



Wisconsin

Department of Health Services

Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Customer Experience Survey Findings, 2014  
Wisconsin's Publicly Supported  
Outpatient Substance Use Services

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## INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY SAMPLE

In October, 2014, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) commissioned the University of Wisconsin Survey Center to conduct a mailed survey of individuals who received publicly-supported outpatient alcohol or drug counseling in the past 12 months. The purpose of the survey was to gauge the quality of and satisfaction with services and to identify areas for service quality improvement efforts.

A sample of 959 persons was randomly selected from adults who had received alcohol or drug counseling services authorized by county Departments of Human Services or Departments of Community Programs. In total, 44 of Wisconsin's 72 counties were selected for inclusion in the original sample of persons to be surveyed. Several large counties with urban centers such as Milwaukee, Dane, Waukesha, Brown, Racine, Winnebago, and Outagamie were not included in the sample because service recipient addresses were not available.

## MAIL SURVEY AND RESPONSE RATE

The survey design consisted of four mailings:

- Cover letter, survey form, business reply envelope, and \$2 incentive to all 959 customers
- A postcard reminder to participants
- Two additional mailings (cover letter, survey form, and business reply envelope) to participants who had not yet responded

The survey began on October 1, 2014 and concluded on December 31, 2014.

The response rates reported are based upon the number of completed questionnaires divided by the total number in the sample (286/959 or 30%) and the total persons who likely received a survey (286/797 or 36%) after removing persons whose mailings were returned by the post office as no such address/addressee.

## RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISONS

Each year about 20,000 persons receive publicly supported alcohol or drug counseling services authorized by county Departments of Human Services or Departments of Community Programs. Data on these services are reported by county agencies and stored in a DHS database called the Program Participation System (PPS).

Table 1 on the next page compares the sample's characteristics with the DHS PPS database records.

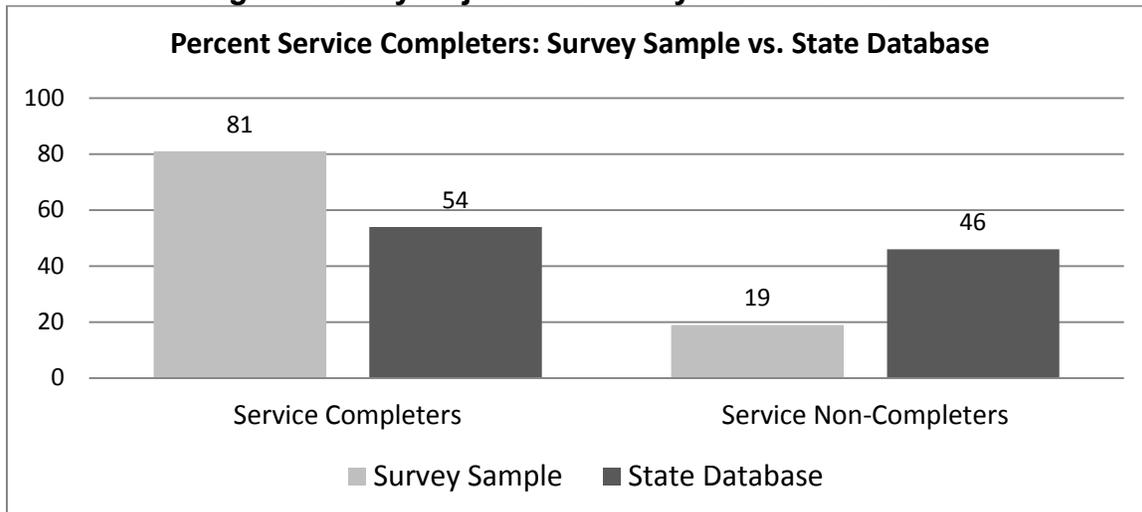
**Table 1: Respondent Characteristics Compared**

