20%
Human Resources	2	8%
Agent	1	4%
Financial Administrator	1	4%
Marketing/Sales	1	4%
Social Worker	1	4%
Total *	29	-
*The N is more than 25 because some respondents selected more than one job/title role at their business. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Types of Businesses		
Agriculture and Natural Resources	0	0%
Banking/Finance	1	4%
Computer and Technology	0	0%
Construction	5	20%
Education	0	0%
Food and Beverage	1	4%
Government	3	12%
Health Care	4	16%
Hospitality	1	4%
Manufacturing	1	4%
Media and News	0	0%
Retail	6	24%
Service	7	28%
Other	0	0%

Total *	29	-
*The N is more than 25 because some respondents selected more than one type of business. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The geographical locations, as well as the number of individuals who are employed at each business, are highlighted in Table 2.6.2. With the exception of Jamestown (Region VI), representatives from businesses in all of the other regions in North Dakota completed the survey. Most of the business respondents were from Minot or Bismarck (32% each). Related to size, most of the respondents (68%) indicated that their business employed 1-15 people. The business sizes are also shown in Table 2.6.2.

Table 2.6.2

Geographic Locations and Size of Businesses

Geographic Locations of Business	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	2	8%
Region II: Minot	8	32%
Region III Devils Lake	3	12%
Region IV Grand Forks	3	12%
Region V Fargo	3	12%
Region VI Jamestown	0	0%
Region VII Bismarck	8	32%
Region VIII Dickinson	1	4%
Total *	28	-
*The N is more than 25 because some of the respondents indicated that they have businesses in more than one geographical location. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Size of Business		
1 – 15 employees	17	68%
16 – 50 employees	6	24%
51 – 250 employees	1	4%
251 – 999 employees	0	0%
1000 or more employees	1	4%
Total	25	100%

Related to whether their business employs individuals with disabilities, the percentage of respondents were quite evenly distributed as shown in Table 2.6.3. While 44% of the business respondents indicated that their business employed people with disabilities, 48% said that they did not.

Table 2.6.3*Employment of People with Disabilities by Business*

Employment of People with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Yes	11	44%
No	12	48%
Unknown	2	8%
Total	25	100%

The disability conditions of the individuals who are employed by the businesses that responded to the survey are noted in Table 2.6.4. Related to the individuals with disabilities whom they employ, the most common conditions that were noted by the business respondents were mental health challenges (32%), substance abuse (24%), and physical disabilities (24%). Thirty-two percent of the business respondents also indicated that they were unaware of the conditions of their employees with disabilities. For this question, respondents from the businesses could choose more than one type of disability condition.

Table 2.6.4*Disability Conditions of Individuals Employed by Businesses*

Disability Conditions of Individuals Employed by Business Respondents	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	1	4%
Intellectual disability	3	12%
Learning disability	3	12%
Developmental disability	2	8%
Communication disorder	1	4%
Deaf or hard of hearing	3	12%
Blindness or visually impaired	0	0%
Deaf and blind	0	0%
Mental health challenges	8	32%
History of substance abuse	6	24%
Physical disability	6	24%
Unknown	8	32%
Other (never hired a person with disabilities)	7	28%
Total *	48	-
*The N is more than 25 because some of the respondents indicated that the individuals with disabilities whom they employ have more than one disability condition. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the individuals with disabilities who are employed by the business respondents are designated in Table 2.6.5. Primarily, the racial or ethnic group of the

individuals with disabilities who were employed by the business respondents was Caucasian/White (36%). The same percentage of business respondents (36%) indicated that they did not know the racial or ethnic groups of their employees with disabilities.

The languages that were spoken by these same employees with disabilities are also shown in Table 2.6.5. Many of the business respondents (56%) noted that their employees with disabilities spoke English. The business respondents chose “unknown” or “other” if their business has not hired (or isn’t currently employing) people with disabilities.

Table 2.6.5

Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Individuals with Disabilities Employed by Businesses

Racial or Ethnic Group of Individuals with Disabilities Employed by Business Respondents	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	1	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	16%
Asian	0	0%
Caucasian/White	9	36%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	4%
Hispanic/Latino	2	8%
Unknown (I don’t know)	9	36%
Other (this is a diverse community we do not discriminate, never hired, none employed at this time, not applicable or n/a)	7	28%
Total *	33	-
*The N is more than 25 because some respondents selected more than one racial/ethnic group for the individuals with disabilities who are employed by their business. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	14	56%
Spanish	1	4%
American Sign Language	1	4%
Unknown	7	28%
Other (never hired, n/a, no one with disabilities)	6	24%
Total *	29	-
*The N is more than 25 because some respondents selected more than one language that is spoken by the individuals with disabilities who are employed by their business. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The business respondents were asked to select the unserved or underserved population groups with which the individuals with disabilities whom they employ most commonly identified as shown in Table 2.6.6. The three main unserved or underserved population groups to which the business respondents’ employees with disabilities belonged are: 1) mental health challenges (40%), 2) history of alcohol or drug abuse (40%), and 3) racial or ethnic minorities (32%). Some of the business respondents (20%) did not know if their employees with disabilities belonged to

unserved or underserved population groups. For this question, some respondents (36%) chose “other” if their business never had applicants or never hired members of these unserved or underserved population groups. Business respondents were also able to select more than one response for this question.

Table 2.6.6

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Individuals with Disabilities Employed by Businesses

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Individuals with Disabilities Employed by Business Respondents	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	5	20%
Transition-age student with disabilities	3	12%
Racial or ethnic minority	8	32%
Immigrant/refugee	3	12%
Non-English speaker	2	8%
Transient	3	12%
Mental health challenges	10	40%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	10	40%
Veterans	7	28%
Homeless	3	12%
LGBTQIA+	5	20%
Previously incarcerated or transition back into their community	2	8%
Unknown	5	20%
Other (never hired a person with a disability)	9	36%
Total *	75	-
*The N is more than 25 because some respondents indicated that the individuals with disabilities who they employ belong to one or more one unserved or underserved population groups. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

For those businesses that have not hired individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as being from one or more unserved or underserved population groups), respondents were asked to select reasons from a list. On this question, respondents could check all of the reasons that apply. Their responses are recorded in Table 2.6.7. The most frequently cited reasons for not hiring individuals with disabilities were: 1) never having an individual with disabilities apply for a job at their business (36%); 2) concerns about safety (16%); and 3) concerns about job performance (12%). Thirty-six percent of the respondents also selected “Other” for this question and indicated that licensing and background check requirements may prohibit them from hiring some individuals (e.g., those who were previously incarcerated).

Table 2.6.7*Reasons For Not Hiring Individuals with Disabilities*

Reasons that Businesses Haven't Hired Individuals with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Unfamiliar with employment laws	0	0%
Unfamiliar with recruiting individuals with disabilities	1	4%
Unfamiliar with interviewing individuals with disabilities	0	0%
Unfamiliar with hiring individuals with disabilities	1	4%
Uncomfortable hiring individuals with disabilities	0	0%
Concerns about job performance	3	12%
Concerns about mental health, substance abuse, or physical challenges	1	4%
Concerns about safety	4	16%
Concerns about attendance	0	0%
Concerns about cost of reasonable accommodations	0	0%
Have never had an individual with disabilities apply for a job	9	36%
Unknown	5	20%
Other (licensing and background check requirements)	9	36%
Total *	33	-
*The N is more than 25 because respondents could indicate more than one reason for why they haven't hired individuals with disabilities. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Business representatives who completed the survey rated their knowledge of NDVR and its services to support the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. Many of the business respondents (48%) indicated that they were “not knowledgeable at all” about NDVR services. Their responses are shown in Table 2.6.8.

Table 2.6.8*Knowledge of NDVR Services by Business Respondents*

Knowledge of NDVR and its Services to Support Employment Needs of Individuals with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Very knowledgeable	3	12%
Somewhat knowledgeable	7	28%
A little bit knowledgeable	3	12%
Not knowledgeable at all	12	48%
Total	25	100%

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The second part of the business survey included questions about the respondents' experiences with NDVR services and supports related to employing individuals with disabilities.

As shown in Table 2.6.9 many of the business respondents (76%) had not utilized any NDVR services to support recruiting, interviewing, employing, or retaining individuals with disabilities.

Table 2.6.9

Businesses' Utilization of NDVR Services

Utilization of NDVR Services to Support the Employment of Individuals with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Yes	2	8%
No	19	76%
Unknown	4	16%
Total	25	100%

For those businesses that had utilized NDVR services to assist with employing individuals with disabilities (e.g., information, training, technical assistance, or support), respondents were asked about the types of services they had received. Their responses are compiled in Table 2.6.10.

Table 2.6.10

Types of NDVR Services Utilized by Businesses

Types of NDVR Services Utilized to Support the Employment of Individuals with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Employment laws for hiring individuals with disabilities	1	4%
Incentives for employing individuals with disabilities	2	8%
Types of disabilities	1	4%
Disability etiquette	0	0%
Recruiting applicants with disabilities	0	0%
Interviewing applicants with disabilities	1	4%
Job skill assessments	2	8%
Reasonable job accommodations	2	8%
Job coaches	2	8%
Supports for employment success	1	4%
Job training programs for employees with disabilities	0	0%
Unknown	12	48%
Other (none, n/a, never had anyone apply with a disability)	10	40%
Total *	34	-

***The N is more than 25 because respondents indicated more than one type of NDVR service that has been utilized by their business. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.**

In the next series of questions, the business representatives who completed the survey were asked about areas in which their businesses needed help to recruit and interview, employ, and retain individuals with disabilities.

In the area of recruiting and interviewing individuals with disabilities, many of the respondents (60%) did not know how NDVR could support their businesses. Among the NDVR supports that the business respondents believed would help them the most to recruit and interview individuals with disabilities, recruiting applicants who met the job qualifications and had good job skills were the most frequently cited (at 16% each).

Related to NDVR supports for employing individuals with disabilities, the business respondents believed that obtaining incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities and obtaining information on job training programs for employees with disabilities would be the most helpful (at 12% each). Like the previous question, many of the business respondents (64%) did not know what types of NDVR supports would be the most helpful for employing individuals with disabilities.

The business respondents believed that supports to address concerns about lack of transportation (12%), poor attendance (8%), inadequate work skills (8%), and substance abuse issues (8%) would help the most for retaining employees with disabilities. Additionally, 56% of the business respondents noted that they did not know the types of supports that would be most helpful for *retaining* their employees with disabilities. Table 2.6.11 is a summary of their responses in each of these areas.

Table 2.6.11

Areas in Which NDVR Support Would be Helpful for Businesses

Helpful NDVR Supports for <i>Recruiting and Interviewing</i> Individuals with Disabilities	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Recruiting applicants with disabilities who meet the job qualifications	4	16%
Recruiting applicants with disabilities who have good job skills	4	16%
Recruiting applicants with disabilities who have good social/interpersonal skills	2	8%
Assessing the skills of applicants with disabilities	3	12%
Discussing reasonable job accommodations	3	12%
Unknown	15	60%
Other (no current need for support in this area)	5	20%
Total *	36	-
*The N is more than 25 because respondents could indicate more than area in which NDVR supports would be helpful with respect to recruiting and interviewing individuals with disabilities. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Helpful NDVR Supports for <i>Employing</i> Individuals with Disabilities		
Understanding disability-related employment laws	1	4%
Obtaining incentives for employing individuals with disabilities	3	12%
Understanding types of disabilities	0	0%
Learning disability etiquette	2	8%
Identifying and implementing job reasonable accommodations	1	4%
Working with job coaches who support employees with disabilities	2	8%
Supporting employees with disabilities to be successful	0	0%
Obtaining information on job training programs for employees with disabilities	3	12%
Unknown	16	64%
Other (no current need for support in this area)	4	16%
Total *	32	-
*The N is more than 25 because respondents could indicate more than area in which NDVR supports would be helpful with respect to employing individuals with disabilities. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Helpful NDVR Supports to Address Challenges in <i>Retaining</i> Employees with Disabilities		
Poor attendance	2	8%
Difficulty learning job skills	1	4%
Slow work speed	2	8%
Poor work stamina	1	4%
Poor communication skills	0	0%
Poor social/interpersonal skills	0	0%
Inadequate job accommodations	0	0%
Concerns about mental health	1	4%
Concerns about substance abuse	2	8%
Concerns about physical health	1	4%
Language barriers	0	0%
Identifying effective accommodations	1	4%
Lack of transportation	3	12%
Unknown	14	56%
Other (our employees do very well, we are okay, n/a, no, no employees with disabilities, no issues in this area)	8	32%
Total *	36	-
*The N is more than 25 because respondents could indicate more than area in which NDVR supports would be helpful with respect to challenges they face in retaining employees with disabilities. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question in this part of the survey asked respondents to share additional thoughts about the services that NDVR could provide to better support their business to recruit, interview, employ, and retain individuals with disabilities. Their responses are summarized in Table 2.6.12 below.

Table 2.6.12*Additional Thoughts on NDVR Services and Supports from Business Respondents*

- We are okay; thank you for checking on us.
- I am unfamiliar with the support provided by NDVR.
- Would love to have someone come and talk to us so we can learn more.
- Helpful skills are always welcome to improve quality of life for all.
- Would be interested in more information.
- Our area is somewhat rural, so we have never really been approached by anyone.
- We work with a company for disabled people. If they need services, then the company provides it.
- This is the first I've ever heard of NDVR.
- More for employers would be beneficial.
- Background checks and licensing are required which might make it impossible for us to hire some individuals with disabilities.
- More education and sharing of best practices.
- We need more job coaches so we can job coach the clients on their jobs.
- We have a great relationship with NDVR.

Access to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The final part of the survey included questions about how businesses in North Dakota *access* NDVR services with respect to supporting employees with disabilities.

When asked if their business knew how to *access* NDVR services to support recruiting, interviewing, employing, and retaining employees with disabilities, many of the respondents (56%) answered “No” and 36% answered “Yes.” All their responses are shown in Table 2.6.13.

Table 2.6.13*Businesses' Knowledge About How to Access NDVR Services*

Knowledgeable About Accessing NDVR Services	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Yes	9	36%
No	14	56%
Unknown	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Related to *accessing* NDVR services and supports, the respondents were asked to cite the types of barriers that they have encountered. Twenty percent of the respondents noted that their business had not experienced any barriers. As the primary barrier, thirty-six percent indicated that their business was not aware of available services through NDVR. Thirty-six percent of the business respondents also selected “Other,” but they did not specify the types of access barriers that they encountered. All the barriers that they cited are in Table 2.6.14.

Table 2.6.14*Barriers Encountered by Businesses to Access NDVR Services*

Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services	Business Respondents (25)	
	N	Percent
Business has not experienced any barriers to accessing NDVR services	5	20%
Business is unaware of available services through NDVR	9	36%
The types of services that NDVR can provide to support the business are limited	1	4%
The rural nature of their business makes it difficult to access NDVR services	4	16%
Unknown	1	4%
Other (not specified)	9	36%
Total *	29	-
*The N is more than 25 because respondents could indicate more than one barrier that they have encountered related to accessing NDVR services and supports. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question in this part of the survey asked respondents to share additional thoughts about how their business could be better supported to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are summarized in Table 2.6.15.

