

2017

State of Staff Development and Training

A National Perspective on Healthcare Performance Improvement



RELIAS

Table of Contents

- 3** Introduction
- 4** Respondent Demographics
- 7** Key Takeaways
- 10** Findings by Healthcare Sector
 - 10** | Health and Human Services
 - 12** | Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
 - 15** | Applied Behavior Analysis
 - 17** | Acute and Pre-Acute Care
 - 19** | Post-Acute Care
 - 21** | Payers and Insurers
- 24** Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses
- 28** Outlook
- 30** Survey Methodology



Introduction

Here at Relias, we continue growing our understanding of the impact of learning on organizational performance. Using a multi-product approach, we provide analytics to help identify organizational weaknesses, assessments to identify individual weaknesses, and then marry those areas with training to help organizations have a more skilled workforce so they can take better care of people, reduce penalties, lower costs, improve reimbursements, and have overall better financial results.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Our *2017 State of Staff Development and Training* report was designed to get a national perspective on five broad staff development and training issues:

- The perceived business alignment, value, and impact of today's staff development and training programs
- Principal training drivers and emerging influences
- Perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of existing training programs
- Current common practices in training management and delivery
- Budgeting and the economics of staff development and training

To get as broad a set of responses as possible, we reached out not only to our customer base, but also to organizations throughout the industry (if we missed you, please let us know; we'd love to include you next year!). We are indebted to our many partner organizations that promoted this survey to their members.

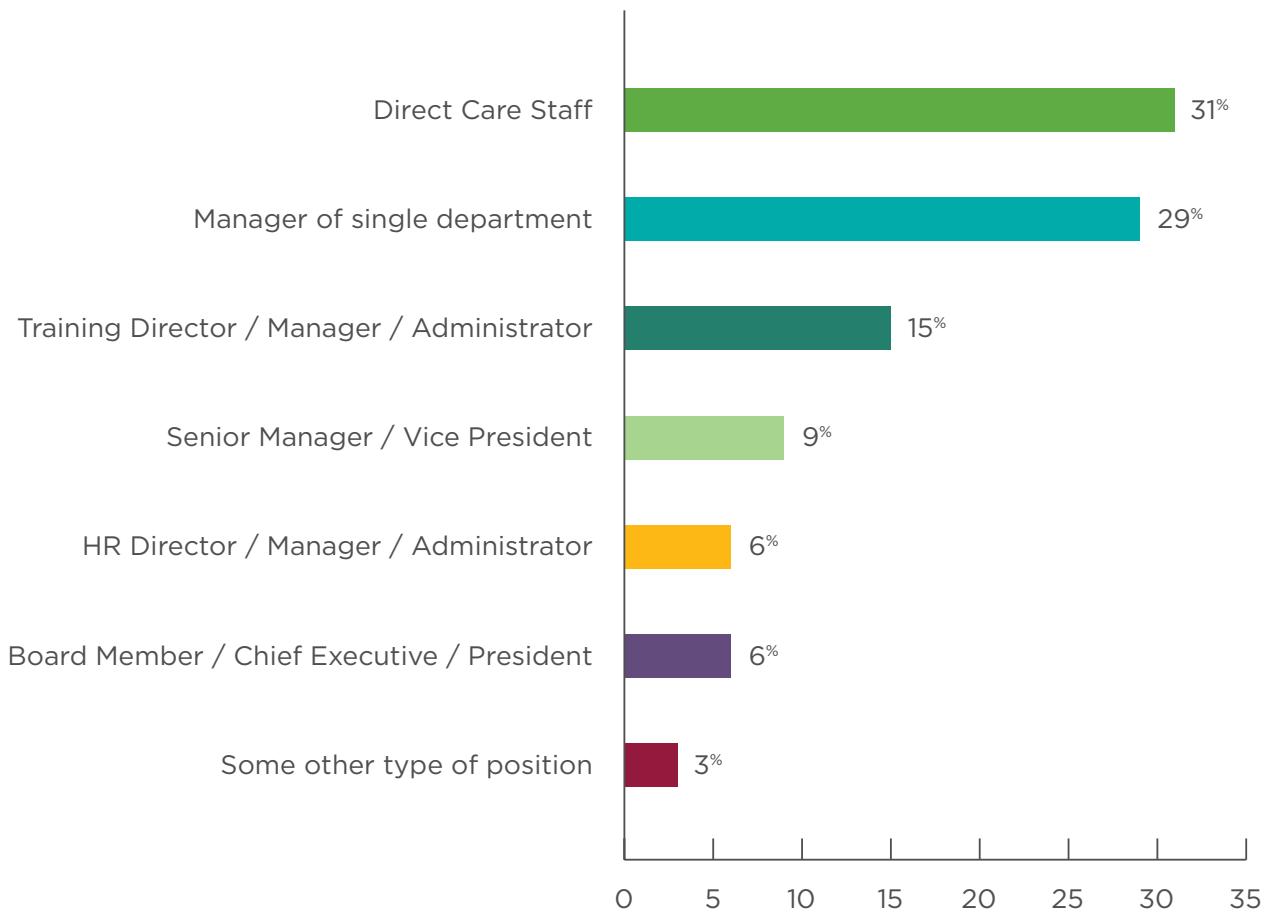
WHO IS THIS REPORT FOR?

This report is for two groups of people: the executives responsible for driving organizational performance and the individuals responsible for overseeing and delivering training programs.

Our hope is that this report provides an opportunity for organizations to 1) benchmark their current practices, investments, and beliefs against a national sample, and 2) spur discussion on how to improve staff development and training to fulfill your organization's mission, and do so in a sustainable way.

Respondent Demographics

More than 5,000 healthcare professionals participated in this survey, with 15% of respondents holding executive or senior management positions and 50% of respondents holding other key training stakeholder positions. The survey represents professionals in the following healthcare sectors: health and human services, applied behavior analysis, intellectual and developmental disabilities, acute and pre-acute care, post-acute care, and payer and insurer.