	<b>Survey Sample (n=286)</b>	<b>State PPS Database (N=19,992)</b>
<b>Female</b>	31%	29%
<b>Male</b>	69%	71%
<b>Age:</b>		
<b>18 - 24</b>	10.8%	14.0%
<b>25 - 34</b>	26.9%	34.2%
<b>35 - 44</b>	20.3%	21.7%
<b>45 - 54</b>	24.8%	20.1%
<b>55 - 64</b>	14.3%	8.5%
<b>65 or older</b>	2.4%	1.5%
<b>Race/Ethnicity:</b>		
<b>Hispanic</b>	4.0%	6.3%
<b>American Indian</b>	2.8%	3.1%
<b>Asian</b>	0.3%	0.7%
<b>Black</b>	2.1%	7.7%
<b>White</b>	90.8%	82.2%

## ADJUSTED SURVEY FINDINGS

Customer satisfaction surveys of this kind can have sources of bias which may skew or inflate the results in a positive direction. Typically, persons who complete alcohol or drug abuse counseling services are not only more likely to return a survey but also will report a higher rate of satisfaction with services than those who do not complete services or do not return a survey. Figure 1 compares the percent of service completers from the survey respondents with the percent of service completers from the DHS database to show a general idea of the amount of bias contained in this survey.

**Figure 1: Why Adjust the Survey Results for Bias?**



It is important to adjust the reported survey findings based upon the data in Figure 1 which shows an imbalance of service completers between the survey respondents and the state database:

- Among survey respondents *who completed services*, 86% indicated that the alcohol/drug counseling was a positive experience, 84% said they would recommend the services to others, and 78% said services helped them. An average of the three satisfaction indicators for service completers is 83%.
- Among survey respondents *who did not complete services*, 66% indicated that the alcohol/drug counseling was a positive experience, 70% would recommend services to others, and 53% said services helped them. An average of the three satisfaction indicators for service non-completers is 63%.

Using these averages, had the survey responders been more representative of the service completer/non-completer distribution in the state database, the overall average service satisfaction rate among survey responders would be an adjusted ~74% versus 80% without the adjustment.

## SERVICE SATISFACTION COMPARISONS

There is an indication that the Wisconsin alcohol/drug service satisfaction rate may be on par with or slightly higher than those reported in published studies. In surveys by Friedmann (2008) and Carlson (2001), rates of alcohol and drug service satisfaction ranged from 65% to 75%. By comparison, a similar 2013 Milwaukee County alcohol and drug services customer survey (n=239) conducted by the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division showed unadjusted 84% to 89% service satisfaction rates. The DHS Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services also conducts a similar mental health services survey called the Mental Health Statistics Improvement Program (MHSIP) survey. Unadjusted service satisfaction rates from the adult Wisconsin MHSIP surveys range from 78% to 82%.