Table 2.6.15*Additional Thoughts on Accessing NDVR Services from Business Respondents*

- More information about NDVR services.
- We are open to learning new things and better our community.
- NDVR does a great job reaching out to employers.
- An initial meeting with businesses to discuss options that are provided for support.
- More education on how NDVR works.
- Since I have worked with my company since 2019, no one has come to me to inquire about using the service; I have worked with the school and special education unit on my own.
- Community outreach.
- More knowledge about NDVR services.
- Possibly conducting an on-site assessment of our work to see if it could be a site for people with disabilities.
- NDVR does a great job giving us clients when we have room for more.

NORTH DAKOTA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STAFF

This section summarizes the responses of North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation staff who completed the survey. Twenty-two surveys were completed by NDVR staff. Of these respondents, ten Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (45%) completed the survey. Three of the respondents (14%) were regional administrators and senior vocational rehabilitation counselors.

Demographics of NDVR Staff

The first part of the survey asked questions about the job titles/roles of the NDVR staff respondents. The 22 respondents from NDVR held a variety of job titles/roles including regional administrator, vocational rehabilitation counselor, office assistant, rehabilitation specialist, career assessment specialist, vision rehabilitation specialist, and senior vocational rehabilitation counselor. Many of the respondents were rehabilitation counselors (23%).

The length of time that these staff members have worked at NDVR is included in Table 2.7.1. Most of the respondents (55%) were employed at NDVR for between one and five years.

Table 2.7.1

Length of Employment of NDVR Staff Respondents

Length of Time Working at NDVR	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Less than one year	1	5%
1-5 years	12	55%
6-10 years	7	32%
11-20 years	2	9%
21 or more years	0	0%
Total	22	100%

The geographical locations, as well as the number of individuals with disabilities that their NDVR Offices support are shown in Table 2.7.2. NDVR staff from all the eight regions in North Dakota were represented in the survey responses with most of their offices supporting 51-250 consumers with disabilities (as also shown in Table 2.7.2).

Table 2.7.2

Geographic Locations and Number of Consumers Supported by NDVR

Geographic Locations of NDVR Offices	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Region I: Williston	3	14%

Region II: Minot	3	14%
Region III: Devils Lake	3	14%
Region IV: Grand Forks	1	5%
Region V: Fargo	5	23%
Region VI: Jamestown	3	14%
Region VII: Bismarck	2	9%
Region VIII: Dickinson	3	9%
Total	23	-
The N is more than 22 because some respondents may provide services and supports to individuals with disabilities in more than one region. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Number of Consumers with Disabilities Supported by NDVR Regional Offices		
1 - 15	2	9%
16 - 50	2	9%
51 - 250	16	73%
251 - 999	2	9%
1000 or more	0	0%
Total	22	100%

The disability conditions of the consumers who were supported by the 22 professionals from NDVR who responded to the survey are noted in Table 2.7.3. Among the disability conditions of the consumers supported by NDVR staff, the most common that they reported are mental health challenges, substance abuse, and physical disability (all at 95%), most significant disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, and deaf or hard of hearing (at 91% each), and developmental disability and blindness or visual impairment (both at 86%). For this question, respondents could choose more than one type of disability condition.

Table 2.7.3*Disability Conditions of Individuals Supported by NDVR*

Disability Conditions of Consumers Supported by NDVR Staff	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	20	91%
Intellectual disability	20	91%
Learning disability	20	91%
Developmental disability	19	86%
Communication disorder	15	68%
Deaf or hard of hearing	20	91%
Blindness or visually impaired	19	86%
Deaf and blind	9	41%
Mental health challenges	21	95%
History of substance abuse	21	95%
Physical disability	21	95%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	205	-
*The N is more than 22 because respondents could indicate more than one disability condition for the individuals they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The racial and ethnic groups of the consumers who are supported by the 22 staff from NDVR who responded to the survey are designated in Table 2.7.4. Of the consumers who are supported by these professionals, the majority of their racial or ethnic groups included the following: Caucasian/White (100%), African American/Black (91%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (91%).

The languages that are spoken by the consumers who are supported by the NDVR staff who responded to the survey are also shown in Table 2.7.4. The primary language of the consumers who are supported by the NDVR staff is English (100%) followed by American Sign Language at 45% and Spanish at 32%. NDVR staff could select all applicable languages spoken by their consumers on this question.

Table 2.7.4*Racial or Ethnic Groups and Languages of Consumers Supported by NDVR*

Racial or Ethnic Group of Consumers Supported by Staff from NDVR Staff	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
African American/Black	20	91%
American Indian or Alaska Native	20	91%
Asian	7	32%
Caucasian/White	22	100%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	23%
Hispanic/Latino	18	82%
Unknown	1	5%
Other	0	0%
Total *	93	-
*The N is more than 22 because respondents could indicate more than one racial or ethnic group for the individuals with disabilities they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		
Language		
English	22	100%
Spanish	7	32%
American Sign Language	10	45%
Unknown	0	0%
Other (Arabic Mandarin)	1	5%
Total *	40	-
*The N is more than 22 because respondents could indicate more than one language that is spoken by the individuals they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The NDVR staff respondents were asked to select the unserved or underserved population groups with which the consumers whom they support most commonly identify as shown in Table 2.7.5. One hundred percent of the NDVR staff respondents indicated that they supported consumers who have mental health challenges or a history of alcohol or drug abuse. Ninety-one percent of the NDVR staff respondents supported transition-age students with disabilities and consumers who are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Other unserved or underserved population groups with which their consumers most commonly identified included LGBTQIA+ and previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community (at 82% each).

Table 2.7.5*Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by NDVR*

Unserved or Underserved Population Groups of Consumers Supported by NDVR Staff	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Most significant disability	21	95%
Transition-age student with disabilities	20	91%
Racial or ethnic minority	20	91%
Immigrant/refugee	8	36%
Non-English speaker	9	41%
Transient	7	32%
Mental health challenges	22	100%
History of alcohol or drug abuse	22	100%
Veterans	14	64%
Homeless	17	77%
LGBTQIA+	18	82%
Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community	18	82%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	196	-
*The N is more than 22 because respondents could indicate more than one unserved or underserved population group with which their consumers identify. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Of the consumers who are supported by the NDVR staff who responded to the survey, there are several ways in which they were referred for services. These are highlighted in Table 2.7.6. The four most common referral sources for their NDVR consumers included a family member (100%), mental health program (95%), teacher (91%), and disability support provider (91%). For this question, NDVR staff could choose more than one applicable referral source for their consumers.

Table 2.7.6*Sources of Referral for Consumers Supported by NDVR*

Referral Sources for Consumers Supported by NDVR Staff	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Self	21	95%
Family member	22	100%
Friend	19	86%
Teacher	20	91%
Disability support provider	20	91%
Social Security Administration	6	27%
Job Service	18	82%
Mental health program	21	95%
Healthcare professional	19	86%
Staff member at a college or vocational training program	13	59%
Parole officer or other court official	12	55%
Unknown	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total *	191	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one referral source for the consumers they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The next survey question asked about the types of services that the NDVR staff respondents provided to their consumers. Among the types of services that NDVR staff provided, the most common were assisting their consumers to find a job that matched their interests and strengths (91%), providing training on writing a resume, applying, and interviewing for a job (91%), and connecting their consumers to assistive technology (86%). For this question, the respondents could choose all of the applicable types of services that they provide from the list. Responses to this question are compiled in Table 2.7.7.

Of the services that they provided, the NDVR staff respondents believed that 1) identifying strengths and matching skills and interests with employment, 2) addressing substance use, mental health, and general health issues, and 3) assisting with finding reliable transportation were among the most important for helping their consumers to get and keep the job that they want.

Table 2.7.7*Types of Services Provided to Consumers by NDVR*

Types of Service Provided	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Assisting to find a job that matches interests and strengths	20	91%
Helping to get more education	19	86%
Assessing strengths and interests	20	91%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	20	91%
Job skills training	17	77%
Job coaching	13	59%
Connecting to natural supports	16	73%
Accommodations	17	77%
Assistive technology	19	86%
Training on communication skills	16	73%
Providing a language translator	13	59%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	18	82%
Support for mental health challenges	13	59%
Support for substance abuse issues	12	55%
Support for health issues	12	55%
Transportation assistance	17	77%
Childcare for their own children	9	41%
Benefits planning	13	59%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	15	68%
Unknown (not yet receiving services, have not been able to get NDVR involved in the transition process)	1	5%
Other (workplace adaptations/technology)	1	5%
Total *	301	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one type of service that they provide to the consumers they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Conversely, NDVR staff respondents also indicated all of the types of services that they do *not* provide to their consumers as listed in Table 2.7.8. The five main types of services that NDVR staff respondents did not provide to their consumers were childcare (50%), support for mental health challenges or substance abuse issues (32% each), support for health issues (27%), and job coaching (27%),

Table 2.7.8*Types of Services Not Provided to Consumers by NDVR*

Types of Service Not Provided	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Assisting to find a job that matches interests and strengths	3	17%
Helping to get more education	3	17%
Assessing strengths and interests	2	9%
Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	3	17%
Job skills training	5	23%
Job coaching	6	27%
Connecting to natural supports	2	9%
Accommodations	2	9%
Assistive technology	4	18%
Training on communication skills	2	9%
Providing a language translator	5	23%
Training on social/interpersonal skills	4	18%
Support for mental health challenges	7	32%
Support for substance abuse issues	7	32%
Support for health issues	6	27%
Transportation assistance	4	18%
Childcare for their own children	11	50%
Benefits planning	7	32%
Teaching employers about benefits of hiring people with disabilities	4	18%
Unknown	3	17%
Other (Not applicable because all are provided)	6	27%
Total *	96	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one type of service that they do <i>not</i> provide to the consumers they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Related to the services that the NDVR staff provided, the next question asked the respondents to indicate how frequently they believed they are meeting the employment needs of the consumers they support based on their experience. Responses to this question are reported in Table 2.7.9. Most respondents (86%) indicated that they meet the needs of their consumers some of the time.

Table 2.7.9*Frequency of Meeting the Employment Needs of People with Disabilities*

Frequency of Meeting Employment Needs of Consumers with Disabilities	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
All of the time	0	0%
Some of the time	19	86%
None of the time	0	0%
Unknown	3	14%
Total	22	100%

The next question in the survey asked the NDVR staff about the most common barriers that their consumers with disabilities encountered related to getting and keeping the job that they want. The NDVR staff respondents indicated that not having a job coach (73%) is the primary barrier that is faced by their consumers. This is followed closely by barriers such as lack of transportation (68%) and mental health challenges (64%). Table 2.7.10 records the responses of the NDVR staff regarding all the barriers that they believed their consumers encounter when they are trying to get and keep a job that they want.

Table 2.7.10*Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job*

Barriers Encountered by NDVR Consumers to Getting and Keeping a Job	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths	5	23%
Not having enough education	7	32%
Not knowing their strengths and interests	2	9%
Not enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job	3	14%
Not having the right job skills	11	50%
Not having a job coach	16	73%
Not having natural supports	13	59%
Not having necessary accommodations	6	27%
Not having necessary assistive technology	2	9%
Not having good communication skills	3	14%
Not having a language translator	4	18%
Not having good social/interpersonal skills	10	45%
Mental health challenges	14	64%
Substance abuse issues	12	55%
Health issues	8	36%
Lack of transportation	15	68%

Lack of childcare	7	32%
Lack of benefits planning	5	23%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with disabilities	12	55%
Unknown	2	9%
Other (lack of housing; too many hoops; not enough client-facing time)	2	9%
Total *	159	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one barrier that is encountered by the consumers they support. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Staff from NDVR noted barriers encountered by individuals with disabilities who also identify as being a member of an unserved or underserved group of people. For each of these groups, the three barriers that the NDVR staff respondents believed to be most common are shown in Table 2.7.11.

Table 2.7.11

Barriers to Getting and Keeping a Job for Members of Unserved or Underserved Population Groups Supported by NDVR

Barriers to Getting and Keeping Jobs	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities		
Lack of job coaches	17	77%
Lack of transportation	15	68%
Mental health challenges	14	64%
Transition-Age Youth (ages 14-21)		
Lack of transportation	14	64%
Limited social/interpersonal skills	12	55%
Inadequate job skills/Mental health challenges	9	41%
Members of Racial or Ethnic Minorities		
Lack of transportation	13	59%
Mental health challenges	11	50%
Lack of education	9	41%
Immigrants/Refugees		
Not applicable (not currently supporting immigrants/refugees)	9	41%
Lack of education; language barriers	6	27%
Lack of transportation	5	23%
Non-English Speakers		
Language barriers	11	50%
Lack of transportation	8	36%
Lack of education; Not applicable (not currently supporting non-English speakers)	6	27%

Transient		
Not applicable (not currently supporting individuals who are transient)	9	41%
Lack of transportation	8	36%
Mental health challenges	6	27%
Individuals Who Struggle with Mental Health Challenges		
Mental health challenges	16	73%
Lack of transportation	13	59%
Limited social/interpersonal skills	11	50%
Individuals Who Have a History of Alcohol or Drug Abuse		
Substance abuse issues; lack of transportation	14	64%
Mental health challenges	11	50%
Employers' concerns about hiring people with substance abuse issues	10	45%
Veterans		
Not applicable (not currently supporting individuals who are veterans)	7	32%
Not enough jobs that match their interests/strengths; mental health challenges; lack of transportation	6	27%
Lack of natural supports; Substance abuse issues	5	23%
Homeless		
Lack of transportation	15	68%
Mental health challenges; Substance abuse issues	10	45%
Lack of natural supports; health issues that are not being addressed	9	41%
Individuals Who Identify as LGBTQIA+		
Mental health challenges	11	50%
Substance abuse issues	8	36%
Employers' concerns about hiring people who identify as LGBTQIA+; Lack of transportation	6	27%
Individuals Who Were Previously Incarcerated or Are Transitioning Back into Their Community		
Lack of transportation	14	64%
Employers' concerns about hiring people who were previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community	13	59%
Mental health challenges	10	45%

To better support their consumers with disabilities (including those who also identify as being a member of an unserved or underserved population group) to overcome the employment barriers that they experienced, NDVR staff indicated a variety of changes that would need to occur. The top three changes that the NDVR staff respondents believe would be necessary include 1) more effective community-based service providers (73%); 2) smaller caseloads (45%); and 3) improved business partnerships (36%). All responses to this question are recorded in Table 2.7.12.