COMPANY SIZE BY EMPLOYEE COUNT

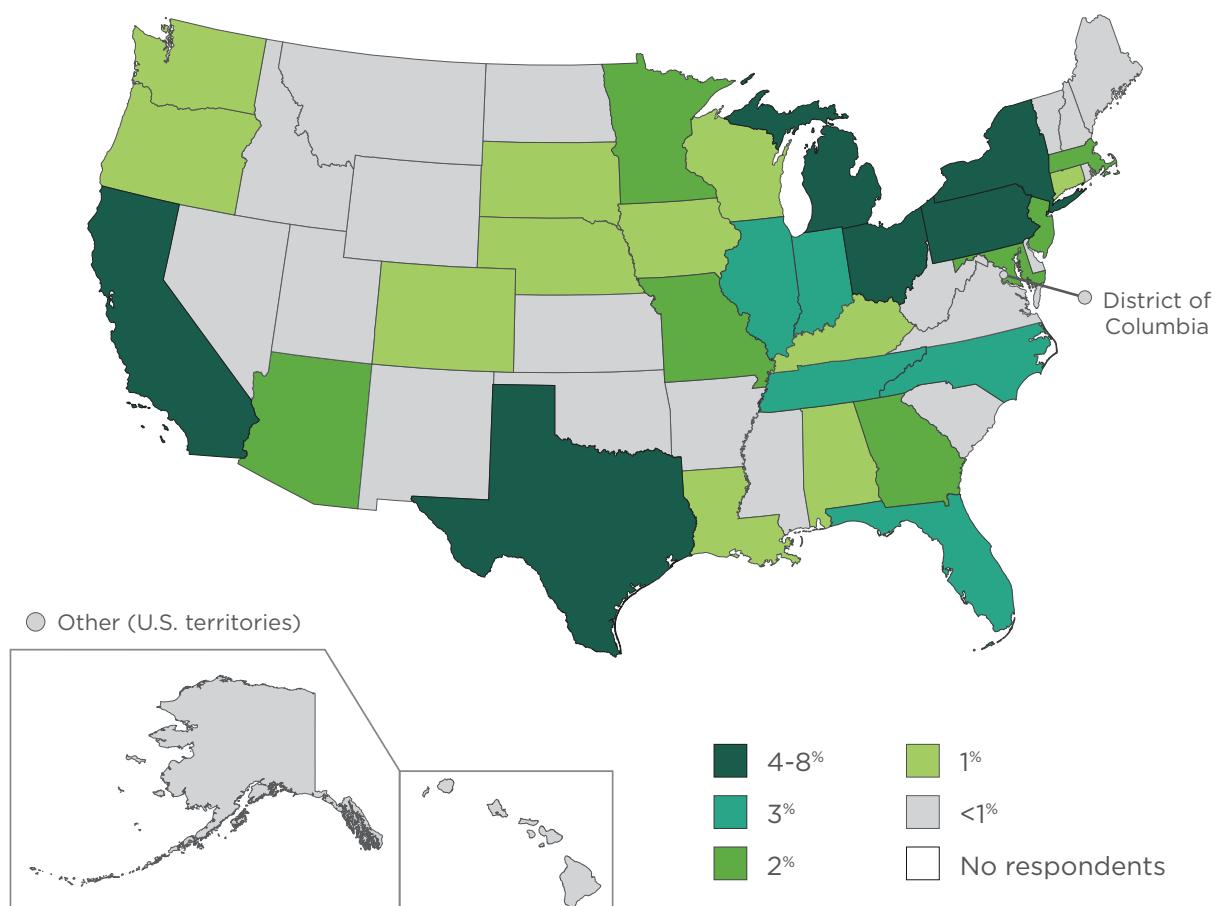


30% Small (<250)

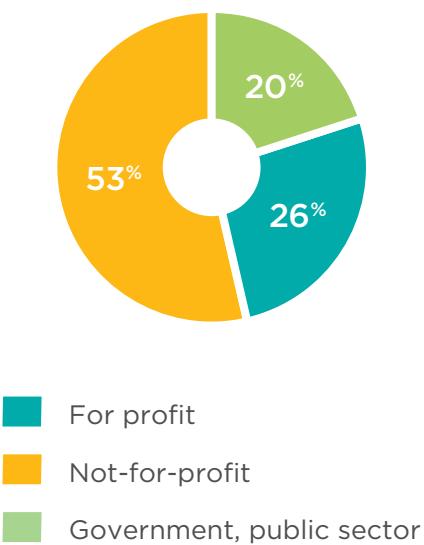
29% Medium (251-1000)

41% Large (>1000)

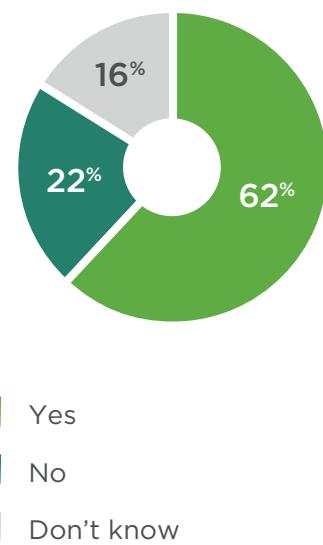
ORGANIZATIONS' HEADQUARTERS



TYPE OF ORGANIZATION



ACCREDITATION



Key Takeaways

There are gaps between online training utilization, putting training into practice, and assessments.

Respondents reported high use of either some or all online training (84%), yet only 26% of respondents have well-developed methods in place to evaluate whether what is taught in training is put into practice on the job. Analytics programs can help identify gaps in care that may lead to adverse outcomes. Typically, such programs are based on service reporting or billing transactions. Finally, only 40% of respondents use structured pre-employment assessments.



84%

reported high use of either
some or all online training



26%

have well-developed methods
to evaluate whether what is
taught in training is put in
practice on the job



40%

use structured pre-employment
assessments in the hiring
process

While **84%** of healthcare professionals reported high usage of some or all online training, **only one quarter** of respondents are able to evaluate whether or not the training is actually working.



Compliance with external requirements motivates investment in staff development and training.

There was a dramatic increase (from 73% in 2015 to 86% in 2017) in the percentage of respondents who reported it is extremely important for staff development and training to support the licensing and certification needs of their staff. This compliance focus is also reflected in the perceived positive impact of staff development and training on compliance with external requirements ranking first among the various areas of impact by respondents overall, and at each management level. We project this trend toward supporting external requirements will continue over the next few years. The respondents' macro-environment predictions centered mainly around changes in national and state governmental policies as well in the insurance industry. Embedded in many of these responses were increasing requirements for training, certification, and reimbursement.

Training programs face both macro-environmental and internal, practical challenges.

More than 20% of the respondents predict the current administration or other national legislation (including potential changes to the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid redesign) will have a substantial impact on their staff development training program over the next few years.

Along with political uncertainty, respondents also face staff shortages and time constraints as roadblocks to implementing and delivering a staff development and training program.

There is a perceived low impact of staff development and training on financial results.