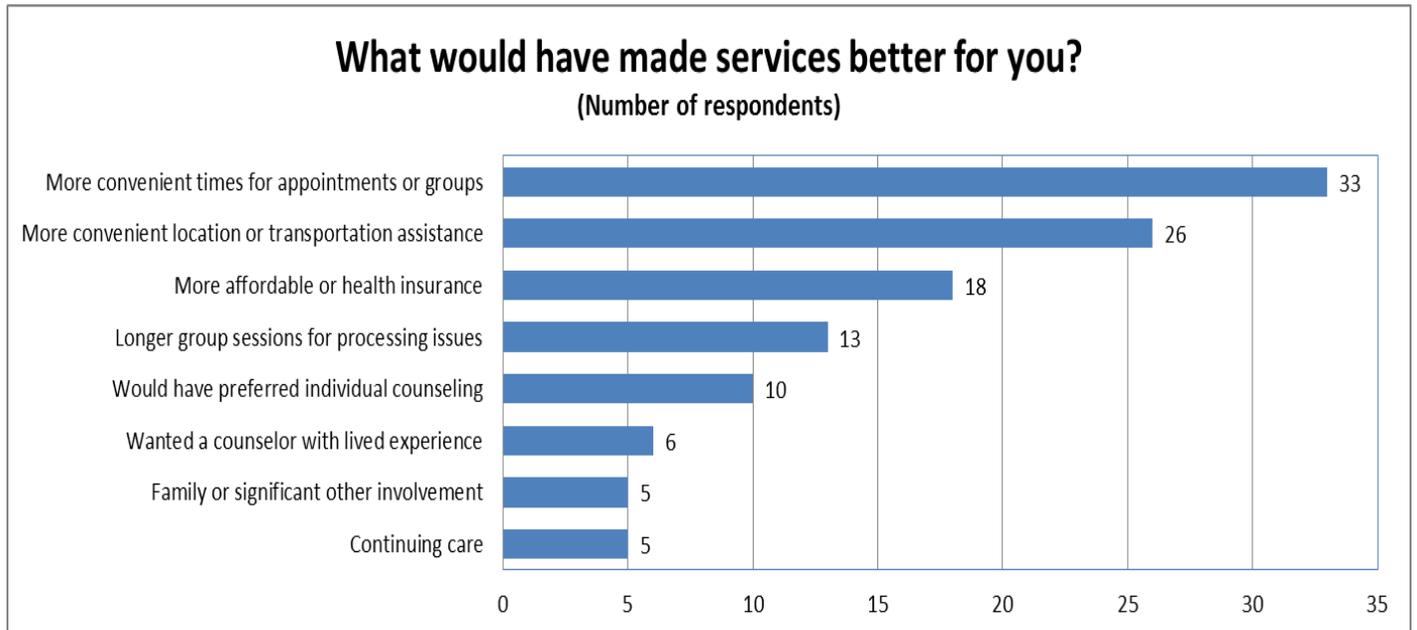
## OTHER UNADJUSTED SERVICE SATISFACTION FINDINGS

The table and figure on the next page provide unadjusted survey responses from the survey questionnaire sorted from highest to lowest for comparison purposes. This information will be used to develop one or more service quality improvement projects.

**Table 2: Other Reported Satisfaction Findings**

Survey Question Item	Percent Satisfied
<i>How satisfied were you with how much your family was involved in your services?</i>	87.8%
<i>How much did you feel that your counselor believed you could grow, change and recover?</i>	86.0%
<i>How much were your culture, lifestyle and beliefs respected by your counselor?</i>	83.6%
<i>Was the amount of time you had to wait before you started receiving services too long or was it about right?</i>	83.2%
<i>How much did you feel heard, understood and respected by your counselor?</i>	82.9%
<i>How much did you trust your counselor?</i>	82.5%
<i>How convenient was the location of the services?</i>	62.9%
<i>How convenient were the times that services were available?</i>	64.0%

**Figure 2: Areas for Improvement**



## GENDER, RACE, AND ETHNICITY FINDINGS

Survey sample sizes for persons of color were too small for valid comparisons by race. Unadjusted rates of service satisfaction are as follows: Eighty-two (82%) percent of female respondents were satisfied with services versus 81% of males. Hispanic persons (82%); African Americans (100%); American Indians (67%); and Caucasians (81%).

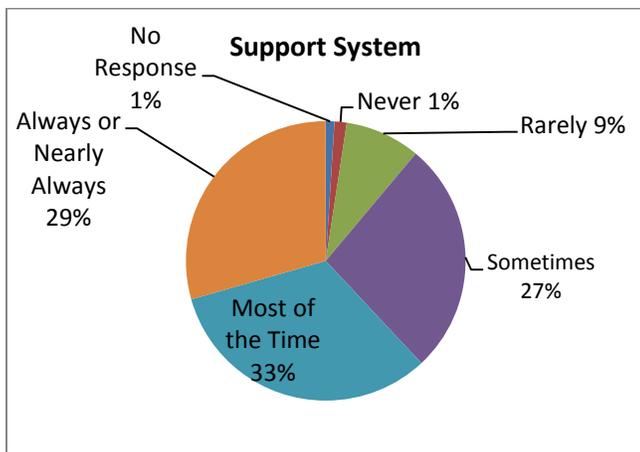
# RESPONDENTS LEGALLY REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN SERVICES

There was a slight, but non-significant difference (proportions difference test) in unadjusted service satisfaction between persons who participated in services voluntarily (81%) and persons legally required to participate in services (77%).