Table 2.7.12*Necessary Changes to Enable NDVR to Better Support Consumers with Disabilities*

Changes Required to Better Support Consumers' Employment Needs	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Smaller caseloads	10	45%
More streamlined processes	7	32%
Better assessment tools	3	14%
Better data management tools	2	9%
Additional training	5	23%
More administrative support	6	27%
More supervisor support	3	14%
Improved business partnerships	8	36%
Decreased procurement time	3	14%
More effective community-based providers	16	73%
Increased outreach to consumers	5	23%
Increased options for virtual technology for meetings and trainings	4	18%
Unknown	2	9%
Other (technology on cell phone to assist with dictation to a centralized location, more job readiness programs)	2	9%
Total *	76	-
* The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one change to better support their consumers' employment needs. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question in this part of the survey asked respondents to share additional thoughts about NDVR's services and supports. Their responses are summarized in Table 2.7.13.

Table 2.7.13*Additional Thoughts About NDVR Services and Supports*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having more educational training in mental health and addiction, smaller case load to use more effective counseling skills, having caseloads with more specialized professionals (e.g., transition counselor, mental health counselor, substance abuse counselor, physical disabilities counselor, and supported employment counselors). • Having counselors more specialized in just 1 area and not spread so thin. For example, transition counselors, mental health counselors, substance abuse counselors, incarceration counselors, etc. The counselors are spread too thin to do business contacts and meetings, marketing, assessments, being a counselor, billing and authorizations, job searching, resumes, counseling and guidance, staff meetings, projects, going to IEP's, meeting with students, etc. More staff are needed and to be more specialized to be able to do more counseling to support the clients and help to get them ready for employment.

- Every individual is different. Sometimes it's hard to help them with LMI when they feel pressure. Employment goals are important, and we need to get this right. If there is a huge time crunch, it is difficult for some of the individuals we serve.
- Many consumers do not have natural supports nearby, so connections are important. It would be nice to have an ongoing course for people to attend that covers soft skills training, and also works on resumes and interviewing skills. Clients have multiple issues and have a lot of needs so having a lower caseload number would be very helpful.
- Additional mental health supports in the community with short or immediate openings, access to housing in which they can be approved for, more time from counselors to have meeting when help is needed.
- Our area has no taxis, limited bus service, limited Uber/Lyft service and most clients who need to use Uber/Lyft don't have a credit card to set up an account. They can't get to work to get/keep a job. Many areas do not have CRPs or the CRPs that exist aren't taking new clients, and/or aren't effectively serving the clients they do have. We need more transportation options and even in-house job coaching options would be great.
- I could provide better support by having smaller caseloads so we can complete the monthly contacts, follow-up with clients/employers/etc., community outreach, business contacts, etc. This would especially help those who have rural caseloads and spend time on the road as well.
- Not so heavy detailed on paperwork.
- Having equality in all regions such as business service specialists, assessment specialists, and VRS's.
- I feel that with higher caseloads we are being asked to increase tracking tasks and are getting measured on areas that continue to reduce bandwidth. I would like to see more AI for creating standardized authorizations. Additionally, to continue to support individuals, I believe that counselors should continue to complete intakes as it is the best opportunity to build rapport for future support and services. Furthermore, I think we need to be able to start exploring ways to support individuals and our providers, especially in the needs of employees and the workforce are evolving and we are seeing a higher number of transient workers.
- When actively job seeking, needs come up quickly/changes happen rapidly, and counselors need to be able to be responsive to these. With larger caseloads and increased deadlines/data requirements/redundant processes and less autonomy for counselor caseload management, it is difficult to be as responsive to these needs. Meaningful services also take much more time than is recognized and it is difficult to be efficient with both the client-facing services and the current requirements of our processes and systems.
- Transportation; less restrictive payment methods.
- Most of my client base is the over 55 Population who have vision related issues and other health issues. Services have shifted to more web based and technology-based methods of accessing services. With an average client age of 82 who do not have internet access and only a landline phone system. It is important to remember that this population relies on individualized, in-person support to access services. Especially with the clients who have limited natural supports and may be socially isolated.
- Every individual is different. Sometimes it's hard to help them with LMI when they feel pressure. Employment goals are important, and we need to get this right. If there is a huge time crunch, it is difficult for some of the individuals we serve.

- I would like more time to engage in the community, advocate, have more client-facing time, and less paperwork. I want tools and processes to help VRCs have time to do the same. We need a better developed SCSEP program and more engagement with businesses.
- The additional needs of the client need to be addressed before the client is ready to obtain employment, and it is necessary for them to keep their employment. Community-based services such as reliable and affordable transportation, mental health/physical health services, public access libraries, and CRPs need to be more available for clients to be successful.

Access to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Supports

The final part of the survey included questions related to the *accessibility* of NDVR services and supports for consumers with disabilities.

Many of the NDVR staff respondents (37%) met their consumers with disabilities at a NDVR Office. Other meeting locations included at their school (30%), somewhere in the community (25%), or an alternative location (9%) such as a restaurant, coffee shop, in their home, apartment, or assistive living facility. As part of the alternative ways in which connections are made, one NDVR staff respondent met with consumers via a phone or meeting over the Internet due to lack of transportation.

Related to the barriers that their consumers experienced when trying to *access* NDVR services, NDVR staff respondents delineated those listed in Table 2.7.14. The most common barriers that the NDVR staff respondents believed their consumers encountered when trying to *access* NDVR services included 1) lack of transportation to NDVR meetings and trainings (91%), lack of information about available services through NDVR (64%), and lack of childcare and support to attend NDVR meetings and trainings (at 41% each).

Table 2.7.14

Barriers to Accessing NDVR Services Experienced by Consumers

Consumers' Barriers to <i>Accessing</i> NDVR Services	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
No barriers are experienced	0	0%
Lack of information about NDVR's available services	14	64%
Application for NDVR services is difficult to complete	1	5%
NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that they can't attend	4	18%
NDVR staff is unable to meet with consumers in the community	1	5%
The NDVR office where they meet is not accessible	1	5%
Lack of transportation to meetings and trainings	20	91%
Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings	9	41%
Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings	9	41%

Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings	1	5%
No translator to provide information in their primary language	3	14%
Difficulties completing their individualized plan for employment	6	27%
Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	3	14%
Unknown	1	5%
Other (Consumers are already working; not enough time for NDVR staff to meet with consumers)	5	23%
Total *	78	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one barrier that their consumers experience when trying to access NDVR services. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

Related to access barriers, the next questions asked NDVR staff about the barriers that are encountered by individuals with disabilities who also identified as a member of an unserved or underserved population group (compared to consumers with disabilities who do not also identify as a member of one of the unserved or underserved population groups). For this question, most of the NDVR staff respondents (45%) believed that members of unserved or underserved population groups experience the same barriers plus additional ones as consumers with disabilities who do not identify as being a member of one of these groups. Responses for this question are shown in Table 2.7.15.

Table 2.7.15

Access Barriers Encountered by Consumers with Disabilities in Unserved/Underserved Population Groups

Access Barriers Encountered by Consumers with Disabilities Who Are Also Members of Unserved/Underserved Population Groups	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
The same barriers are encountered	7	32%
The same plus additional barriers are encountered	10	45%
Completely different barriers are encountered	0	0%
Unknown	5	23%
Total	22	100%

The NDVR staff identified the types of additional access barriers faced by individuals who are from one or more of the unserved/underserved population when they are trying to access NDVR services to meet their employment needs. These are highlighted in Table 2.7.16.

Table 2.7.16*Types of Additional Access Barriers Encountered by Consumers in Unserved/Underserved Population Groups*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of motivation and interest to access services. • Mental health and substance abuse issues often hinder people in these groups from accessing services. • “They don’t know what they don’t know.” They may not understand what NDVR can offer, what they need, how the systems work together, how NDVR is different from Job Service of the Human Service Center, etc. • They may not be able to afford to take off of work to come to an NDVR office or have the gas to get to the office of intake appointment. • Lack of understanding of how to build supports within the community (i.e., SNAP, housing, etc.) • Criminal histories. • Too high of income to qualify for services but unable to afford the rising cost of living; A lot of consumers do not have access to budgeting to help them learn skills for long-term maintenance. • Language barriers. • Lack of mental health care.

To help consumers overcome these access barriers, the NDVR staff respondents noted several types of supports that would be necessary. These are displayed in Table 2.7.17. The three most helpful supports that were identified by the NDVR respondents for their consumers to overcome access barriers included 1) transportation to NDVR meetings and trainings (86%); 2) information about NDVR’s available services (77%), and 3) support to attend NDVR trainings and meetings (55%).

Table 2.7.17*Supports to Overcome Access Barriers*

Supports to Overcome Access Barriers	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Information about NDVR’s available services	17	77%
Assistance to complete application for NDVR services	11	50%
Scheduling meetings and trainings at a time or place that consumers can attend	9	41%
NDVR staff meeting with consumers in the community	10	45%
Accessible NDVR offices for meetings and trainings	8	36%
Transportation to meetings and trainings	19	86%
Childcare to attend meetings and trainings	7	32%
Support to attend meetings and trainings	12	55%
Accommodations during meetings and trainings	4	18%

Translator to provide information in their primary language	4	18%
Assistance to complete individualized plan for employment	10	45%
Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually	11	50%
Unknown	2	10%
Other (better mental health services and case management; braiding of services)	1	5%
Total *	125	-
*The N is more than 22 because NDVR staff respondents could indicate more than one barrier that their consumers experience when trying to access NDVR services. For the same reason, the percentage totals more than 100.		

The final open-ended question on this part of the survey asked NDVR staff respondents to share their additional thoughts about how their consumers could be better supported to *access* NDVR services. Their responses are captured in Table 2.7.18.

Table 2.7.18

Additional Thoughts on Supporting NDVR Consumers to Access NDVR Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More education about NDVR services compared to the services offered by other community programs. • More counseling to get individuals with disabilities ready for work. • More transportation needs to be available both through CRPs and for clients who don't need CRPs. • Transportation is the number one thing that our clients struggle with; our outlying communities don't have public transit that will pick them up and bring them to appointments. In some communities, finding a place to meet that is comfortable for the client and VR counselor can be a challenge. • More mental health support in the community and options for affordable housing. • Knowing which employers hire individuals with criminal records. • Due to the increasing barriers and/or lack of resources in communities, there needs to be a bigger focus on looping in employers willing to work with our consumers who have limited to no access to supports to help them find and keep a job. Increasing caseloads with individuals with lists of barriers continues to create frustration for consumers, other resource providers, and negatively impacting the ability to grow as a support/accommodation for those who want to live and work in their communities. • Our services are difficult to understand, especially when collaborating with other agencies. It is hard for consumers to know what is available and understand our basic functions and operations. • Easier payment system. • Since my position is a VRS, I would have to say one of the biggest issues is to have face-to-face in-person contact with the client in their living environment. There are some who have Internet and cell phones, however, there is a larger portion who do not use or have access to technology and individualized in-person contact is the only form of contact to be used. • More job coaches, community providers, easier online telehealth options for clients.
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- Transportation and time are the biggest access barriers.
- Awareness of what is expected of all parties is crucial. Services could be listed in orientation/intake information and given to clients at first meeting to avoid unrealistic expectations.
- There needs to be better education given to the social services/community partners/schools that refer clients.

The last part of the survey that was completed by NDVR staff respondents asked questions about the pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) that were provided by schools in the regions that they served. For each of the categories of pre-employment transition services, the NDVR staff respondents believed that they were being provided by either school, district, or special education staff, or by members of the NDVR staff. Their responses to this series of questions are reported in Table 2.7.19.

Table 2.7.19

Pre-Employment Transition Services Provided by Schools in the NDVR Respondents' Regions

Job Exploration Counseling	NDVR Staff Respondents (22)	
	N	Percent
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	17	77%
Provided through an online or electronic application	8	36%
Provided by NDVR staff	17	77%
This is not offered	0	0%
Unknown	2	9%
Total *	44	-
Work-Based Learning Experiences		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	19	86%
Provided through an online or electronic application	5	23%
Provided by NDVR staff	15	68%
This is not offered	0	0%
Unknown	2	9%
Total *	41	-
Workplace Readiness Training		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	18	82%
Provided through an online or electronic application	3	14%
Provided by NDVR staff	17	77%
This is not offered	0	0%
Unknown	3	14%
Total *	41	-
Counseling for Enrollment in a Postsecondary Education Program		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	18	82%
Provided through an online or electronic application	5	23%
Provided by NDVR staff	17	77%

This is not offered	0	0%
Unknown	3	14%
Total *	43	-
Instruction in Self-Advocacy		
Provided by school, district, or special education staff	16	73%
Provided through an online or electronic application	3	14%
Provided by NDVR staff	18	82%
This is not offered	0	0%
Unknown	3	14%
Total *	40	-
* For each question in this series, the N is more than 22 because some NDVR staff respondents support more than one school in their districts and some of their consumers may be receiving Pre-ETS services in more than one way. For the same reason, the percentages also total more than 100.		

SECTION THREE: FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

A total of four focus group sessions, each with in-person and virtual options, were conducted by the NDCPD Project team on Monday, October 23, and Monday, October 30, 2023, in Fargo, Bismarck, and Minot. While 51 participants expressed interest in and registered to attend these focus group sessions, only 8 participants attended.

Monday, October 23, 2023, at 2:00 PM CST – On-Site in Fargo and Virtual

According to participants, people with disabilities in North Dakota face several barriers when trying to access services from NDVR, including “bogus paperwork,” bureaucracy, long wait times, and misconceptions. Suggestions for improvement include partnering with disability groups to better understand the lived experiences of individuals with disabilities. Focus group participants also suggested NDVR staff getting to know individuals more on a one-to-one basis and assessing their needs in order to expand service options.

Monday, October 23, 2023, at 7:00 PM CST – On-Site in Fargo and Virtual

No participants were in attendance either on-site or virtually for this focus group session.

Monday, October 30, 2023, at 2:00 PM CST – On-Site in Bismarck/Minot and Virtual

Overall, the feedback from this focus group provided insights into the challenges faced by people with disabilities in finding and maintaining employment, as well as the ways in which NDVR can better support them. The challenges mentioned included the barriers to accessing services, difficulty in getting and keeping jobs, lack of support for transition-age youth, and additional challenges faced by people with significant disabilities. Some ideas for solutions included improving access to services, providing more support for transition-age youth, and developing

specialized services for people with significant disabilities. Participants in this focus group also suggested that NDVR could improve its outreach efforts to members of unserved and underserved populations, provide more training and education opportunities, and work more closely with employers to create job opportunities for people with disabilities.

Monday, October 30, 2023, at 7:00 PM CST – On-Site in Bismarck/Minot and Virtual

Participants from this focus group identified several challenges that people with disabilities in North Dakota face when trying to get and keep jobs. These challenges include access issues, such as the distance to NDVR agencies in rural areas, as well as barriers related to disability, such as discrimination and lack of accommodations. Participants also discussed the challenges faced by unserved or underserved population groups, such as people from rural areas, diverse racial or ethnic groups, homeless individuals, veterans, and those with mental health or substance abuse challenges. These groups may face additional barriers to employment, such as lack of transportation or training opportunities. Overall, it was suggested that there is a need for more tailored services and supports to help individuals with disabilities overcome these challenges and achieve their employment goals.