As with the Relias State of Training survey results in 2015, less than half of the respondents indicate training directly impacts their financial results. Interestingly, upper level managers and other managers are less likely than training/HR managers to see an impact on financial results. Analytics programs not only help identify opportunities for quality improvement but they also increase transparency of business initiatives' impact on costs and patient outcomes. Another reason for not seeing an impact on financial results may be that the vast majority of respondents indicate that the manpower and financial investments in staff development and training are inadequate. A positive financial impact only accrues when enough investment is made to deliver an effective staff development and training program; perhaps there are a lack of staff development and training programs with enough organizational investment and resources behind them.



>20% of respondents predict national legislation will **substantially impact** training.

Commitment to staff development and training is correlated with its having a higher impact on top business goals.

Organizations that place staff development and training as a top priority tend to see a substantial impact on their top business goals. Similarly, organizations that place greater importance on devoting manpower and financial investment in staff development and training tend to put more methods in place to evaluate whether what is taught in training is put into practice. The data indicate that greater benefits regarding business goals achievement and translation of skills into practice may require not only instituting a staff development and training program but that organizational leadership prioritize such a program and allocate the necessary resources.



Placing staff development as a **top priority** tends to **substantially impact** top business goals.



Findings by Healthcare Sector

Sector 1: Health and Human Services

2,324 respondents self-identified their primary service sector as health and human services (HHS). This sector excludes respondents in the ABA and IDD markets who were identified in the data feed provided before the survey distribution and analyzed separately.

Importance of Staff Development and Training

Within health and human services, the importance of staff development and training has increased from 48% to 54% between 2015 and 2017. The highest substantial positive impact of staff development and training is seen in compliance with external requirements (see graph, top of page 11), with large and medium-sized organizations and upper-level managers indicating the greatest impact on this measure. Since 2015, the impact has significantly increased on clinical practice standardization and risk management in this sector. Most noticeable among areas of impact is the gap between staffing (e.g., recruitment, retention, and onboarding) and performance (core competencies, outcomes, and practice standardization).

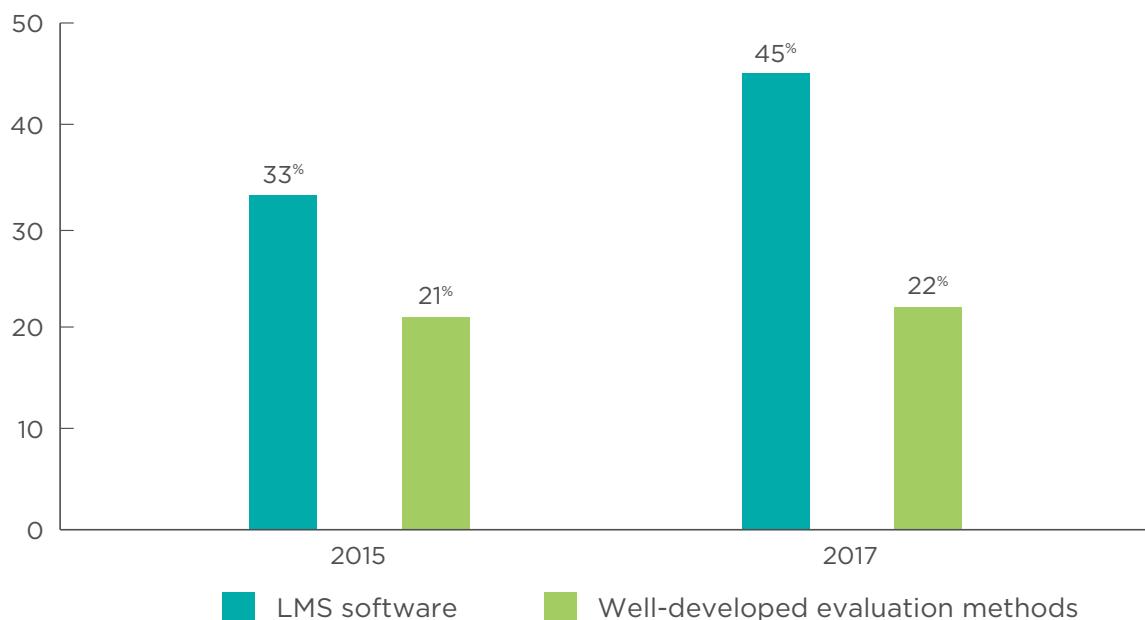
Technology

As in other healthcare sectors surveyed, a greater percentage of large and medium organizations within HHS have LMS software. Unique to this sector, large and medium organizations have more well-developed methods in place to evaluate whether their training is put into practice than small organizations. Over the last two years, reported utilization of LMS programs has increased within HHS, while well-developed methods to evaluate translating training into practice has stayed relatively the same over time. This discrepancy suggests an opportunity for using implemented technology to help track training and increase the application of learned skills on the job.

IMPACTS OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING



ORGANIZATIONAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY



Sector 2: Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

766 respondents were identified as working in the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) sector in the data feed provided before the survey distribution.

Importance of Staff Development and Training

Respondents in the IDD sector report training and staff development ranks as very important among the top priorities for their organization (59%—an increase from 53% in the Relias 2015 survey) and has a direct, substantial, and positive impact on their business goals (60%). The areas of impact are consistent with the data from other healthcare sectors we surveyed. More than three-quarters of the respondents state a positive impact on compliance with external requirements, while less than half state a positive impact on staff recruitment and financial results. The relatively low impact on staff recruitment is also evident in the low use of pre-employment assessments (32%).





IDD is the only sector in which upper management is more likely than lower management to see the direct positive impact of training on staff retention.