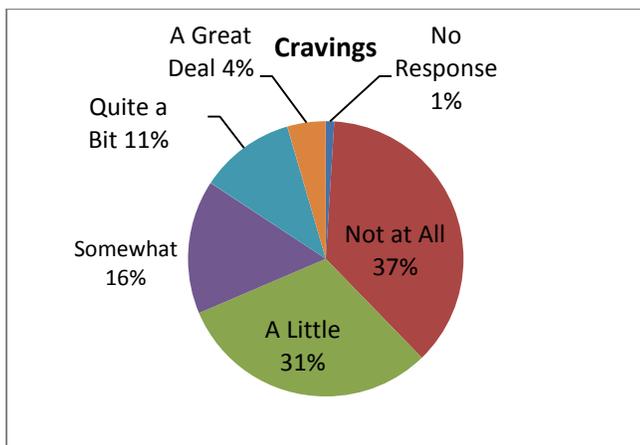
## SERVICE OUTCOMES

The survey included several questions about the outcomes of services and the unadjusted findings are included in the figures below.

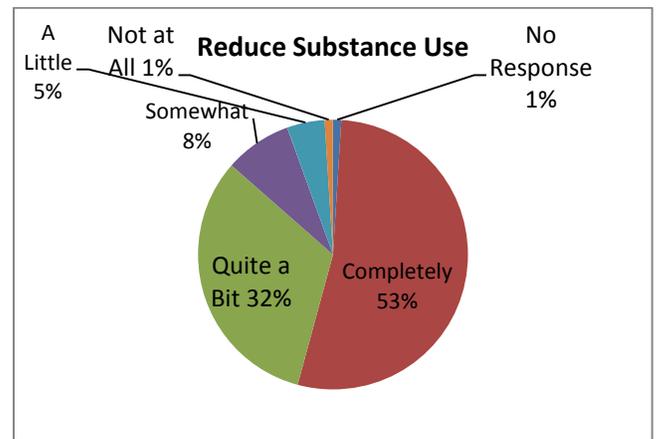
**Figure 3: How often are you spending time with family members, friends or support groups who are supportive of your recovery?**



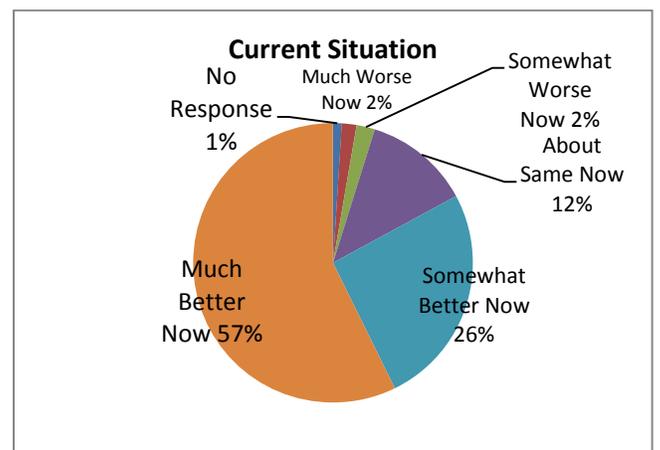
**Figure 4: How much are you bothered by cravings or urges to drink alcohol or use drugs?**



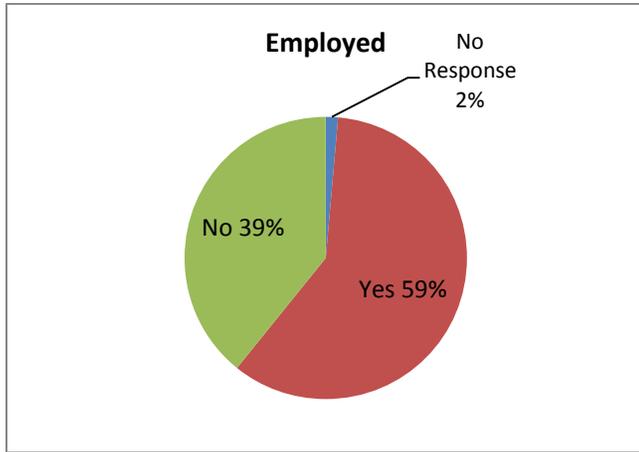
**Figure 5: How much have you been able to reduce or stop using alcohol or drugs?**