Recurring Themes Across Focus Group Sessions

According to the results of our focus groups, the participants noted that people with disabilities in North Dakota face several barriers when trying to get and keep the jobs they want. Some of these barriers include:

- Lack of awareness: Many individuals with disabilities and their families are not aware of the services and programs available to support them in finding employment.
- Limited job opportunities/job matching: Some individuals may struggle to find job opportunities that align with their interests and strengths. They may be placed in open positions that do not match their skills or preferences.
- Transportation challenges: Accessible transportation options may be limited, making it difficult for individuals with disabilities to get to and from work.
- Lack of follow-through: Some individuals may experience a lack of follow-through from support services, leading to unfulfilled promises and inadequate support.

It is important to note that these barriers may vary depending on the region and the attitudes of program administrators and state directors.

Overall, experiences with NDVR have been relatively good. Participants reported NDVR works well with students, parents, and guardians. But there is room for improvement in communication and perceived treatment of different disabilities. Participants indicated that the job developers for CRPs are not adequately trained to effectively “sell” individuals to employers. Participants reiterated that the focus of services and supports from NDVR should be on finding jobs that align with consumers’ interests and strengths.

SECTION FOUR: DISCUSSION OF ASSESSMENT QUESTION FINDINGS

In addition to the information that was collected on the individual surveys and in the focus group sessions, data related to each of the following research questions were also gathered through the NDVR assessment. Results related to the overall performance of NDVR are presented in Section Five.

- 4.1 What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?*
- 4.2 What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of minorities and those who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program?*
- 4.3 What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?*
- 4.4 What is the need for pre-transition and transition services for youth with disabilities?*
- 4.5 What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state?*

4.1 Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities

Until relatively recently, our society did not believe that individuals with the most significant disabilities could be employed. These individuals often faced various barriers related to getting and keeping a job they wanted. Individuals with the most significant disabilities benefit from supported employment models that meet their employment needs.

Section 4.1 includes results from an assessment of the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment, as expressed by the survey respondents and focus group participants.

Professionals were asked, for individuals **with the most significant disabilities** (e.g., a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work), what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? Responses from this question are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1*Most Common Barriers for Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities*

Most Common Barriers - Most Significant Disabilities	CRPs (4)		Partner Agencies (55)		NDVR Staff (22)		TOTALS	
	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*
Not enough jobs that match their strengths and interests	0	0%	17	31%	6	27%	23	28%
Lack of education	0	0%	11	20%	5	23%	16	20%
Interests and strengths have not been identified	1	25%	15	27%	0	0%	16	20%
Lack of training to develop (alternative) resume options, apply, and/or interview for a job	0	0%	8	15%	4	18%	12	15%
Inadequate skills for a job	2	50%	27	49%	9	41%	38	47%
Lack of job coaches	1	25%	18	33%	17	77%	36	44%
Lack of natural supports	0	0%	18	33%	11	50%	29	36%
Lack of accommodations	0	0%	19	35%	8	36%	27	33%
Lack of assistive technology	0	0%	13	24%	2	9%	15	19%
Limited communication skills	0	0%	19	35%	3	14%	22	27%
Language barriers	0	0%	8	15%	2	9%	10	12%
Limited social/interpersonal skills	0	0%	21	38%	12	55%	33	41%
Mental health challenges	--	--	17	31%	14	64%	31	40%
Substance abuse issues	--	--	7	13%	12	55%	19	25%
Health issues that are not being addressed	2	50%	7	13%	7	32%	16	20%
Lack of transportation to the workplace	2	50%	22	40%	15	68%	39	48%
Lack of childcare	1	25%	6	11%	5	23%	12	15%
Concerns about impact of a job on benefits	0	0%	10	18%	5	23%	15	19%
Employers' concerns about hiring and	2	50%	16	29%	10	45%	28	35%

supporting individuals with disabilities								
I don't know	1	25%	13	24%	1	5%	15	19%
Not Applicable	--	--	2	4%	1	5%	3	4%
Other	--	--	3	5%	1	5%	4	5%
*Most common barrier percentages for individuals with the most significant disabilities total more than 100% as respondents reported multiple most common barriers.								

Assessment Question #1: What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?

The three most common barriers for individuals with the most significant disabilities were reported as:

- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Inadequate skills for the job
- Lack of job coaches

According to this comprehensive needs assessment, individuals with the most significant disabilities need transportation to the workplace, increased training to teach job skills, and more job coaches.

Recurring Themes Across Survey and Focus Group Results for Assessment Question #1

Using information from both data collection methods, the following themes were identified related to the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment.

- Supported employment is crucial to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities; NDVR excels in providing services for supported employment.
- The quality of employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities needs to improve overall.
- Regarding customized employment, training has occurred for NDVR staff, but it has not yet been sustainable.
- The employment barriers that were most frequently cited for individuals with the most significant disabilities were transportation to the workplace, training to teach job skills, and job coaches.

4.2 Individuals from Racial/Ethnic Minorities and Other Unserved/Underserved Population Groups

Some individuals with disabilities also identify as a member of a racial/ethnic minority or other group that has been traditionally unserved or underserved (e.g., those who are immigrants or refugees, who are non-English speakers, who are transient [e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.], who struggle with mental health challenges, who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse, who are veterans, who are homeless, who identify as LGBTQIA+, or who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community). Members of these groups may face different or additional barriers to employment than those individuals with disabilities who do not also identify with one of these other population groups.

Section 4.2 includes results from an assessment of the needs of individuals who also identify as being a member of a racial/ethnic minority or other traditionally unserved/underserved population group.

Professionals were asked about the most common barriers for individuals who are from racial or ethnic minorities and those who have been traditionally unserved or underserved to get and keep the job that they want. Responses from this question are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Most Common Barriers for Individuals from Racial or Ethnic Minorities and Unserved or Underserved Population Groups

Most Common Barriers – Racial or Ethnic Minorities and Unserved or Underserved	CRPs (4)		Partner Agencies (55)		NDVR Staff (22)		TOTALS	
	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*
Not enough jobs that match their strengths and interests	6	15%	70	13%	35	16%	111	14%
Lack of education	6	15%	80	15%	55	25%	141	17%
Interests and strengths have not been identified	6	15%	79	14%	18	8%	103	13%
Lack of training to develop (alternative) resume options, apply, and/or interview for a job	6	15%	90	16%	37	17%	133	16%
Inadequate skills for a job	8	20%	84	15%	50	23%	142	18%
Lack of job coaches	10	25%	94	17%	30	14%	134	17%

Lack of natural supports	10	25%	143	26%	65	30%	218	27%
Lack of accommodations	12	30%	98	18%	30	14%	140	17%
Lack of assistive technology	6	15%	53	10%	17	8%	76	9%
Limited communication skills	6	15%	79	14%	27	12%	112	14%
Language barriers	6	15%	87	16%	39	18%	132	16%
Limited social/interpersonal skills	7	18%	87	16%	57	26%	151	19%
Mental health challenges	--	--	160	29%	91	41%	251	33%
Substance abuse issues	--	--	114	21%	69	31%	183	24%
Health issues that are not being addressed	11	28%	107	19%	41	19%	159	20%
Lack of transportation to the workplace	12	30%	154	28%	99	45%	265	33%
Lack of childcare	6	15%	89	16%	22	10%	117	14%
Concerns about impact of a job on benefits	8	20%	64	12%	16	7%	88	11%
Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities	10	25%	123	22%	55	25%	188	23%
I don't know	9	23%	153	28%	28	13%	190	23%
Not Applicable	14	35%	93	17%	44	20%	151	19%
Other	2	5%	26	5%	11	5%	39	5%
*Most common barriers percentages for minorities and those who have been unserved or underserved total more than 100% as respondents reported multiple most common barriers.								

Assessment Question #2: What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of minorities and those who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program?

The three most common barriers for minorities and those who have traditionally been unserved or underserved were reported as:

- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Mental health challenges
- Lack of natural supports

According to this comprehensive needs assessment, minorities and those who have traditionally been unserved or underserved need transportation to the workplace, increased mental health supports, and connections to natural supports.

Recurring Themes Across Survey and Focus Group Results for Assessment Question #2

The following themes emerged from both data collection methods regarding the needs of individuals from racial/ethnic minorities and other traditionally unserved/underserved population groups.

- The groups that were most reported as potentially unserved or underserved include those who are racial or ethnic minorities, those who struggle with mental health challenges, and those who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Individuals with disabilities who also identify as being a member of a traditionally unserved or underserved population group may face limited access to NDVR services and supports, especially if they live in a rural area of the state. Many partner agencies indicated that they were unaware of the most common barriers of this population, while NDVR staff reported lack of education as a common barrier.
- The employment barriers that were most frequently cited for individuals from racial/ethnic minorities and other traditionally unserved/underserved population groups were transportation to the workplace, mental health supports, and natural supports.

4.3 Individuals with Disabilities Served Through Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Development Systems

In addition to NDVR, some individuals with disabilities also receive services from other components of North Dakota's statewide workforce development system (e.g., Job Service North Dakota).

Section 4.3 includes results from an assessment of the needs of individuals served through other components of ND's statewide workforce development system. The information in this section refers to NDVR's workforce development partners.

Assessment Question #3: What are the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?

According to this comprehensive needs assessment, Table 4.3.1 shows that 35% of consumer respondents did not know how they were referred to NDVR. 4% indicated they were referred through Job Service. In comparison, 82% of VR staff indicated they have consumers referred by Job Service (as shown in Table 4.3.2).

Table 4.3.1*Consumer Referred to NDVR*

Referred to NDVR	Consumers (26)	
	N	Percent
I referred myself	4	15%
Someone in my family	0	0%
A friend	0	0%
A teacher	1	4%
A disability support provider	2	8%
The Social Security Administration	0	0%
Job Service	1	4%
A mental health program	0	0%
A healthcare professional	0	0%
A staff member at a college or vocational training program	3	12%
My parole officer or other court official	0	0%
I don't know	9	35%
Other	6	23%

Table 4.3.2*VR Staff Referred to NDVR*

Referred to NDVR	VR Staff (22)	
	N	Percent*
They referred themselves	21	95%
Someone in their family	22	100%
A friend	19	86%
A teacher	20	91%
A disability support provider	20	91%
The Social Security Administration	6	27%
Job Service	18	82%
A mental health program	21	95%
A healthcare professional	19	86%
A staff member at a college or vocational training program	13	59%
My parole officer or other court official	12	55%
They didn't know	0	0%
Other	0	0%

Based on the limited connection that consumers make to other components of the statewide workforce investment system with the services provided by NDVR, there is insufficient data to determine the needs of individuals with disabilities served through this system. It is likely that increased awareness and education is required to identify and highlight these partnerships. By increasing awareness and improving collaboration, NDVR can help ensure that individuals with

disabilities receive seamless and coordinated supports, as they pursue employment and career goals.

Recurring Themes Across Survey and Focus Group Results for Assessment Question #3

The following themes were identified from the two data collection methods related to the needs of individuals served through other components of statewide workforce development systems.

- Overall, NDVR's collaboration with the North Dakota Workforce Development System is seen as positive, but increased awareness is necessary.
- There is some variability related to the level of local partnerships between NDVR and Job Service North Dakota.

4.4 Transition-Age Youth/Students

Since the Rehabilitation Act under WIOA was reauthorized in 2014, there has been a greater emphasis on providing employment services to youth/students who are transition-age, including their need for pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS).

Section 4.4 includes results from an assessment of the needs of transition-age youth/students (ages 14-21), including their need for pre-employment services.

Professionals were asked about the most common barriers for transition-age youth/students (ages 14-21) with disabilities to get and keep the job that they want. Their responses are captured in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Most Common Employment Barriers for Transition-Age Youth/Students (ages 14-21)

Most Common Barriers - Transition-Age Youth/Students (ages 14-21)	CRPs (4)		Partner Agencies (56)		Transition Teachers (45)		NDVR Staff (22)		TOTALS	
	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*	N	Percent*
Not enough jobs that match their strengths and interests	0	0%	10	18%	15	33%	5	23%	30	24%
Lack of education	1	25%	11	20%	8	18%	3	14%	23	18%
Interests and strengths have not been identified	1	25%	18	32%	9	20%	4	18%	32	25%

Lack of training to develop (alternative) resume options, apply, and/or interview for a job	0	0%	10	18%	6	13%	5	23%	21	17%
Inadequate skills for a job	0	0%	20	36%	21	47%	9	41%	50	39%
Lack of job coaches	1	25%	17	30%	22	49%	8	36%	48	38%
Lack of natural supports	0	0%	14	25%	18	40%	6	27%	38	30%
Lack of accommodations	1	25%	13	23%	9	20%	3	14%	26	20%
Lack of assistive technology	1	25%	7	24%	4	9%	2	9%	14	11%
Limited communication skills	0	0%	8	13%	14	31%	4	18%	26	20%
Language barriers	0	0%	3	5%	2	4%	0	0%	5	4%
Limited social or interpersonal skills	1	25%	14	25%	27	60%	12	55%	54	43%
Mental health challenges	--	--	15	27%	27	60%	9	41%	51	41%
Substance abuse issues	--	--	3	5%	9	20%	1	5%	13	11%
Health issues that are not being addressed	1	25%	6	11%	3	7%	1	5%	11	9%
Lack of transportation to the workplace	2	50%	16	29%	25	56%	14	64%	57	45%
Lack of childcare	0	0%	1	2%	3	7%	0	0%	4	3%
Concerns about impact of a job on benefits	0	0%	4	7%	6	13%	0	0%	10	8%
Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities	0	0%	11	20%	19	42%	5	23%	35	28%
I don't know	0	0%	14	25%	2	4%	1	5%	17	13%

Not Applicable	1	25%	10	18%	--	--	2	9%	1 3	16%
Other	1	25%	4	7%	1	2%	0	0%	6	5%
*Most common barriers percentages for transition-age youth (ages 14-21) with disabilities total more than 100% as respondents reported multiple most common barriers.										

Assessment Question #4: What is the need for pre-transition and transition services of youth/students with disabilities?

The three most common employment barriers for transition-age youth/students (ages 14-21) with disabilities, were reported as:

- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges

According to this comprehensive needs assessment, transition-age youth/students (ages 14-21) with disabilities need transportation to the workplace, increased training to teach social and interpersonal skills, and increased mental health supports.

Recurring Themes Across Survey and Focus Group Results for Assessment Question #4

The following themes were identified related to the needs of transition-age youth/students, including their need for Pre-ETS.

- Overall, pre-employment services for transition-age youth/students are being provided by NDVR or school staff across the state, including in some rural school districts, for job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and opportunities for postsecondary programs.
- Unfortunately, some parents of transition-age youth/students are unaware of the pre-employment services and supports that their sons and daughters are receiving.
- NDVR staff and teacher turnover, along with geographic distances between rural communities in ND, create challenges in providing individualized support and maintaining consistent contact with transition-age youth/students.

4.5 Community Rehabilitation Programs

Sometimes NDVR contracts with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). NDVR authorizes CRPs to provide employment services for individuals with disabilities in ND. Because of North Dakota's rural nature, the purchase of services through authorized CRPs may be challenging in many parts of the State.