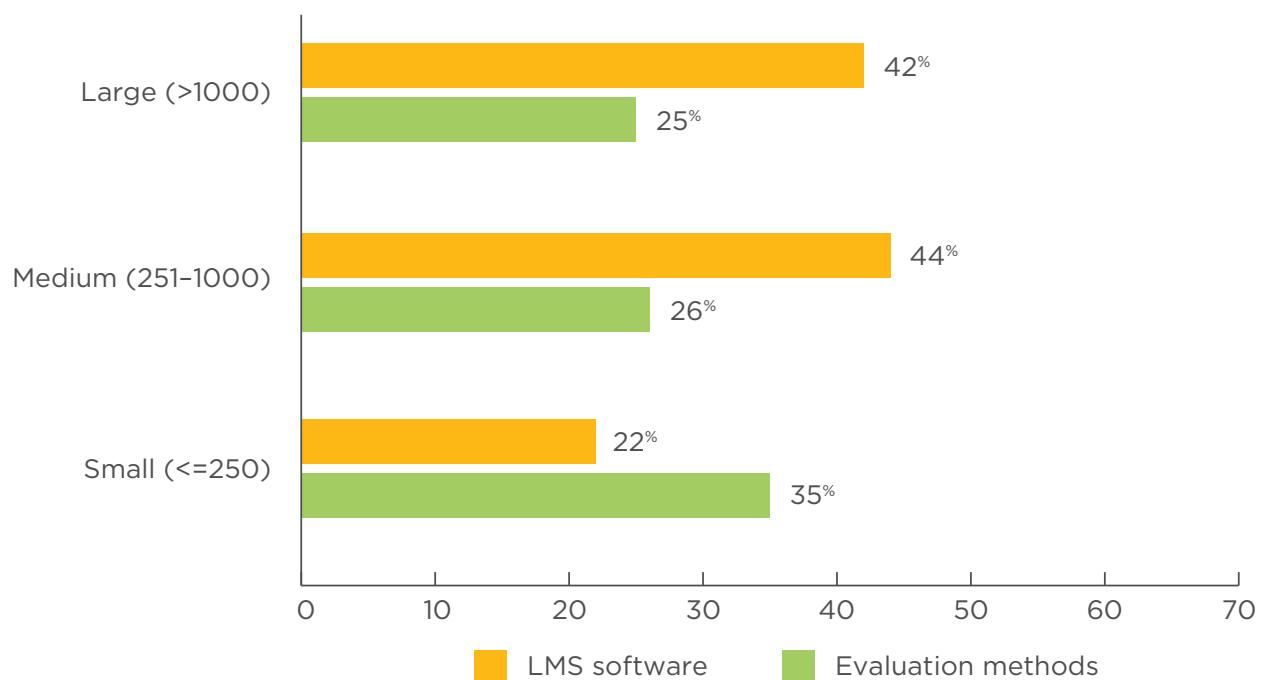


Since our 2015 report, 19% more respondents in the IDD sector reported that staff development and training supports the licensing and certification needs of their staff. Analyzed by management level, 78% of upper management, 83% of HR and training management, and 88% of single-department managers indicate its importance. This is the only healthcare sector surveyed in which the importance of staff development and training for licensing and certification increases as the level of management decreases. Also unique to this sector is that upper management is more likely to see the direct, substantial, and positive impact of training on staff retention compared to other levels of managers. Not surprisingly, HR and training management report the highest impact of staff development and training on staff onboarding compared to upper management and other managers.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Three-quarters of respondents in the IDD vertical reported either half (60%) or all (18%) of their training is completed online. Yet only one-third of the respondents reported using a learning management system software to track training, which is roughly equal to the percentage of respondents using less technical methods such as paper or word processing files, spreadsheets, and databases. Similarly, 30% of IDD respondents reported they have well-developed methods for evaluating whether what is taught in training is put into practice and 32% report using structured, pre-employment assessments.

The graph below shows that, within IDD, a greater percentage of large and medium-sized organizations use LMS software, yet fewer report having methods in place to evaluate whether what is taught in training is put into practice on the job than small organizations. This indicates an opportunity for large and medium-sized companies to improve their data-driven decision making by utilizing such capabilities of analytics programs and LMS software.

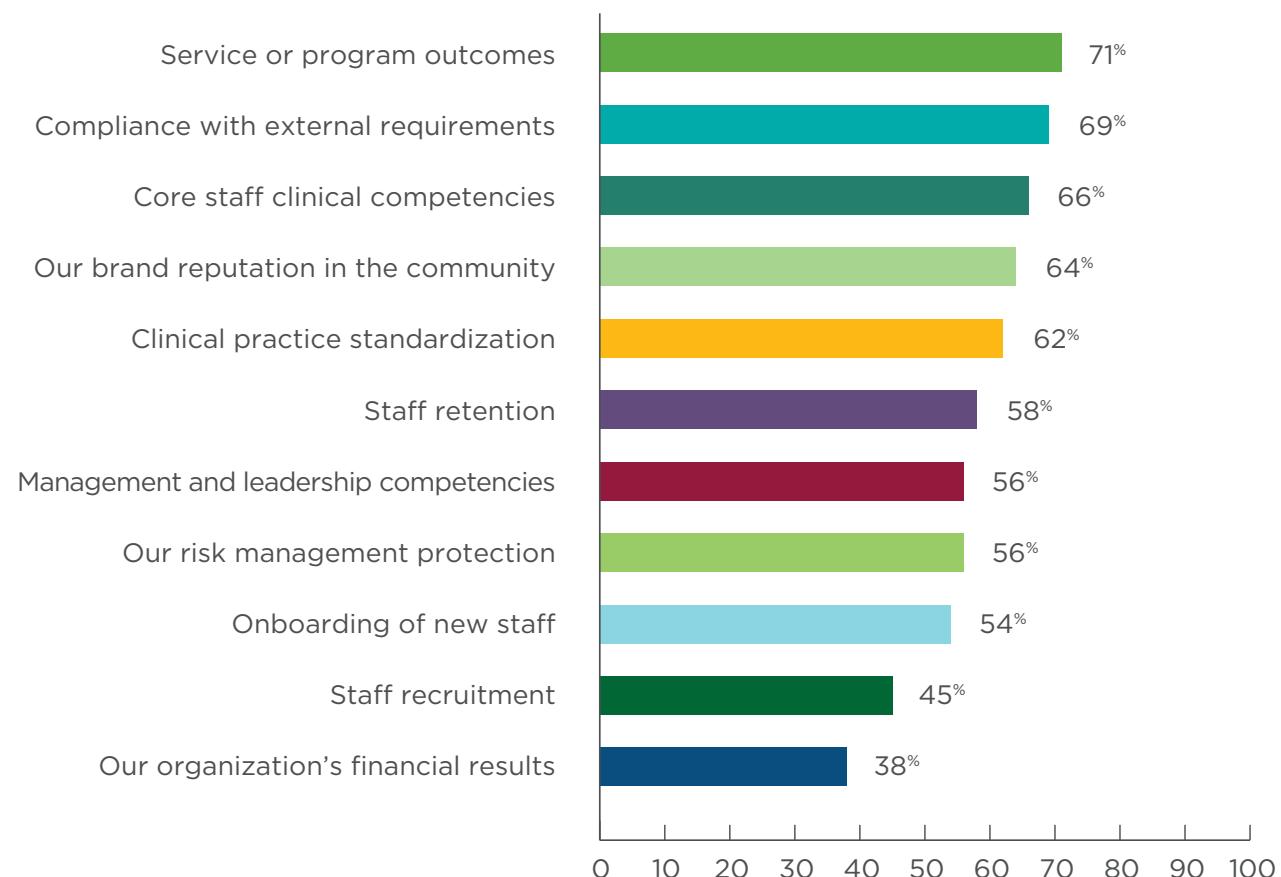


Sector 3: Applied Behavior Analysis

480 respondents were identified as working in the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) sector in the data feed provided before the survey distribution.

