



COLLEGE OF DIRECT SUPPORT EVALUATION BRIEF

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Charting Progress Using the College of Direct Support

Purpose

The College of Direct Support is committed to ongoing evaluation of the quality of its curriculum, its ease of use to learners, the usefulness of its human resource functions and its contributions to the lives of persons with disabilities. A wide range of quantitative and qualitative evaluation activities are being undertaken to provide this information. The Evaluation Brief provides a sampling of findings from CDS data collection activities occurring at the national, state, agency and individual levels. If you have questions about, suggestions for, or requests of the College of Direct Support in the area of evaluation, please let us know at: lakin001@umn.edu

People are saying that...

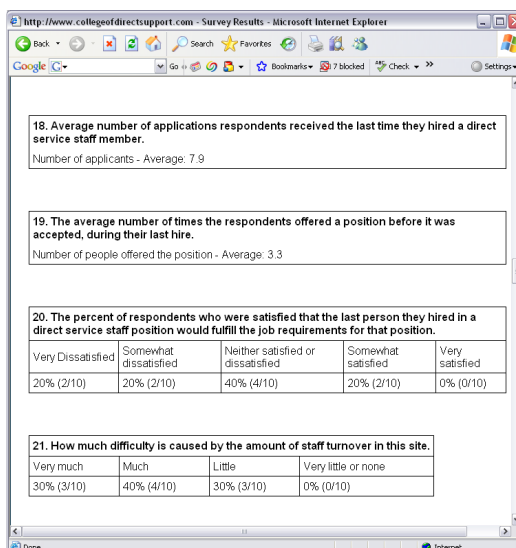
"The College of Direct Support is an exceptional curriculum to enhance one of our most valuable human resources, the direct support professional. With the College of Direct Support we can finally provide quality, consistency, innovative training at any time, any day, while continuing to improve the quality of life for our consumers."

--India Sue Ridout, Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services.

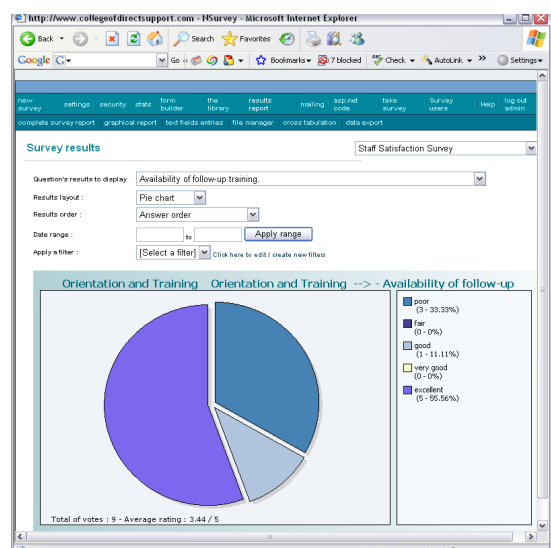
Many agencies are finding great benefit in being able to tailor the College of Direct Support (CDS) to meet their specific training needs. The CDS system also allows users to tailor questionnaires using the form building feature of the Human Resources Management Tools. This feature allows users to use or adapt any of the 66 existing survey questions and response options. They can also develop surveys from scratch and integrate them within their own CDS site.

Once tailored, surveys can be assigned to staff members using the CDS learner management system and then be completed by staff members online. The presentation of results can then be determined by the administrator. As seen in Example 1, aggregated responses to survey questions can be retrieved in neatly displayed and understandable reports. If a graphical presentation is needed, in either pie chart or bar graph, the user can click the "graphical report" button and select a specific survey question (see Example 2). Regardless of what survey results they choose to review, users always have the option to view all surveys ever completed or limit their analysis to those completed in a specific time span. This gives administrators control over what data they retrieve and what comparisons they make.

Example 1: Aggregate Summary of Data



Example 2: Pie Chart Presentation of Data



The College of Direct Support is an internet-delivered multimedia, competency-based training curriculum for direct support professionals and frontline supervisors supporting individuals with disabilities. The College of Direct Support is available for review at <http://collegeofdirectsupport.com>. For more information about the College of Direct Support write Bill Tapp (bill@collegeofdirectsupport.com) or Donna Kosak (donna@collegeofdirectsupport.com) or call the College of Direct Support (toll-free) at 877-353-2767. The College of Direct Support is a program of MC Strategies and the University of Minnesota

Information can also be exported to other databases and statistical programs for more in depth analyses.

For more information about these tools and how they can be integrated into your agency, visit: http://info.collegeofdirectsupport.com/go/curriculum/hr_survey_tools/ or contact Derek Nord at 612.624.0386 or nord0364@umn.edu.

Preliminary College of Direct Support Evaluation Results Indicate Success

Approximately a year ago the University of Minnesota implemented an evaluation of the College of Direct Support (CDS) training program. A primary source of data includes the surveying of randomly selected Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). In addition, many supervisors of DSPs were surveyed to get their perspectives on the CDS. Though the evaluation continues, some promising preliminary results are emerging that point to the success of the CDS.

From the perspective of the DSP, the CDS is reported to be a useful training tool. Two questions that summarize this ask DSPs to rate what role the CDS has in increasing their performance on course objectives and job performance. Using a scale from one to four, where one is “never or rarely” and four is “to a great extent”, DSPs believed, on average, their CDS training played a moderate to a great role in improving their performance on course objectives (average rating of 3.3; N = 66). Similarly, DSPs believed their CDS training played a moderate to great role in improving their job performance (average rating of 3.2; N = 65).

Supporting the DSPs’ responses, the majority of responding supervisors (N = 22) felt those they supervise are more qualified in a variety of situations after using the CDS. With respect to support provisions, DSPs were more qualified to support people to make their own choices, prevent challenging behaviors, and live safely in their homes and communities. Supervisors also felt DSPs were more qualified in educating people about their rights and how to advocate for themselves. Finally, DSPs were believed to be more qualified in areas of professionalism such as making ethical decisions, protecting people from harm, and utilizing person-centered planning.

Though this summary provides only a few pieces of data from a larger, ongoing evaluation, the results do provide a preliminary glimpse as to how DSPs feel they are benefiting from using the CDS. It also shows, from a smaller sample, supervisors tend to agree that CDS does impact performance in various areas. As the evaluation continues, more information about its results will be presented in future Evaluation Briefs.

For more information about the evaluation of the College of Direct Support being conducted by the University of Minnesota, please contact Derek Nord. He can be contacted at nord0364@umn.edu or 612.624.0386.

College of Direct Support Reaches Milestone-50,000 Learners!

In June 2007, the College of Direct Support (CDS) reached a significant milestone when it enrolled its 50,000th learner. As of July 1, 2007, this number has increased to 52,103 enrolled learners. Also, since its inception, a total 481,899 lessons have been completed. At approximately one hour per lesson, the CDS has provided thousands of days of training. These milestones reflect the commitment of hundreds of state and provider agencies that believe the CDS can contribute to a high-quality DSP workforce.

Chart 1: Growth in Enrolled CDS Learners, January 1, 2004 to July 1, 2007