**Figure 6: Compared to before you started receiving alcohol or drug use counseling services, how would you rate your situation now? Would you say you are...**



**Figure 7: Are you currently employed, either full-time or part-time?**



## SERVICE SATISFACTION AND OUTCOMES CORRELATION

The scientific literature on the correlation between service satisfaction and outcomes is mixed. Two of the three studies reviewed (Friedmann, 2008 and Carlson, 2001) found a favorable evaluation of treatment near the time of discharge was significantly correlated with substance use reduction at one-year post-discharge.

Using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test, Wisconsin service satisfaction was significantly correlated ( $p < .01$ ) with service outcomes of reduced substance use and having a positive support system.

## REFERENCES

- Carlson M., Gabriel R. (2001) Patient satisfaction, use of services, and one-year outcomes in publicly funded substance abuse treatment, *Psychiatric Services*, 52(9):1230.
- Friedmann, P., Gerstein D., Zhang Z. (2008) Patient satisfaction and sustained outcomes of drug abuse treatment, *Journal of Health Psychology*, 13:388.
- McLellan, A.T., Hunkeler, E. (1998) Patient satisfaction and outcomes in alcohol and drug abuse treatment, *Psychiatric Services*, 49:573.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A Initial Cover Letter

Scott Walker  
Governor

Kitty Rhoades  
Secretary



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Health Services

DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

1 WEST WILSON STREET  
PO BOX 7851  
MADISON WI 53707-7851

Telephone: 608-266-2717  
FAX: 608-266-2579  
TTY: 888-241-9432  
dhs.wisconsin.gov

[DATE HERE]

Good Day,

We need your help. In order to provide the best possible services, we need to know what you think about the alcohol or drug use counseling you may have received in the past 12 months. We want to know if the services were good, bad, if they helped you and your quality of life.

Filling out this survey is voluntary. Your services will not be affected in any way if you answer our questions or if you chose to not answer. We hope you will choose to answer our questions whether you may have had a good experience or a bad experience. Your individual responses to the questions will be kept private and confidential. This means your individual responses will never be identified in a report nor shared with county agencies or service providers. We have assigned a unique number to this letter and survey so we can track whether or not we need to send you follow-up reminders.

Except for the \$2 enclosed, filling out the questionnaire will not provide any direct benefit to you. However, your participation in filling out the questions will help the State Department of Health Services and county agencies across the state improve services. Your opinion is very important to us.

Some people prefer that someone read each question to them, so feel free to ask a trusted friend or family member to read the questions to you. Because you are one of a small sample of people selected to fill out the form, it is very important that you return a completed survey. The questions should take about 10 minutes to answer. Please take time now to complete and return the questions in the postage-paid envelope provided. A \$2 bill is also enclosed to thank you for your time and effort for answering our questions.

If you have questions about the form, please feel free to contact Mike Quirke (608-266-7584) or Chad Kniss at the University of Wisconsin (608-262-4157). Thank you in advance for assisting us.

Sincerely,

*M Quirke*

Mike Quirke  
Program Evaluation Coordinator  
Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Si desea recibir esta carta y la encuesta en español, por favor llame a Mike Quirke al (608-266-7584).

P1077-S1-«caseid»

Wisconsin.gov

**Appendix B  
Customer Experience Survey Questionnaire**

## Customer Experience Survey

In order to provide the best possible services, we need to know what you think about the alcohol or drug use counseling you may have received in the past 12 months. Please read each question carefully and check the one response that is most like the way you felt when you received services or how you feel right now. Your honest responses will help us better assist you and others. Your answers will be kept private and secure. Please do not identify yourself using your name, address, phone number, or social security number anywhere on this survey form.