Importance of Staff Development and Training

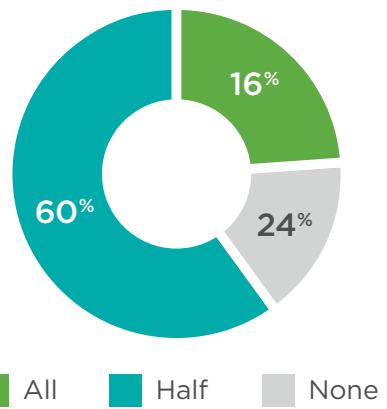
Nearly three-fifths (58%) of respondents in the ABA sector report that staff development and training ranks among the top priorities at their organization, and a similar portion (60%) claim it has a direct impact on their business goals. An overwhelming majority (82%) report that staff development and training is “extremely important” in supporting the licensing and certification needs of their staff. The graph below shows that a substantial positive impact of staff development and training is most seen in service or program outcomes and compliance with external requirements. In our analysis by organization size, we found that for all areas except compliance with external requirements and financial results, more small organizations (<= 250 employees) than large or medium organizations report that staff development and training has a direct positive impact.



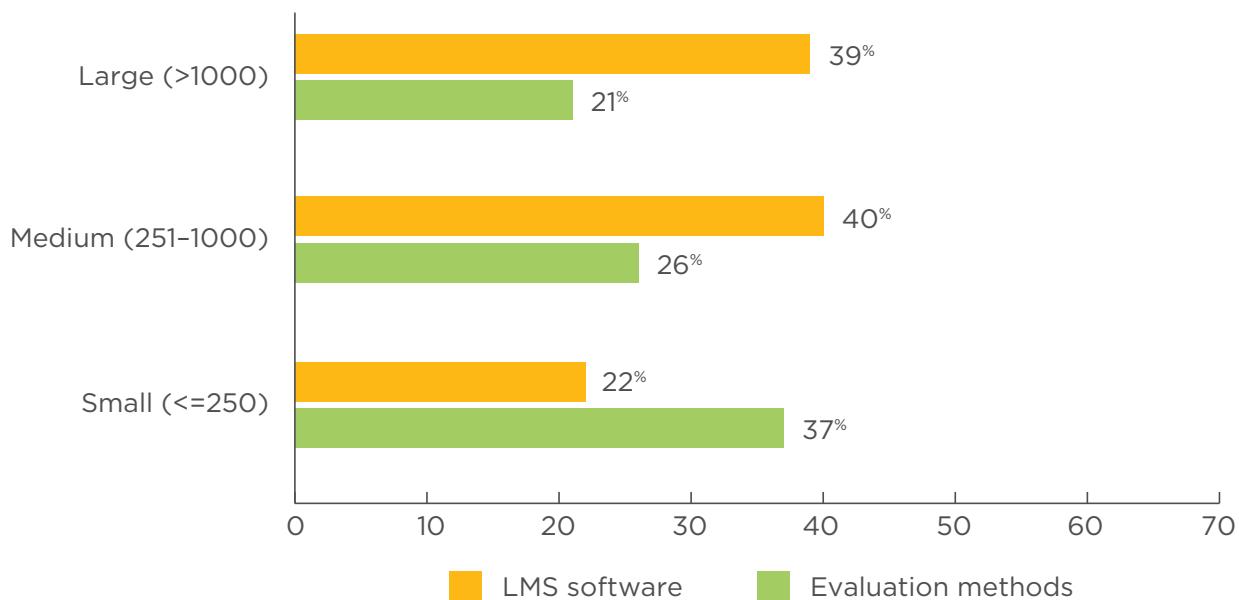
Technology

Three-quarters of respondents in the ABA sector report conducting at least half or all their staff development and training online. 40% of respondents list their top staff development and training strength as it being online—a considerably higher proportion than any other healthcare sector surveyed. Four out of ten respondents report they are using “low-tech” methods to track training (44% use paper/Word files; 47% use spreadsheets), while less than one-third are using either databases (32.8%) or LMS software (30%). There is a significant gap between low-tech and more sophisticated methods, despite a large percentage using online staff development and training.

AMOUNT OF TRAINING CONDUCTED ONLINE



Small organizations in the ABA sector are more likely to use low-tech methods for tracking staff training—one-half use either paper/Word files or spreadsheets. They are significantly less likely to use LMS software (22%) compared to either medium size (40%) or large organizations (39%). It is interesting to note that large organizations use the four types of tracking methods (paper/Word files, spreadsheets, databases, and LMS) nearly equally. We believe an opportunity exists to both implement new and utilize existing analytics programs to improve staff development and training evaluation and increase actual on-the-job implementation of learned skills.



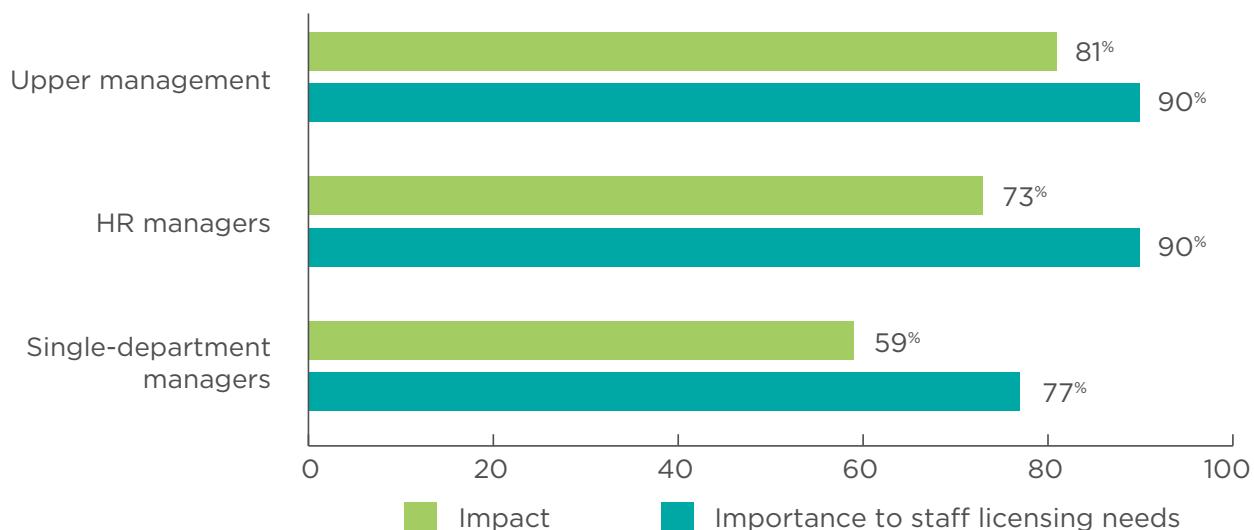
Sector 4: Acute and Pre-Acute Care

557 respondents self-identified their primary service sector as acute or pre-acute care, with 9% of respondents holding executive or senior management positions and 44% of respondents holding other key training stakeholder positions.