Section 4.5 includes results from an assessment of the needs of CRPs to establish, develop, or improve CRPs that serve individuals with disabilities in ND.

Assessment Question #5: What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state?

Based on the limited survey response from community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), there is insufficient data to determine the need to develop or improve these programs from the CRPs themselves. However, according to NDVR staff, 73% of respondents indicated that more effective community-based service providers would enable them to better support their consumers as depicted in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Changes to Better Support NDVR Consumers

Changes to Better Support NDVR Consumers	NDVR Staff (22)	
	N	Percent*
Smaller caseloads	10	45%
More streamlined processes	7	32%
Better assessment tools	3	14%
Better data management tools	2	9%
Additional training	5	23%
More administrative support	6	27%
More supervisor support	3	14%
Improved business partnerships	8	36%
Decreased procurement time	3	14%
More effective community-based service providers	16	73%
Increased outreach to consumers in their communities	5	23%
Increased options for virtual technology for meetings and trainings with consumers	4	18%
I don't know	2	9%
Other	2	9%
*Changes to better support NDVR consumers total more than 100% as respondents reported multiple changes.		

Related to established CRPs, the following comment was made.

“Many areas do not have CRPs or the CRPs that exist aren't taking new clients, and/or aren't effectively serving the clients they do have.”

In addition to developing more and improving CRPs within the state, the need to connect with other community-based service providers to better support VR consumers was also suggested.

“The additional needs of the client need to be addressed before the client is ready to obtain employment, and it is necessary for them to keep their employment. Community based services such as reliable and affordable transportation, mental health/physical health services, public access libraries, and CRPs need to be more available for clients to be successful.”

Recurring Themes Across Survey and Focus Group Results for Assessment Question #5

Across both data collection methods, the following themes were identified related to the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs authorized by NDVR to provide employment services to individuals with disabilities in ND.

- Overwhelmingly, NDVR staff indicate that more effective community-based service providers would enable them to better support their consumers.
- There is some variability related to the level of local partnerships between NDVR and authorized Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

SECTION FIVE: OVERALL THEMES

The fifth section of the CSNA identifies several overall themes related to the needs of individuals with disabilities and the effectiveness of NDVR in providing services and supports to employers for recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining employees with disabilities. These overall themes include:

1. Lack of Awareness: Many individuals with disabilities, their families or systems of support, and businesses are not familiar with the services that NDVR provides related to supporting the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. For businesses, this lack of awareness may hinder recruiting, hiring, and retaining individuals with disabilities. Parents of transition-age youth also reported a general lack of awareness, which impedes their ability to support and carryover the pre-employment transition services that their children may be receiving in the school setting.

2. Misperceptions: Employers may have misperceptions about the skills and abilities of individuals with disabilities. This may lead to hesitancy in hiring members of this population. Addressing these misperceptions is crucial for creating inclusive and diverse workplaces.

3. Partnership Opportunities: NDVR's collaboration with community partner agencies/ organizations and businesses may be lacking in some areas of the State. NDVR's community partner agencies/organizations and business partners can potentially play a key role in promoting awareness about the services and supports that NDVR provides. By strengthening partnerships

and collaboration with these entities, it is likely that the recruitment, hiring, and retention of employees with disabilities across the State will be enhanced.

<p style="text-align: center;">SECTION SIX: OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS</p>

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) is an agency that plays a crucial role in supporting people with disabilities to get and keep good jobs. To assist individuals with disabilities in meeting their employment goals, the following overall recommendations were identified from the survey and focus group data.

1. Strengthening Outreach Efforts to Individuals with Disabilities, Families, and Businesses

- Assessing outreach needs to promote awareness of NDVR services for individuals with disabilities, through their families and other systems of support, along with parents of transition-age youth.
- Exploring options for providing universal or targeted training to businesses and entities within North Dakota's Workforce Development System on topics such as disability awareness and supported/customized employment.

2. Addressing Misperceptions and Expanding Employment Services for NDVR Consumers

- Determining marketing options for highlighting how businesses can capitalize on the benefits of employing individuals with disabilities.
- Identifying opportunities to expand efforts to tailor services/job matching to meet the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities and members of unserved or underserved population groups.

3. Training for NDVR Staff and Community Partner Agencies/Organizations

- Increasing outreach efforts and providing training opportunities to support NDVR staff, community partner agencies/organizations, and CRPs to effectively support members of traditionally unserved/underserved population groups.
- Conducting regular statewide training to increase the knowledge and skills of CRP staff related to NDVR policies to meet the employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

These recommendations aim to increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities by improving collaboration with workforce development systems and businesses, increasing awareness about the benefits of employing individuals with disabilities, and providing tailored

services to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. Ultimately it is believed that the recommendations will foster a more diverse and inclusive workforce in North Dakota.

CONCLUSION

The document is a report on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) conducted by the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) to evaluate the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in North Dakota. The CSNA report includes the methodology used, (i.e., focus group sessions and surveys), and the analysis of the data collected. Approximately 193 people were involved in the assessment process as either survey respondents or focus group participants (or a combination of both). While the overall sample size is quite small, the NDCPD project team believes that the results and findings are important and can be utilized to guide future strategic planning and resource allocation for NDVR. This CSNA report also presents findings related to meeting the employment needs of individuals with disabilities, along with a list of overall themes and recommendations. The NDCPD team will disseminate the report to relevant stakeholders and publish it for public access.

SECTION SEVEN: APPENDICES

The Appendices include the survey instruments for each respondent category, and the protocol and script/questions for the focus group interviews.

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Appendix A:
Survey for NDVR Consumers

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of individuals with disabilities who receive services from NDVR. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

If you are a parent/guardian or professional who is helping an individual with disabilities to complete the survey or completing it for them, please answer the questions as if the individual with disabilities were answering them him or herself.

The first set of questions asks about you.

1. Please tell us who you are.

- ☐ I am an individual with disabilities
- ☐ I am a parent (or guardian) who is helping an individual with disabilities to complete the survey
- ☐ I am a professional who is helping an individual with disabilities to complete the survey
- ☐ I am a parent (or guardian) who is completing the survey for an individual with disabilities
- ☐ I am a professional who is completing the survey for an individual with disabilities

2. What is your **age**?

- ☐ Under 26
- ☐ 27-64
- ☐ 65 or over

3. Where do you **live** in North Dakota?

- Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
- Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
- Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
- Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
- Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
- Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
- Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
- Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

4. Where do you go to **school**?

- A middle school/junior high school
- A high school
- A college or university
- Other (e.g., homeschool, Job Corp, etc.,)
- I don't go to school

5. What are **your** disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
- Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
- Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Blindness or Visually Impaired
- Deaf and Blind
- Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
- History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
- I prefer not to answer
- I don't know
- Other

6. What is your **racial or ethnic group**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ African American/ Black
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Caucasian/ White
- ☐ Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic/ Latino
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

7. What **language** do you speak? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

8. Do you **identify** as a person from one of the following **groups**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Racial or ethnic minority
- ☐ Immigrant/refugee
- ☐ Non- English Speaker
- ☐ Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- ☐ History of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ Homeless
- ☐ LGBTQIA⁺
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about NDVR services and support for getting and keeping the job that you want.

9. What is your **connection** to NDVR?

- ☐ I currently receive services from NDVR
- ☐ I used to receive services from NDVR but now my case is closed
- ☐ I have heard of NDVR but I have never received their services
- ☐ I have never heard of NDVR
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

10. Who **referred** you to NDVR? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I referred myself
- ☐ Someone in my family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Services
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ My parole officer or other court official
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

11. What **kind of services** do you currently **receive from NDVR** (or did you receive in the past)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Finding a job that matches my interests and strengths
- ☐ Helping me get more education
- ☐ Learning about my strengths and interests
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Training to get the right job skills
- ☐ Job coaching
- ☐ Connecting to natural supports
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills

- Providing a language translator
- Training on social/interpersonal skills
- Support for mental health challenges
- Support for health issues
- Transportation Assistance
- Childcare for my children
- Benefits planning
- Support to teach employers about the benefits of hiring me
- I don't know
- Other

12. What are your **barriers** for **getting and keeping the job** that you want? (Check all that apply)

- There aren't enough jobs that match my interests and strengths
- I don't have enough education
- I don't know my strengths and interest
- I don't have enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- I don't have the right job skills
- I don't have a job coach
- I don't have natural supports
- I don't have the accommodations that I need
- I don't have the assistive technology that I need
- I don't have good communication skills
- I don't have a translator to provide information in my language
- I don't have good social/interpersonal skills
- I have mental health challenges that could make it difficult
- I have substance abuse issues that could make it difficult
- I have other health issues that could make it difficult
- My criminal record
- I don't have transportation to get to a job
- I don't have childcare for my children while I am at work
- I am worried that I will lose my benefits if I have a job
- Employers have concerns about hiring and supporting me
- I don't know
- Other

13. Of the barriers that you checked in Question 12, which **three** are the **biggest barriers** for you to **get and keep the job that you want**? (Describe three)

14. How can **NDVR help** you **get and keep the job that you want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Help me to find a job that matches my interest and strengths
- ☐ Help me to get more education
- ☐ Help me to learn about my strengths and interests
- ☐ Help me to get training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Help me to get training to learn the right job skills
- ☐ Help me to get a job coach
- ☐ Help me to find natural supports
- ☐ Help me to get accommodations to do my tasks
- ☐ Help me to get assistive technology to do my job tasks
- ☐ Help me to learn good communication skills
- ☐ Help me to get information that I need through a language translator
- ☐ Help me to learn good social. Interpersonal skills
- ☐ Help me to get support for my mental health challenges
- ☐ Help me to get support for my substance abuse
- ☐ Help me to get support for my health issues
- ☐ Help me to talk to my employer about my criminal record
- ☐ Help me to find transportation to get to a job
- ☐ Help me to find childcare for my children while I am at work
- ☐ Help me to get information for benefits planning
- ☐ Help me to talk to my employer about hiring and supporting me
- ☐ I don't know

15. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important** to you to **get and keep the job that you want?** (List three)

16. Please share **additional thoughts** about how NDVR could **support you better** to **get and keep the job that you want.**

Accessing (Getting) North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about your experiences **accessing (getting)** NDVR services and support.

17. Where do you usually **meet** with your NDVR counselor?

- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor at my school
- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor somewhere in the community
- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor at an NDVR office
- ☐ I don't have a NDVR counselor
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

18. What **barriers to accessing** NDVR services do you experience? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I don't experience any barriers to accessing NDVR Services
- ☐ I don't have information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ The application for NDVR services is difficult for me to complete
- ☐ NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that I can't attend
- ☐ The NDVR office where they have meetings and trainings is not accessible for me
- ☐ I don't have transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ There is not a translator to provide information in in my primary language
- ☐ The individualized plan for employment is difficult for me to complete
- ☐ There are not options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

19. What do you **need to access (get)** the NDVR services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ Assistance completing the application for NDVR services
- ☐ Scheduling of meetings and trainings at a time and place that I can attend
- ☐ Meetings with NDVR staff in my own community
- ☐ An accessible location
- ☐ Transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Childcare while I am attending meetings and trainings
- ☐ Support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Accommodations for meetings and trainings
- ☐ A translator to provide information in my primary language
- ☐ Assistance to complete my individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

20. Of the things that you checked in Question 18, which **three** would **help you the most to access (get)** NDVR services? (Describe three)

21. Please share **additional thoughts** about how you could be **better supported to access (get)** NDVR services.

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix B:

Survey for Transition-Age Youth and Students with Disabilities

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

If you are a parent/guardian or professional who is helping a transition-age student with disabilities to complete the survey or completing it for them, please answer the questions as if the transition-age student were answering them him or herself.

The first set of questions asks about you.

1. Please tell us **who** you are.

- ☐ I am a transition-age student with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- ☐ I am a parent (or guardian) who is helping a transition-age student with disabilities to complete the survey
- ☐ I am a professional who is helping a transition-age student with disabilities to complete the survey
- ☐ I am a parent (or guardian) who is completing the survey for a transition-age student with disabilities
- ☐ I am a professional who is completing the survey for a transition-age student with disabilities

2. What is your **age**?

- ☐ 14-17
- ☐ 18-31

3. Where do you **live** in North Dakota? (Check one)

- ☐ Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
- ☐ Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
- ☐ Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
- ☐ Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
- ☐ Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
- ☐ Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
- ☐ Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
- ☐ Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

4. Where do you go to **school**? (Check one)

- ☐ A middle school/junior high school
- ☐ A high school
- ☐ A college or university
- ☐ I don't go to school

5. What are your **disabilities**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
- ☐ Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
- ☐ Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
- ☐ Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Blindness or Visually Impaired
- ☐ Deaf and Blind
- ☐ Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
- ☐ History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- ☐ Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

6. What is your **racial or ethnic group**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ African American/ Black
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Caucasian/ White
- ☐ Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic/ Latino
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

7. What **language** do you speak? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

8. Do you **identify** as a person from one of the following **groups**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Racial or ethnic minority
- ☐ Immigrant/refugee
- ☐ Non- English Speaker
- ☐ Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Mental health challenges(e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- ☐ History of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ Homeless
- ☐ LGBTQIA⁺
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about NDVR services and support for getting and keeping the job that you want.

9. What is your **connection** to NDVR? (Check one)

- ☐ I currently receive services from NDVR
- ☐ I used to receive services from NDVR but now my case is closed
- ☐ I have heard of NDVR but I have never received their services
- ☐ I have never heard of NDVR
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

10. Who **referred** you to NDVR? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I referred myself
- ☐ Someone in my family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Services
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ My parole officer or other court official
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

11. What **kind of services** do you currently **receive from NDVR** (or did you receive in the past)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Finding a job that matches my interests and strengths
- ☐ Helping me get more education
- ☐ Learning about my strengths and interests
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Training to get the right job skills
- ☐ Job coaching
- ☐ Connecting to natural supports
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills

- Providing a language translator
- Training on social/interpersonal skills
- Support for mental health challenges
- Support for health issues
- Transportation Assistance
- Childcare for my children
- Benefits planning
- Support to teach employers about the benefits of hiring me
- I don't know
- Other

12. What are your **barriers** for **getting and keeping the job that you want?** (Check all that apply)

- There aren't enough jobs that match my interests and strengths
- I don't have enough education
- I don't know my strengths and interests
- I don't have enough training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- I don't have the right job skills
- I don't have a job coach
- I don't have natural supports
- I don't have the accommodations that I need
- I don't have the assistive technology that I need
- I don't have good communication skills
- I don't have a translator to provide information in my language
- I don't have good social/ interpersonal skills
- I have mental health challenges that could make it difficult
- I have substance abuse issues that could make it difficult
- I have other health issues that could make it difficult
- I have a criminal record
- I don't have transportation to get to a job
- I don't have childcare for my children while I am at work
- I am worried that I will lose my benefits if I have a job
- Employers have concerns about hiring and supporting me
- I don't know
- Other

13. Of the barriers that you checked in Question 12, which **three** are the **biggest barriers** for you to **get and keep the job that you want?** (Describe three)

14. How can **NDVR** help you **get and keep the job that you want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Help me to find a job that matches my interests and strengths
- ☐ Help me to get more education
- ☐ Help me to learn about strengths and interest
- ☐ Help me to get training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Help me to get training to learn the right job skills
- ☐ Help me to get a job coach
- ☐ Help me to find natural supports
- ☐ Help me to get accommodations to do my job tasks
- ☐ Help me to get assistive technology to do my job tasks
- ☐ Help me to learn communication skills
- ☐ Help me to get information that I need through a language translator
- ☐ Help me to learn good social/ interpersonal skills
- ☐ Help me to get support for my mental health challenges
- ☐ Help me to get support for my substance abuse issues
- ☐ Help me to get support for my health issues
- ☐ Help me to find transportation to get to a job
- ☐ Help me to find childcare for my children while I am at work
- ☐ Help me to get information for benefits planning
- ☐ Help me to talk to my employer about hiring and supporting me
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

15. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important** to you to **get and keep the job that you want?** (List three)

16. Please share **additional thoughts** about how NDVR could **support you better** to **get and keep the job that you want.**

Accessing (Getting) North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about your experiences **accessing (getting)** NDVR services and support.