**1. Was the amount of time you had to wait before you started receiving services too long or was it about right?**

- Waited too long before receiving services  
 The wait was about right

**2. The next questions are about your experiences with the alcohol or drug use counseling services you received.**

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
a. How <u>much</u> were your culture, lifestyle and beliefs respected by your counselor?	<input type="radio"/>				
b. How <u>much</u> did you feel heard, understood and respected by your counselor?	<input type="radio"/>				
c. How <u>much</u> did you and your counselor agree on the changes that would be beneficial in your life?	<input type="radio"/>				
d. How <u>much</u> did you feel that your counselor believed you could grow, change and recover?	<input type="radio"/>				
e. How <u>much</u> did you trust your counselor?	<input type="radio"/>				
f. How <u>much</u> were you helped by the alcohol or drug counseling services you received?	<input type="radio"/>				

**3. Continuing to think about your experiences, how convenient were the alcohol or drug use counseling services you received?**

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
a. How convenient was the <u>location</u> of the services?	<input type="radio"/>				
b. How convenient were the <u>times</u> that services were available?	<input type="radio"/>				

**4. How satisfied were you with how much your family was involved in your services?**

- Very dissatisfied  
 Somewhat dissatisfied  
 Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied  
 Somewhat satisfied  
 Very satisfied

**5. How would you rate your experience with alcohol or drug use counseling?**

- Very bad experience
- Somewhat bad experience
- Neither a bad nor good experience
- Somewhat good experience
- Very good experience

**6. How likely would you be to recommend to a friend or family member the agency that you received alcohol or drug counseling services from, if they needed similar services?**

- Very unlikely to recommend
- Somewhat unlikely to recommend
- Neither unlikely nor likely to recommend
- Somewhat likely to recommend
- Very likely to recommend

**7. What one or two things would have made the alcohol or drug use counseling services better for you?**


**8. Did you participate in services because it was legally required?**

- Yes
- No

**9. Did you complete the alcohol or drug use counseling services?**

- Yes → Go to question 11 on the next page
- No



**10. If No to question 9, which one of the following was the main reason you did not complete services?**

- I chose to stop receiving services
- I could not afford to pay for the services
- The agency referred me to another agency
- The agency told me not to come back for services
- I moved away
- Other reason → Please tell us

--

**11. Please tell us whether or not your services were paid for by each of the following methods.**

	Yes	No
a. Did you or a family member pay for some or all of the fees?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Did insurance pay for some or all of the fees?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Did a county or the agency pay for some or all of the fees?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Were fees paid in some other way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

→ Please tell us

**The next questions are about your current situation. All your answers are strictly confidential.**

**12. How often are you spending time with family members, friends or support groups who are supportive of your recovery?**

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Most of the time
- Always or nearly always

**13. How much are you bothered by cravings or urges to drink alcohol or use drugs?**

- A great deal
- Quite a bit
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

**14. How much have you been able to reduce or stop using alcohol or drugs?**

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- Quite a bit
- Completely

**15. Compared to before you started receiving alcohol or drug use counseling services, how would you rate your situation now? Would you say you are...**

- ...much worse now?
- ...somewhat worse now?
- ...about the same now?
- ...somewhat better now?
- ...much better now?

**16. Are you currently employed, either full-time or part-time?**

Yes → Go to question 18

No

**17. What is the main reason you are not currently employed?**

You are looking for work

In school or job training

Homemaker

Retired

On disability

Some other reason → Please tell us

**18. What is your age?**

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 to 54

55 to 64

65 or older

**19. Are you Hispanic or Latino?**

Yes

No

**20. Which of the following categories describe your race? Please check all that apply**

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

Something else → Please tell us

**Thank you for your time and cooperation in completing this form!  
Please return it in the postage paid and addressed enclosed envelope to:**

**UW Survey Center  
475 N Charter Street Room B607  
Madison, WI 53706-1507**