Staff Development and Training Impact

The areas where more than seven in ten acute and pre-acute care respondents state that staff development and training have the greatest positive impact are compliance with external requirements, core staff clinical competencies, and risk management protection. As with the other healthcare sectors surveyed, the lowest areas of positive impact are staff recruitment (49%) and financial results (50%). Regarding the impact on service or program outcomes, upper management and HR managers reported a greater positive impact of staff development and training than single-department managers (81% and 73%, respectively, compared to 59%). Additionally, upper management and HR managers are 13% more likely than single-department managers to report that staff development and training are extremely important to the licensing needs of their staff (90% vs. 77%). This suggests that upper-level managers and HR managers may want to better communicate the importance and impact of staff development and training to single department managers. With time and staffing shortages named as top weaknesses, it's important that managers know the value of training that pulls employees from their regular duties.

A lower percentage of respondents in acute and pre-acute care consider training as important (48%) or having a direct impact on business goals (56%) than respondents in post-acute care (59% for both items). Interestingly, 69% of acute and pre-acute care respondents use



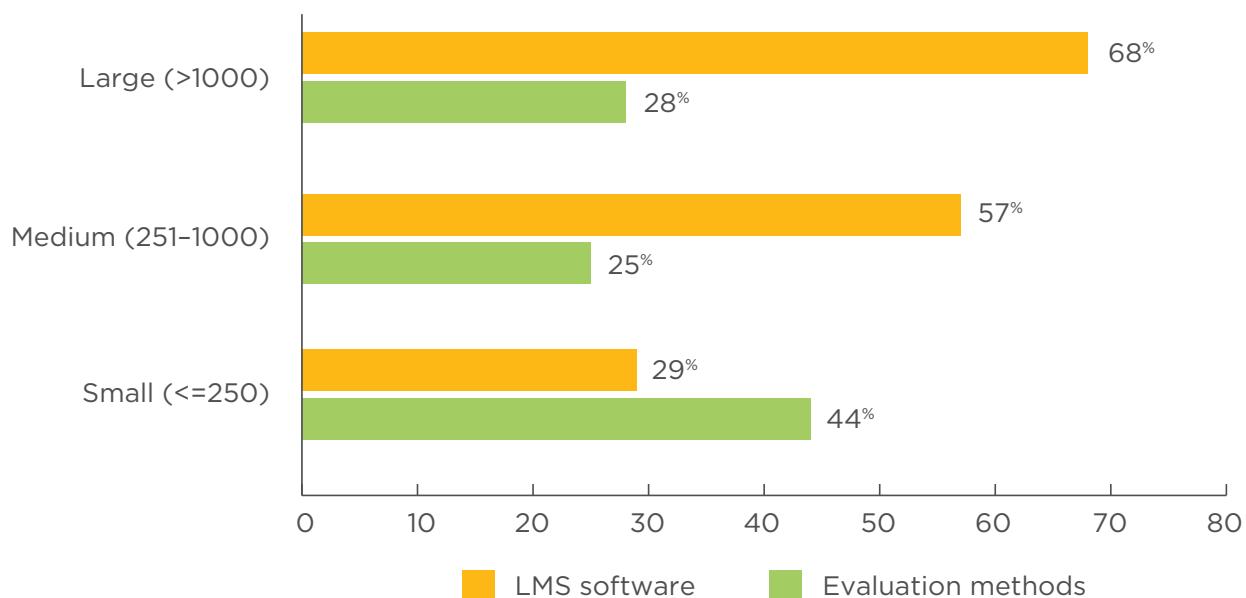


15% more acute and pre-acute care respondents use individualized staff development and training than post-acute care respondents.

individualized staff development and training versus 54% of respondents in the post-acute care sector. The percentages of acute and pre-acute care responses in these categories of importance, impact, and individualized training do not differ based on organization size.

Technology

The vast majority (94%) of acute and pre-acute care professionals are using online training for about half (63%) or all (31%) of their staff development and training. Use of LMS software increases with organization size level. However, small organizations have a significantly greater amount of well-developed methods in place to evaluate whether what is taught in training is put into practice (see graph below). As with other healthcare sectors, there is an opportunity to utilize online systems, LMS software, and analytics to evaluate and translate staff development and training into everyday practice.



Sector 5: Post-Acute Care

717 respondents self-identified their primary service sector as post-acute care, with 16% of respondents holding executive or senior management positions and 61% of respondents holding other key training stakeholder positions.

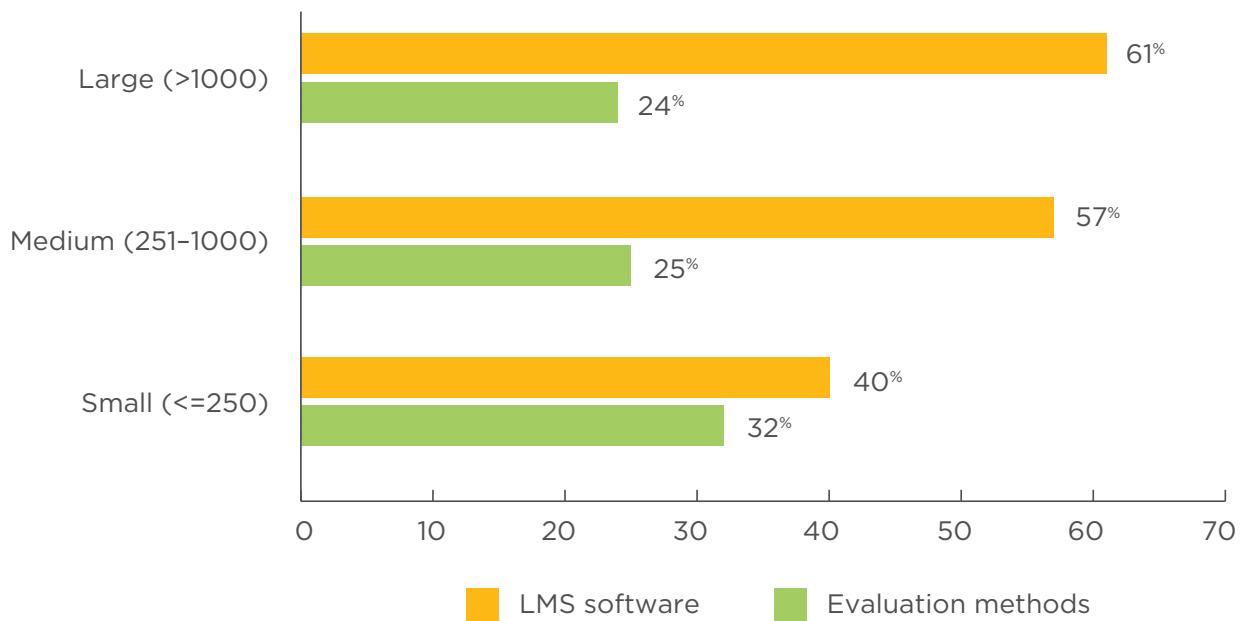
Importance of Staff Development and Training