17. **Where** do you usually **meet** with your NDVR counselor?

- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor at my school
- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor somewhere in the community
- ☐ I usually meet with my NDVR counselor at a NDVR office
- ☐ I don't have a NDVR counselor
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

18. What **barriers to accessing** NDVR services do you experience? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I don't experience any barriers to accessing NDVR Services
- ☐ I don't have information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ The application for NDVR services is difficult for me to complete
- ☐ NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that I can't attend
- ☐ The NDVR office where they have meetings and trainings is not accessible for me
- ☐ I don't have transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ I don't have accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ There is not a translator to provide information in in my primary language
- ☐ The individualized plan for employment is difficult for me to complete
- ☐ There are not options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

19. What do you **need to access** (get) the NDVR services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ Assistance completing the application for NDVR services
- ☐ Scheduling of meetings and trainings at a time and place that I can attend
- ☐ Meetings with NDVR staff in my own community
- ☐ An accessible location
- ☐ Transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Childcare while I am attending meetings and trainings
- ☐ Support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Accommodations for meetings and trainings
- ☐ A translator to provide information in my primary language
- ☐ Assistance to complete my individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

20. Of the things that you checked in Question 18, which **three** would **help you the most to access (get)** NDVR services? (Describe three)

21. Please share **additional thoughts** about how you could be **better supported to access (get)** NDVR services.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) to collaborate with state and local education agencies to ensure that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them.

This last set of questions asks about the required activities for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

22. In your opinion, does your school provide **Job Exploration Counseling** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

23. In your opinion, does your school provide **Job Exploration Counseling**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

24. In your opinion, does your school provide **Work-Based Learning Experiences**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

25. In your opinion, does your school provide **Workplace Readiness Training**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

26. In your opinion, does your school provide **counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

27. In your opinion, does your school provide **instruction in self-advocacy**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by teachers or school staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix C:

Survey for Professionals who Support Transition-Age Youth and Students with Disabilities

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

The first set of questions asks about you and the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support.

1. What is your **job title/role** at your place of employment where you support transition-age students with disabilities?
2. Which of the following describes **where** you support transition-age students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ A middle school/junior high school
 - ☐ A high school
 - ☐ A college or university
 - ☐ Other
3. In which **geographic region** do you work? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
 - ☐ Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
 - ☐ Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
 - ☐ Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
 - ☐ Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
 - ☐ Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
 - ☐ Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
 - ☐ Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

4. How **old** are the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 14-17
 - ☐ 18-21
5. What are the **disabilities** of the transition-age students whom you support? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
 - ☐ Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
 - ☐ Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
 - ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
 - ☐ Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
 - ☐ Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - ☐ Blindness or Visually Impaired
 - ☐ Deaf and Blind
 - ☐ Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
 - ☐ History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
 - ☐ Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
 - ☐ I don't know
 - ☐ Other
6. Of the people with disabilities whom your business employs, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ African American/ Black
 - ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - ☐ Asian
 - ☐ Caucasian/ White
 - ☐ Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - ☐ Hispanic/ Latino
 - ☐ I prefer not to answer
 - ☐ I don't know
 - ☐ Other

7. Of the people with disabilities that your business employs, what **language** do they speak? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

8. Do you support any transition-age students with disabilities who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups**? (Check all that apply)?

- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Transition- Age youth with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- ☐ Racial or ethnic minority
- ☐ Immigrant/refugee
- ☐ Non- English Speaking
- ☐ Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- ☐ History of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Homeless
- ☐ LGBTQIA⁺
- ☐ Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about NDVR services and supports for the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support (including those who also identify as being from one or more unserved or underserved population groups) to get and keep the job that they want.

9. Which statement best describes the **connection** of the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support to the North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support currently receive services from NDVR
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support do not currently receive services from NDVR; their case has been closed
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support are familiar with NDVR but they have never received services from NDVR
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support are not familiar with NDVR
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

10. If you support transition-age students with disabilities who receive services from NDVR, who **referred** them? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They referred themselves
- ☐ Someone in my family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Services
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ My parole officer or other court official
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

11. What **kind of services** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support currently **receive from NDVR** (or did they previously receive)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace

- Finding natural Supports at the workplace
- Accommodations
- Assistive technology
- Training on communication skills
- Providing a language translator
- Training on social/ interpersonal skills
- Mental health support
- Substance abuse support
- Transportation assistance
- Childcare assistance
- Benefits planning
- Training for employers about benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

12. What do you believe are the **most common barriers** for transition-age students with disabilities to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting transition-age youth with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

13. Do you think that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience the **same barriers** for **getting and keeping the job that they want**?

- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers
- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers plus more
- ☐ I think they experience completely different barriers
- ☐ I don't know

14. If you answered that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience **more barriers or completely different barriers** in Question 13, what are they?

15. What **kind of services** could NDVR provide to help the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Support for health issues
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

16. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important to help** the transition-age students with disabilities (as well as those who are also from unserved or underserved population groups) whom you support to **get and keep the job that they want?** (List three)

17. Are there **gaps in the services** that NDVR provides related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) related to **getting and keeping the job that they want?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

18. What are the **three biggest gaps** in services that NDVR provides related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Describe three)

19. What can NDVR do to **address these gaps** and **improve the services** that they provide related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) to **get and keep the job that they want?**

Accessing North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks you about the experiences of the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support related to accessing NDVR services and supports.

20. **Where** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support usually **meet** with their NDVR counselor? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They usually meet with their NDVR counselor at school
- ☐ They usually meet with their NDVR counselor somewhere in the community
- ☐ They usually meet with the NDVR counselor at a NDVR office
- ☐ They don't have a NDVR counselor
- ☐ I don't know

21. What **barriers to accessing NDVR services** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support experience? (Click all that apply)

- ☐ They don't experience any barriers to accessing NDVR services
- ☐ Lack of information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ The application for NDVR services is difficult to complete
- ☐ NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that they can't attend
- ☐ The NDVR office where they meet is not accessible
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ No translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Difficulties completing their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

22. Do you think that transition-age youth with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience the **same barriers** for **accessing NDVR services** as you checked in question 21?

- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers
- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers plus more
- ☐ I think they experience completely different barriers
- ☐ I don't know

23. If you answered that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience **more barriers or completely different barriers** in Question 22, what are they?

24. Of the **access barriers** that you identified for transition-age students with disabilities as well as those who identify as members of one or more unserved or underserved population groups, which **three** are the **most significant**? (Describe three)

25. What do the transition-age students whom you support (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) **need to access** NDVR services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ Assistance to complete the application for NDVR services
- ☐ Scheduling of meetings at a time and place that they can attend
- ☐ Meetings with NDVR staff in their own communities
- ☐ An accessible meeting location
- ☐ Transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ A translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Assistance to complete their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

26. Of the things that you checked in Question 25, which **three** would **help** your transition-age students with disabilities the most to **access** NDVR services? (Describe three)

27. Please share **additional thoughts** about how transition-age students with disabilities could be **better supported to access** NDVR services.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) to collaborate with state and local education agencies to ensure that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them.

This last set of questions asks about the required activities for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

28. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Job Exploration Counseling**?
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

29. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Work-Based Learning Experiences**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

30. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Workplace Readiness Training**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

31. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

32. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **instruction in self-advocacy**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

33. Does your school, district, or special education unit use an **“online career information system”** with students? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix D:

Survey for Community Partner Agencies and Organizations

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

The first set of questions asks about you and your agency/organization.

1. What is your **job title/role** at your agency/organization?
2. Which of the following best **describes your agency/organization?** (Check one)
 - ☐ Secondary Education
 - ☐ Postsecondary Education
 - ☐ Department of Public Instruction
 - ☐ Regional Human Service Center
 - ☐ Client Advocacy Organization
 - ☐ Veteran's Administration
 - ☐ Workforce Development Agency
 - ☐ City, County, or State Government
 - ☐ Other State Agency
 - ☐ Other Federal Agency
 - ☐ Other Private Non-Profit
 - ☐ Individual Service Provider

3. **Where** does your agency/organization provide services to individuals with disabilities? (Check all that apply)
- Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
 - Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
 - Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
 - Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
 - Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
 - Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
 - Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
 - Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)
4. **How many** individuals with disabilities are supported by your agency/organization? (Check one)
- 1-15
 - 16-50
 - 51-250
 - 251-999
 - 1,000 or more
5. Of the individuals with disabilities whom your agency/organization supports, what are their **disabilities**? (Check all that apply)
- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
 - Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
 - Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
 - Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
 - Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
 - Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Blindness or Visually Impaired
 - Deaf and Blind
 - Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
 - History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
 - Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)

- I don't know
 - Other
6. Of the individuals with disabilities whom your agency/organization supports, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)
- African American/ Black
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Caucasian/ White
 - Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - Hispanic/ Latino
 - I prefer not to answer
 - I don't know
 - Other
7. Of the individuals with disabilities whom your agency/organization supports, what **language do they speak**? (Check all that apply)
- English
 - Spanish
 - American Sign Language
 - I don't know
 - Other
8. Does your agency/organization support individuals with disabilities who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups**? (Check all that apply)
- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
 - Transition-age students with disabilities (ages 14-21)
 - Racial or ethnic minority
 - Immigrant/refugee
 - Non- English Speaker
 - Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
 - Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
 - History of alcohol or drug abuse
 - Veterans
 - Homeless
 - LGBTQIA⁺

- Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- I prefer not to answer
- I don't know
- Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about the services that NDVR provides to support your consumers with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to get and keep the job that they want.

9. How would you rate your **knowledge** of North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) and the services they provide to agencies/organizations to support the employment needs of individuals with disabilities?
 - Very knowledgeable
 - Somewhat knowledgeable
 - A little bit knowledgeable
 - Not knowledgeable at all

10. Has your agency/organization ever **utilized any of the services that NDVR provides** to help individuals with disabilities **get and keep the job that they want**?
 - Yes
 - No
 - I don't know

11. Based on your experience, how **frequently** is NDVR able to **meet the employment needs** of individuals with disabilities?
 - All of the time
 - Some of the time
 - None of the time
 - I don't know

12. If you support individuals with disabilities who receive services from NDVR, who **referred** them? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They referred themselves
- ☐ Someone in my family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Services
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ My parole officer or other court official
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

13. Which of the following services are **readily available** to individuals with disabilities through NDVR (including those individuals with disabilities who are also from unserved or underserved population groups)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural Supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/ interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

14. Please indicate which of the following services **are not readily available** to individuals with disabilities through NDVR (including individuals with disabilities who are also from unserved or underserved population groups). (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural Supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/ interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

15. For the individuals with disabilities whom you support, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported

- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

16. For individuals with the **most significant disabilities** (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work), what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with the most significant disabilities)

17. For individuals with disabilities **who are transition-age youth (ages 14-21)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified

- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are transition-age
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are transition-age)

18. For individuals with disabilities **who are from racial or ethnic minorities**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare

- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities)

19. For individuals with disabilities **who are immigrants/refugees**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees)

20. For individuals with disabilities **who are non-English speakers**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are non-English speakers
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are non-English speakers)

21. For individuals with disabilities **who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers

- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)

22. For individuals with disabilities **who struggle with mental health challenges**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who struggle with mental health challenges
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who struggle with mental health challenges

23. For individuals with disabilities **who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse)

24. For individuals with disabilities **who are veterans**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers

- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are veterans
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse)

25. For individuals with disabilities **who are homeless**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are homeless)
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who are homeless)

26. For individuals with disabilities **who identify as LGBTQIA+**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+)

27. For individuals with disabilities **who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interests and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social Limited social/Interpersonal skills

- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community
- I don't know
- Not applicable (My agency/organization does not support individuals with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community)

28. Which of the following NDVR services would **help** individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Helping them find (or developing) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- Helping them get more education
- Assessing strengths and interests
- Providing training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Providing training to teach job skills
- Providing a job coach
- Connecting them to natural supports
- Helping them get accommodations to do their job tasks
- Helping them get assistive technology to do their job tasks
- Providing training on communication skills
- Providing a language translator
- Providing training on social/interpersonal skills
- Supporting their mental health challenges
- Supporting their substance abuse issues
- Supporting their health issues
- Providing transportation assistance
- Providing childcare assistance
- Providing benefits planning
- Providing training to employers about hiring and supporting workers with disabilities
- I don't know

29. Of the NDVR services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important** to **help** individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Describe three)

30. Please share **additional thoughts** about how individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as being from unserved or underserved population groups) can be **better supported by NDVR to get and keep the job that they want.**

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix C:

Survey for Professionals Who Support Transition-Age Youth and Students with Disabilities

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

The first set of questions asks about you and the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support.

1. What is your **job title/role** at your place of employment where you support transition-age students with disabilities?
2. Which of the following describes **where** you support transition-age students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ A middle school/junior high school
 - ☐ A high school
 - ☐ A college or university
 - ☐ Other
3. In which **geographic region** do you work? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
 - ☐ Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
 - ☐ Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
 - ☐ Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
 - ☐ Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
 - ☐ Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)

- Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
 - Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)
4. How **old** are the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support? (Check all that apply)
- 14-17
 - 18-21
5. What are the **disabilities** of the transition-age students whom you support? (Check all that apply)
- Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
 - Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
 - Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
 - Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
 - Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
 - Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Blindness or Visually Impaired
 - Deaf and Blind
 - Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
 - History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
 - Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
 - I don't know
 - Other
6. Of the people with disabilities whom your business employs, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)
- African American/ Black
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Caucasian/ White
 - Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - Hispanic/ Latino
 - I prefer not to answer

- I don't know
- Other

7. Of the people with disabilities that your business employs, what **language** do they speak?
(Check all that apply)

- English
- Spanish
- American Sign Language
- I don't know
- Other

8. Do you support any transition-age students with disabilities who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups**?
(Check all that apply)?

- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- Transition- Age youth with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- Racial or ethnic minority
- Immigrant/refugee
- Non- English Speaking
- Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Veterans
- Homeless
- LGBTQIA⁺
- Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- I don't know
- Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about NDVR services and supports for the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support (including those who also identify as being from one or more unserved or underserved population groups) to get and keep the job that they want.

9. Which statement best describes the **connection** of the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support to the North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support currently receive services from NDVR
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support do not currently receive services from NDVR; their case has been closed
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support are familiar with NDVR but they have never received services from NDVR
- ☐ The transition-age students with disabilities whom I support are not familiar with NDVR
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

10. If you support transition-age students with disabilities who receive services from NDVR, who **referred** them? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They referred themselves
- ☐ Someone in my family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Services
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ My parole officer or other court official
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

11. What **kind of services** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support currently **receive from NDVR** (or did they previously receive)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training

- Job coaching at the workplace
- Finding natural Supports at the workplace
- Accommodations
- Assistive technology
- Training on communication skills
- Providing a language translator
- Training on social/ interpersonal skills
- Mental health support
- Substance abuse support
- Transportation assistance
- Childcare assistance
- Benefits planning
- Training for employers about benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

12. What do you believe are the **most common barriers** for transition-age students with disabilities to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/Interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting transition-age youth with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

13. Do you think that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience the **same barriers** for **getting and keeping the job that they want**?

- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers
- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers plus more
- ☐ I think they experience completely different barriers
- ☐ I don't know

14. If you answered that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience **more barriers or completely different barriers** in Question 13, what are they?

15. What **kind of services** could NDVR provide to help the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Support for health issues
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

16. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important to help** the transition-age students with disabilities (as well as those who are also from unserved or underserved population groups) whom you support to **get and keep the job that they want**? (List three)

17. Are there **gaps in the services** that NDVR provides related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) related to **getting and keeping the job that they want**?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

18. What are the **three biggest gaps** in services that NDVR provides related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Describe three)

19. What can NDVR do to **address these gaps** and **improve the services** that they provide related to supporting transition-age students with disabilities (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) to **get and keep the job that they want**?

Accessing North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks you about the experiences of the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support related to accessing NDVR services and supports.

20. **Where** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support usually **meet** with their NDVR counselor? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They usually meet with their NDVR counselor at school
- ☐ They usually meet with their NDVR counselor somewhere in the community
- ☐ They usually meet with the NDVR counselor at a NDVR office
- ☐ They don't have a NDVR counselor
- ☐ I don't know

21. What **barriers to accessing NDVR services** do the transition-age students with disabilities whom you support experience? (Click all that apply)

- ☐ They don't experience any barriers to accessing NDVR services
- ☐ Lack of information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ The application for NDVR services is difficult to complete
- ☐ NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that they can't attend
- ☐ The NDVR office where they meet is not accessible
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ No translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Difficulties completing their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

22. Do you think that transition-age youth with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience the **same barriers** for **accessing NDVR services** as you checked in question 21?

- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers
- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers plus more
- ☐ I think they experience completely different barriers
- ☐ I don't know

23. If you answered that transition-age students with disabilities who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience **more barriers or completely different barriers** in Question 22, what are they?

24. Of the **access barriers** that you identified for transition-age students with disabilities as well as those who identify as members of one or more unserved or underserved population groups, which **three** are the **most significant**? (Describe three)

25. What do the transition-age students whom you support (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) **need to access** NDVR services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ Assistance to complete the application for NDVR services
- ☐ Scheduling of meetings at a time and place that they can attend
- ☐ Meetings with NDVR staff in their own communities
- ☐ An accessible meeting location
- ☐ Transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ A translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Assistance to complete their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

26. Of the things that you checked in Question 25, which **three** would **help** your transition-age students with disabilities the most to **access** NDVR services? (Describe three)

27. Please share **additional thoughts** about how transition-age students with disabilities could be **better supported to access** NDVR services.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) to collaborate with state and local education agencies to ensure that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them.

This last set of questions asks about the required activities for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

28. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Job Exploration Counseling**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

29. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Work-Based Learning Experiences**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

30. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **Workplace Readiness Training**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

31. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

32.. Does your school, district, or special education unit provide **instruction in self-advocacy**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

33. Does your school, district, or special education unit use an **“online career information system”** with students? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR Staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix E:

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) Survey

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

Demographic Information

The first set of questions asks about you and the Community Rehabilitation Program.

1. What is your **job title/role** at the Community Rehabilitation Program?

2. **Where** does the Community Rehabilitation Program provide services to people with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
- ☐ Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
- ☐ Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
- ☐ Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
- ☐ Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
- ☐ Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
- ☐ Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
- ☐ Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

3. **How many** people with disabilities are supported by the Community Rehabilitation Program?

- ☐ 1-15
- ☐ 16-50
- ☐ 51-250
- ☐ 251-999
- ☐ 1,000 or more

4. Of the individuals with disabilities that the Community Rehabilitation Program supports, what are their disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
- ☐ Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
- ☐ Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
- ☐ Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Blindness or Visually Impaired
- ☐ Deaf and Blind
- ☐ Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
- ☐ History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- ☐ Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

5. Of the consumers whom you support, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ African American/ Black
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Caucasian/ White
- ☐ Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic/ Latino
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

6. Of the consumers whom you support, what **language do they speak**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

7. Does the Community Rehabilitation Program support individuals with disabilities who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Transition-age youth with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- ☐ Racial or ethnic minority
- ☐ Immigrant/refugee
- ☐ Non- English Speaker
- ☐ Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- ☐ History of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Homeless
- ☐ LGBTQIA⁺
- ☐ Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) Services and Supports

The next set of questions asks about the services that NDVR authorizes through Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) for individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to get and keep the job that they want.

8. How would you rate your **knowledge** of North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) and the services they authorize through Community Rehabilitation Programs to support the employment needs of people with disabilities?

- ☐ Very knowledgeable
- ☐ Somewhat knowledgeable
- ☐ A little bit knowledgeable
- ☐ Not knowledgeable at all

9. Has NDVR authorized your Community Rehabilitation Program to help consumers **get and keep the job that they want**?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

10. Which of the following services **are readily available** to individuals with disabilities through your Community Rehabilitation Program authorized by NDVR (including individuals with disabilities who are also from unserved or underserved population groups)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to develop alternative resume options, apply, and/or interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Support for health issues at the workplace
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

11. Please indicate which of the following services **are not readily available** to individuals with disabilities through your Community Rehabilitation Program authorized by NDVR (including individuals with disabilities who are also from unserved or underserved population groups)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interest and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to develop alternative resume options, apply, and/or interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Finding natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Support for health issues at the workplace

- Transportation assistance
- Childcare assistance
- Benefits planning
- Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

12. For the individuals with disabilities whom you support, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

13. For individuals **with the most significant disabilities** (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work), what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job

- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with the most significant disabilities)
- Other

14. For individuals with disabilities **who are transition-age youth (ages 14-21)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting transition-age youth with disabilities

- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who are transition-age)
- Other

15. For individuals with disabilities **who are racial or ethnic minorities**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities)
- Other

16. For individuals with disabilities **who are immigrants/refugees**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports

- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees)
- Other

17. For individuals with disabilities **who are non-English speakers**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Individuals with disabilities who are non-English speakers
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not currently support individuals with disabilities who are non-English speakers)
- Other

18. For individuals with disabilities **who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Other

19. For individuals with disabilities **who struggle with mental health challenges**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers

- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who struggle with mental health challenges)
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who struggle with mental health challenges)
- Other

20. For individuals with disabilities **who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse)
- Other

21. For individuals with disabilities **who are veterans**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are veterans
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support consumers with disabilities who are veterans)
- ☐ Other

22. For individuals with disabilities **who are homeless**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills

- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are homeless
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who are homeless)
- Other

23. For individuals with disabilities **who identify as LGBTQIA+**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+
- I don't know
- Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+)
- Other

24. For individuals with disabilities **who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (The Community Rehabilitation Program does not support individuals with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community)
- ☐ Other

25. Which of the following services would **help** individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Help them find (or developing a job that matches their interests and strengths
- ☐ Helping them get more education
- ☐ Providing training to develop alternative resume options, apply, and/ or interview for a job
- ☐ Providing training to teach job skills
- ☐ Providing a job coach
- ☐ Connecting them to natural supports
- ☐ Helping them get assistive technology to do their job tasks
- ☐ Assessing strengths and interests

- Providing training on communication skills
- Providing training on social/ interpersonal skills
- Providing a language translator
- Supporting their health issues at the workplace
- Providing transportation assistance
- Providing childcare assistance
- Providing benefits planning
- Providing training to employers about hiring and supporting workers with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

26. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important to help** individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) **to get and keep the job that they want?** (Describe three)

27. Please share **additional thoughts** about how individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as being from unserved or underserved population groups) can be **better supported by NDVR or Community Rehabilitation Programs to get and keep the job that they want.**

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix F:

Survey for North Dakota Businesses

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your relationship and experiences with NDVR. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of individuals with disabilities who receive services from NDVR. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

1. What is your **job title/role** at your business?

2. Which of the following best **describes your type of business**?
 - Agriculture and Natural Resources – farming, forestry, parks, landscaping
 - Banking/Finance – bank or other business that helps others manage their finances
 - Computer and Technology – repairing computer hardware systems, developing or updating computer apps, developing websites
 - Construction – building houses or other structures, working on roads, laying concrete, woodworking
 - Education – school or childcare center
 - Food and Beverage – preparing and serving food items
 - Government – local, state, or federal government office
 - Health Care – health clinic, hospital, dentist office
 - Hospitality – hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies
 - Manufacturing – plant or factory
 - Media and News – television or radio station, newspaper, social media
 - Service – businesses that provide a service rather than a tangible good (e.g., pet sitter, hairstylist, etc.)
 - Retail – store or other business that sells items to customers.

3. **Where** is your business located? (Check all that apply)
 - Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
 - Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
 - Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
 - Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)

- Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
- Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
- Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
- Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

4. How many people are employed at your business?

- 1-15
- 16-50
- 51-250
- 251-999
- 1000 or more

5. Does your business employ people with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

6. Of the people with disabilities that your business employs, what are their disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
- Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
- Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Blindness or Visually Impaired
- Deaf and Blind
- Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
- History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)

- Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
- I don't know
- Other

7. Of the people with disabilities whom your business employs, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)

- African American/ Black
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Caucasian/ White
- Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/ Latino
- I prefer not to answer
- I don't know
- Other

8. Of the people with disabilities that your business employs, what **language** do they speak? (Check all that apply)

- English
- Spanish
- American Sign Language
- I don't know
- Other

9. Does your business hire people with disabilities who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups**? (Check all that apply)

- Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- Transition- Age youth with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- Racial or ethnic minority
- Immigrant/refugee
- Non- English Speaking
- Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Veterans
- Homeless
- LGBTQIA⁺
- Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- I don't know

- Other

10. If your business does not hire individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as being from one or more unserved or underserved population groups), what are the **reasons**? (Check all that apply)

Unfamiliar with employment laws related to hiring individuals with disabilities

- Unfamiliar with recruiting individuals with disabilities to hire
- Unfamiliar with interviewing individuals with disabilities
- Unfamiliar with hiring individuals with disabilities
- Uncomfortable with hiring individuals with disabilities
- Concerns about job performance of employees with disabilities (e.g., lack of necessary job skills, quality of task completion, slow work speed, lack of stamina, etc.)
- Concerns about the mental health, substance abuse, or physical challenges of employees with disabilities
- Concerns about the safety of employees with disabilities
- Concerns about the attendance of employees with disabilities
- Concerns about cost of reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities
- Have never had an individual with disabilities apply for a job
- I don't know
- Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about the services that NDVR can provide to support your business in recruiting, interviewing, employing, and retaining individuals with disabilities (including those who also identify as being from one or more unserved or underserved population groups).

11. How would you rate your **knowledge** of NDVR and the services they provide to businesses related to employing individuals with disabilities?

- Very knowledgeable
- Somewhat knowledgeable
- A little bit knowledgeable
- Not knowledgeable at all

12.Has your business ever **utilized any NDVR services** to support recruiting, interviewing, employing, or retaining individuals with disabilities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

13.In which of the following areas related to **recruiting, interviewing, employing, or retaining individuals with disabilities** has your business received **NDVR services** (e.g., information, training, technical assistance, or support)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Employment laws related to hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ Incentives for employing individuals with disabilities
- ☐ Types of disabilities
- ☐ Disability etiquette (e.g., when to offer help, using respectful language, etc.)
- ☐ Recruiting applicants with disabilities
- ☐ Interviewing applicants with disabilities
- ☐ Job skill assessments
- ☐ Reasonable job accommodations for employees with disabilities
- ☐ Job coaches
- ☐ Supports for employment success
- ☐ Job training programs for employees with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know

14.With respect to **recruiting and interviewing** individuals with disabilities, does your business need **help from NDVR** to....? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Recruit applicants with disabilities who meet the job qualifications
- ☐ Recruit applicants with disabilities who have good work skills
- ☐ Recruit applicants with disabilities who have good social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Assess the skills of applicants with disabilities
- ☐ Discuss reasonable job accommodations for applicants with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know

15. With respect to **employing** individuals with disabilities, does your business need **help from NDVR** to....? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Understand disability-related laws related to employing individuals with disabilities
- ☐ Obtain incentives for employing individuals with disabilities
- ☐ Understand types of disabilities
- ☐ Learn disability etiquette (e.g., when to offer help, using respectful language, etc.)
- ☐ Identify and implement reasonable job accommodations for employees with disabilities
- ☐ Work with job coaches who support employees with disabilities
- ☐ Support employees with disabilities to be successful
- ☐ Obtain information on job training programs available for employees with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know

16. With respect to **retaining** employees with disabilities you employ, does your business need **help from NDVR** to address the following challenges? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Poor attendance
- ☐ Difficulty learning job skills
- ☐ Slow work speed
- ☐ Poor work stamina
- ☐ Poor communication skills
- ☐ Poor social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Inadequate job accommodations
- ☐ Concerns about mental health
- ☐ Concerns about substance abuse
- ☐ Concerns about physical health
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Identifying effective accommodations
- ☐ Lack of transportation
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

17. Please share **additional thoughts** about how your business could be **better supported** by NDVR to **recruit, interview, employ, and retain employees with disabilities**.

Accessing North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks you about your businesses' experiences accessing NDVR services and support.

18. Does your business know how to **access NDVR services** to support recruiting, interviewing, employing, and retaining employees with disabilities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

19. Which of the following **barriers** has your business experienced in the past related to **accessing** NDVR services?

- ☐ Our business has not experienced any barriers to accessing NDVR services
- ☐ Our business is unaware of available services through NDVR
- ☐ The types of services that NDVR can provide to support our business are limited
- ☐ The rural location of our business makes it difficult to access NDVR services

20. Please share **additional thoughts** about how your business could be **better supported** to **access** NDVR services.

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix G: Survey for NDVR Staff

ND Vocational Rehabilitation Survey for Vocational Rehabilitation Staff

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) at Minot State University is conducting surveys on behalf of the North Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR).