About three in five post-acute care respondents reported staff training and development programs rank among their organization's top priorities and the same percentage reported these programs have a direct impact on their top business goals. As with other sectors, the greatest positive impact is seen in compliance with external requirements, clinical practice standardization, and core staff clinical competencies. Less than half of the post-acute respondents report a substantial positive impact on staff recruitment and financial results (see graph below). Over nine-tenths of respondents reported that staff development and training is extremely important to the licensing and certification needs of their staff. This does not vary by size of the organization.



Technology

Most post-acute care respondents (86%) report using online training methods for at least half or all of the time versus face-to-face or other forms of training. More than half of the post-acute care sector surveyed uses LMS software. However, as you can see on the graph below, small organizations have lower rates of LMS software. Despite their lower rates of sophisticated technology, a greater percentage of small organizations report having well-developed methods in place to evaluate whether what is taught in training is put into practice on the job. It appears there is an opportunity in this sector for organizations of all sizes to adopt LMS and analytics and for medium and large organizations to utilize current technology for better training evaluation and implementing learned skills into practice.



Sector 6: Payers and Insurers

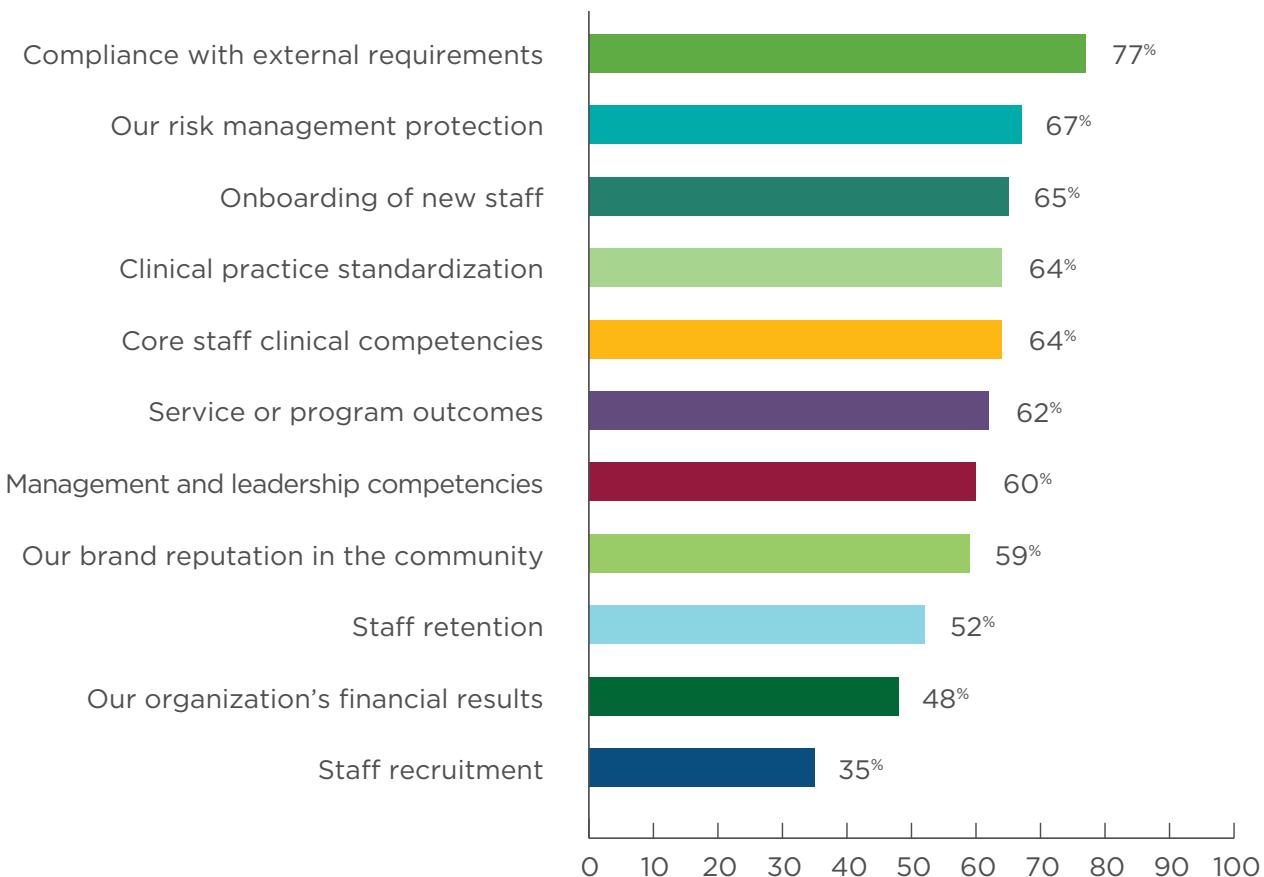
More than 200 professionals from payer or insurer organizations participated in this survey, with 12% of respondents holding executive or senior management positions and 48% of respondents holding other key training stakeholder positions.

Importance of Staff Development and Training

Nearly half of the people in the payer and insurer vertical view training and staff development as a top priority in importance for their businesses (46%) and over half (54%) indicate it has a substantial positive impact on their top business goals. 77% saw the greatest positive impact on compliance with external requirements. Of those listed, the only areas with less than 50% reporting a positive impact are staff recruitment (35%) and organizational financial results (48%).