Below is a survey about your experiences as a NDVR staff member. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the survey. Your input is crucial for determining the needs of NDVR stakeholders. We truly thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to complete this survey.

All responses will be completely confidential and anonymous.

1. What is your **job title/role** at NDVR?
2. How **long** have you worked at NDVR?
 - Less than one year
 - 1-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - 11-20 years
 - 21+ years
3. What **region** do you serve? (Check all that apply)
 - Region I: Williston (Divide, Williams, McKenzie)
 - Region II: Minot (Burke, Renville, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Bottineau, Pierce)
 - Region III: Devils Lake (Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Ramsey, Benson, Eddy)
 - Region IV: Grand Forks (Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks)
 - Region V: Fargo (Sargent, Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Richland)
 - Region VI: Jamestown (Griggs, Wells, Foster, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Dickey)
 - Region VII: Bismarck (Mercer, McLean, Sheridan, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Emmons, Grant, Sioux)
 - Region VIII: Dickinson (Slope, Golden Valley, Billings, Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Bowman, Adams)

4. How **many** people with disabilities do you support?

- ☐ 1-15
- ☐ 16-50
- ☐ 51-250
- ☐ 251-999
- ☐ 1,000 or more

5. Of the consumers whom you support, what are their **disabilities**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Intellectual Disability (limited ability to learn and function in daily life)
- ☐ Learning Disability (a mild intellectual disability such as dyslexia that makes reading and math difficult)
- ☐ Developmental Disability (Down syndrome, Autism, Fragile X syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)
- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Communication Disorder (limitations in receiving information and using spoken language)
- ☐ Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Blindness or Visually Impaired
- ☐ Deaf and Blind
- ☐ Mental Health Challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.)
- ☐ History of Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- ☐ Physical Disability (health impairment such as asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, seizure disorder, etc., uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches for mobility)
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

6. Of the consumers whom you support, what are their **racial or ethnic groups**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ African American/ Black
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Caucasian/ White
- ☐ Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic/ Latino
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

7. Of the consumers whom you support, what **language do they speak?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

8. Do you support consumers who also **identify** as being from any of the following **traditionally unserved or underserved population groups?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Most Significant Disability (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work)
- ☐ Transition-age youth with disabilities (ages 14-21)
- ☐ Racial or ethnic minority
- ☐ Immigrant/refugee
- ☐ Non- English Speaker
- ☐ Transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar, etc.)
- ☐ History of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ Homeless
- ☐ LGBTQIA⁺
- ☐ Previously incarcerated or transitioning back into their community
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks about the services that you provide to help your consumers with disabilities (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to get and keep the job that they want.

9. Based on your experience, how **frequently** are you able to **meet the employment needs** of your consumers?

- ☐ All of the time
- ☐ Some of the time
- ☐ None of the time
- ☐ I don't know

10. Who **referred** your consumers for services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They referred themselves
- ☐ Someone in their family
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A disability support provider
- ☐ The Social Security Administration
- ☐ Job Service
- ☐ A mental health program
- ☐ A healthcare professional
- ☐ A staff member at a college or vocational training program
- ☐ Their parole office or other court official

11. Which of the following services do you **provide** to your consumers (including those who are also from unserved or underserved population groups)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Find natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Support for health issues
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

12. Which of the following services do you **not provide** to your consumers (including your consumers who are also from unserved or underserved population groups)? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Assistance to find (or develop) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- ☐ Information about options for more education
- ☐ Strength and interest assessments
- ☐ Training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Job coaching at the workplace
- ☐ Find natural supports at the workplace
- ☐ Accommodations
- ☐ Assistive technology
- ☐ Training on communication skills
- ☐ Providing a language translator
- ☐ Training on social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Substance abuse support
- ☐ Support for health issues
- ☐ Transportation assistance
- ☐ Childcare assistance
- ☐ Benefits planning
- ☐ Training for employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

13. For your consumers, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills

- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concern about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

14. For your consumers **with the most significant disabilities** (a physical, intellectual, or sensory disability or combination of these disability conditions that impacts two or more functional areas of daily living and/or work), what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with the most significant disabilities)
- Other

15. For your consumers **who are transition-age youth (ages 14-21)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting transition-age youth with disabilities
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers who are transition-age youth with disabilities)
- ☐ Other

16. For your consumers **who are from racial or ethnic minorities**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills

- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are from racial or ethnic minorities)
- Other

17. For your consumers **who are immigrants/refugees**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are immigrants/refugees)
- Other

18. For your consumers **who are non-English speakers**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are non-English speakers
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are non-English speakers)
- ☐ Other

19. For your consumers **who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers

- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are struggling with mental health challenges)
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are transient (e.g., migrants, temporary workers, etc.)
- Other

20. For your consumers **who struggle with mental health challenges**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- Lack of education
- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are struggling with mental health challenges
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are struggling with mental health challenges)
- Other

21. For your consumers **who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse)
- ☐ Other

22. For your consumers **who are veterans**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Not enough jobs that match their interest and strengths
- ☐ Lack of education
- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers

- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are veterans
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are veterans)
- Other

23. For your consumers who are homeless, what are the most common barriers for them to get and keep the job that they want? (Check all that apply)

- Interests and strengths have not been identified
- Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Inadequate skills for a job
- Lack of job coaches
- Lack of natural supports
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of assistive technology
- Limited communication skills
- Language barriers
- Limited social/interpersonal skills
- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who are homeless
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who are homeless)
- Other

24. For your consumers **who identify as LGBTQIA+**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills
- ☐ Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- ☐ Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- ☐ Health issues that are not being supported
- ☐ Lack of transportation to the workplace
- ☐ Lack of childcare
- ☐ Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- ☐ Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who identify as LGBTQIA+)
- ☐ Other

25. For your consumers **who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community**, what are the **most common barriers** for them to **get and keep the job that they want**? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Interests and strengths have not been identified
- ☐ Lack of training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- ☐ Inadequate skills for a job
- ☐ Lack of job coaches
- ☐ Lack of natural supports
- ☐ Lack of accommodations
- ☐ Lack of assistive technology
- ☐ Limited communication skills
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Limited social/interpersonal skills

- Mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.,) that are not being supported
- Substance abuse issues (alcohol and drugs) that are not being supported
- Health issues that are not being supported
- Lack of transportation to the workplace
- Lack of childcare
- Concerns about impact of a job on benefits
- Employers' concerns about hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transition back into their community
- I don't know
- Not applicable (I am not currently supporting consumers with disabilities who were previously incarcerated or are transitioning back into their community)
- Other

26. Which of the following services do you provide to **help** your consumers (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) to **get and keep the job that they want?** (Check all that apply)

- Helping them find (or developing) a job that matches their interests and strengths
- Helping them get more education
- Assessing strengths and interests
- Providing training to write a resume, apply, and interview for a job
- Providing training to teach job skills
- Providing a job coach
- Connecting them to natural supports
- Helping them get accommodations to do their job tasks
- Helping them get assistive technology to do their job tasks
- Providing a language translator
- Providing training on communication skills
- Providing training on social/interpersonal skills
- Supporting their mental health challenges
- Supporting their substance abuse issues
- Supporting their health issues
- Providing transportation assistance
- Providing childcare assistance
- Providing benefits planning
- Providing training to employers about hiring and supporting workers with disabilities
- I don't know
- Other

27. Of the services that you checked above, which **three** are the **most important** to **help** your consumers (including those who also identify as part of an unserved or underserved population group) **to get and keep the job that they want?** (Describe three)

28. What are the top **three changes** that would enable you to **better support your consumers?** (Choose three)

- ☐ Smaller caseloads
- ☐ More streamlined processes
- ☐ Better assessment tools
- ☐ Better data management tools
- ☐ Additional training
- ☐ More administrative support
- ☐ More supervisor support
- ☐ Improved business partnerships
- ☐ Decreased procurement time
- ☐ More effective community-based service providers
- ☐ Increased outreach to consumer in their communities
- ☐ Increased option for virtual technology for meetings and trainings with consumers
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

29. Please share **additional thoughts** about how you could **better support** your consumers (including those who also identify as being from unserved or underserved population groups) **to get and keep the job that they want.**

Accessing North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) Services and Support

The next set of questions asks you about your consumers' experiences **accessing** the services and supports that you provide.

30. **Where** do you usually **meet** with your consumers? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ At their school
- ☐ Somewhere in the community
- ☐ At a NDVR office
- ☐ Other

31. What are the most common **barriers to accessing NDVR services** that your consumers experience? (Click all that apply)

- ☐ They don't experience any barriers to accessing NDVR services
- ☐ Lack of information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ The application for NDVR services is difficult for them to complete
- ☐ NDVR meetings and trainings are scheduled at a time or place that they can't attend
- ☐ NDVR staff is unable to meet with consumers in the communities in which they live
- ☐ The NDVR office where they meet is not accessible
- ☐ Lack of transportation
- ☐ Lack of childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Lack of accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ No translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Difficulties completing their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Lack of options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

32. Do you think that your consumers who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience the **same barriers** to accessing NDVR services as you checked in Question 31? (Check one)

- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers
- ☐ I think they experience the same barriers plus more
- ☐ I think they experience completely different barriers
- ☐ I don't know

33. If you answered that your consumers who are also from one or more unserved or underserved population groups experience **more barriers or completely different barriers** in Question 32, what are they?

34. Of the **access barriers** that you identified for your consumers as well as those who identify as members of one or more unserved or underserved population groups, which **three** are the **most significant**? (Describe three)

35. What do your consumers (including those from unserved or underserved population groups) **need to access** NDVR services? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information about available services through NDVR
- ☐ Assistance to complete the application for NDVR services
- ☐ Scheduling of meetings and trainings at a time and place that they can attend
- ☐ Meetings with NDVR staff in their own communities
- ☐ An accessible meeting location
- ☐ Transportation to the NDVR office for meetings and trainings
- ☐ Childcare to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Support to attend meetings and trainings
- ☐ Accommodations during meetings and trainings
- ☐ A translator to provide information in their primary language
- ☐ Assistance to complete their individualized plan for employment
- ☐ Options to attend meetings and trainings virtually
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other

36. Of the things that you checked in Question 35, which **three** would **help** your consumers the most to **access** NDVR services? (Describe three)

37. Please share **additional thoughts** about how your consumers (including those who also identify as being from unserved or underserved population groups) can be **better supported to access NDVR services**.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) to collaborate with state and local education agencies to ensure that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them.

This last set of questions asks about the required activities for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

38. In your opinion, does the school district(s) you serve provide **Job Exploration Counseling** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ Other

39. In your opinion, does the school district(s) you serve provide **Work-Based Learning Experiences** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ Other

40. In your opinion, does the school district(s) you serve provide **Workplace Readiness Training** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ Other

41. In your opinion, does the school district(s) you serve provide **counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ Other

42. In your opinion, does the school district(s) you serve provide **instruction in self-advocacy** to students with disabilities? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, this is provided by school, district, or special education staff
- ☐ Yes, this is provided through an online or electronic application
- ☐ Yes, this is provided by NDVR staff
- ☐ No, this is not offered
- ☐ Other

This is the end of the survey!

Thank you for completing the survey. Your feedback is valuable. Please click the submit button to record your survey responses.

Appendix H

Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Script and Questions for the ND Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Welcome to our focus group. Thank you for joining us.

During this meeting, we will be asking you questions about your experiences with North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation. Your answers to the questions will help us to identify what North Dakota VR does well and what could be done better.

Your answers to the questions will be used without any identifiable information, however, if you don't feel comfortable with your answers being collected, you do not have to participate or answer the questions. This session will also be recorded so that we have a record of the answers to the questions for when we write our report. If you are not comfortable with your answers being recorded, you do not need to participate.

Section I: NDVR's Overall Performance

North Dakota VR's mission is to support the employment needs of people with disabilities in our state by helping them to get and keep good jobs.

- 1) The first question that we would like to ask you is: How well do think that North Dakota VR is doing to help people with disabilities get and keep the jobs that they want?
 - a. What has your experience with North Dakota VR been like?
 - b. What has been positive? What has been negative?

Section II: Barriers to *Getting and Keeping* Good Jobs

Sometimes people with disabilities face barriers when they are trying to **get and keep** the jobs that they want.

- 2) What barriers do people with disabilities in North Dakota face when they are trying to **get and keep** the jobs that they want? (Prompts: not enough education, not enough jobs, lack of job skills, fear of losing benefits, businesses are hesitant to hire people with disabilities, etc.)
 - a. What services do you need (or did you need) that aren't (weren't) available and why weren't (aren't) you able to get these services?
- 3) What can North Dakota VR do to help people with disabilities **get and keep** good jobs? (Prompts: provide more services and supports to overcome the barriers)

Section III: Barriers to *Accessing* North Dakota VR Services and Supports

Sometimes people with disabilities face barriers when they are trying to **get (access)** services from North Dakota VR to get and keep the jobs that they want.

- 4) What barriers do people with disabilities in our state face when they are trying to get **(access)** services from North Dakota VR to meet their employment needs? (Prompts: lack of information about NDVR services, the application is too difficult, meetings are at a time/place that I can't attend, lack of transportation to meetings, lack of childcare, lack of support to attend meetings, lack of a language translator, etc.)
- 5) How can North Dakota VR help people with disabilities to overcome these **access** barriers? (Prompts: strategies to improve access to its services and supports)

Section IV: Services and Supports for People with Disabilities from Unserved and Underserved Population Groups

It can also be hard for individuals with disabilities who are part of other groups of people to get and keep the jobs that they want. (Prompts: people from rural areas of North Dakota, people who are from a diverse racial or ethnic group, people who are homeless, people who are veterans, people who were previously in prison, people who identify as being LGBTQIA+, people who have challenges with mental health, or a history of drug/alcohol abuse)

- 6) What can North Dakota VR do to improve services to people with disabilities who are also part of other groups, so they can get and keep the jobs that they want?

Sometimes students who are transition-age (14-21) do not get the support that they need while they are in high school to prepare them for post-secondary education or employment.

- 7) What can North Dakota VR do to improve services to youth with disabilities who are transition-age, to get and keep the jobs that they want?

Sometimes it is even harder for people who have more severe (significant) disabilities to get and keep the jobs that they want.

- 8) What can North Dakota VR do to improve services to people with significant disabilities, so they can get and keep the jobs that they want?

Section V: Services and Support from CRPs and Statewide Workforce Agencies

Sometimes people with disabilities get extra employment services and support from Community Rehabilitation Providers and other statewide workforce agencies like Job Service.

- 9) Is there anything that North Dakota VR can do to help the Community Rehabilitation Programs and workforce agencies in our state to better support the employment needs of people with disabilities?

Section VI: Services and Supports for Businesses

Sometimes businesses need help to hire, train, and keep employees who have disabilities.

- 10) What can North Dakota VR do to support businesses in our state to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities? (Prompts: With recruiting, training, and retaining; with supported or customized employment)

The last question we would like to ask is:

- 11) Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about what North Dakota VR can do to improve the services that it provides to help people with disabilities in our state to **get and keep** good jobs or to have better **access** to its services?