76%

Respondents who find training and staff development **extremely important** for licensing and certification.





Online and Learning Management System Utilization

Respondents in the payer and insurer industries reported higher use of online training than those in the other healthcare industries surveyed. Furthermore, the majority of payer and insurer respondents use a learning management system software to track training. This is at least twice the use of any other tracking method (e.g., paper/Word files, spreadsheets, databases).

PERCENTAGE REPORTING THAT ALL TRAINING IS ONLINE



42% Payers & Insurers

30% Health and Human Services,
Post-Acute, and Pre-Acute

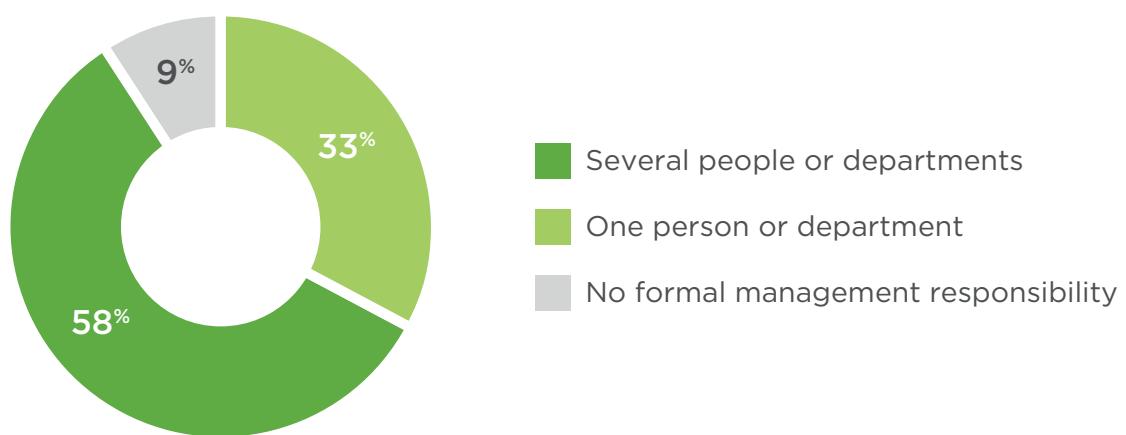
>20% Intellectual and
Developmental Disabilities
& Applied Behavior Analysis

Training Investment and Responsibility

One out of five respondents reported the institutional investment in training and staff development is much too low. Three-quarters of the respondents report the investment inadequate. This corresponds to the results from organizations in the other industries surveyed.

Most payers and insurers report that several people or departments manage responsibility for training and staff development. About one-third report that one person or department has sole responsibility.

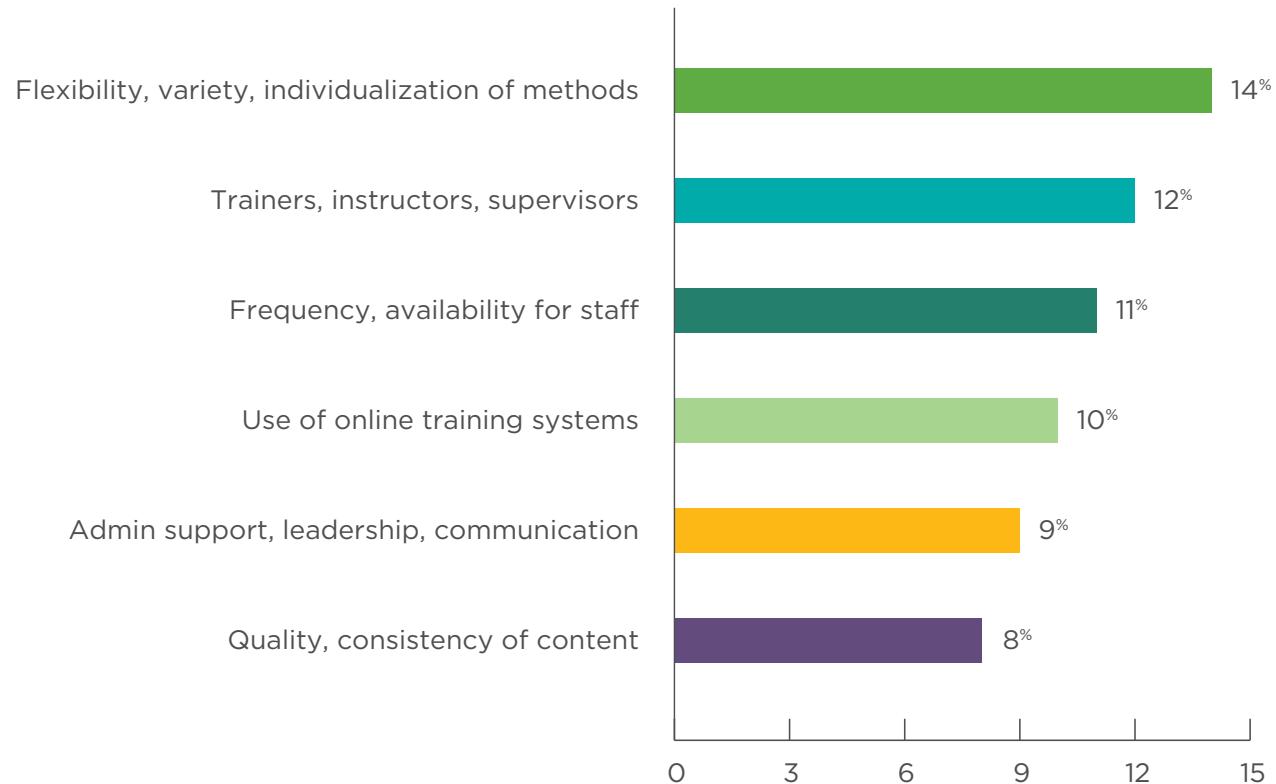
TRAINING RESPONSIBILITY



Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses

Most Commonly Cited Strengths of Staff Development and Training Programs

Many healthcare professionals highly value their online training systems and the personalization, content variety, and access and availability that an online system provides at their organizations. Respondents also consider their instructors and trainers as a top strength of their staff development and training programs.





“What do you consider to be the top STRENGTH of your current staff development and training program?

RESPONDENT COMMENTS:

Dedicated team of trainers who are invested in growing our staff's knowledge.

Ease in which trainings can be completed without the need for individuals with varied schedules to come together for classes.

Exposure to leadership, communication and diversity best practices.

The trainings that staff does attend are high quality trainings.

Staff has the ability to individualize training.

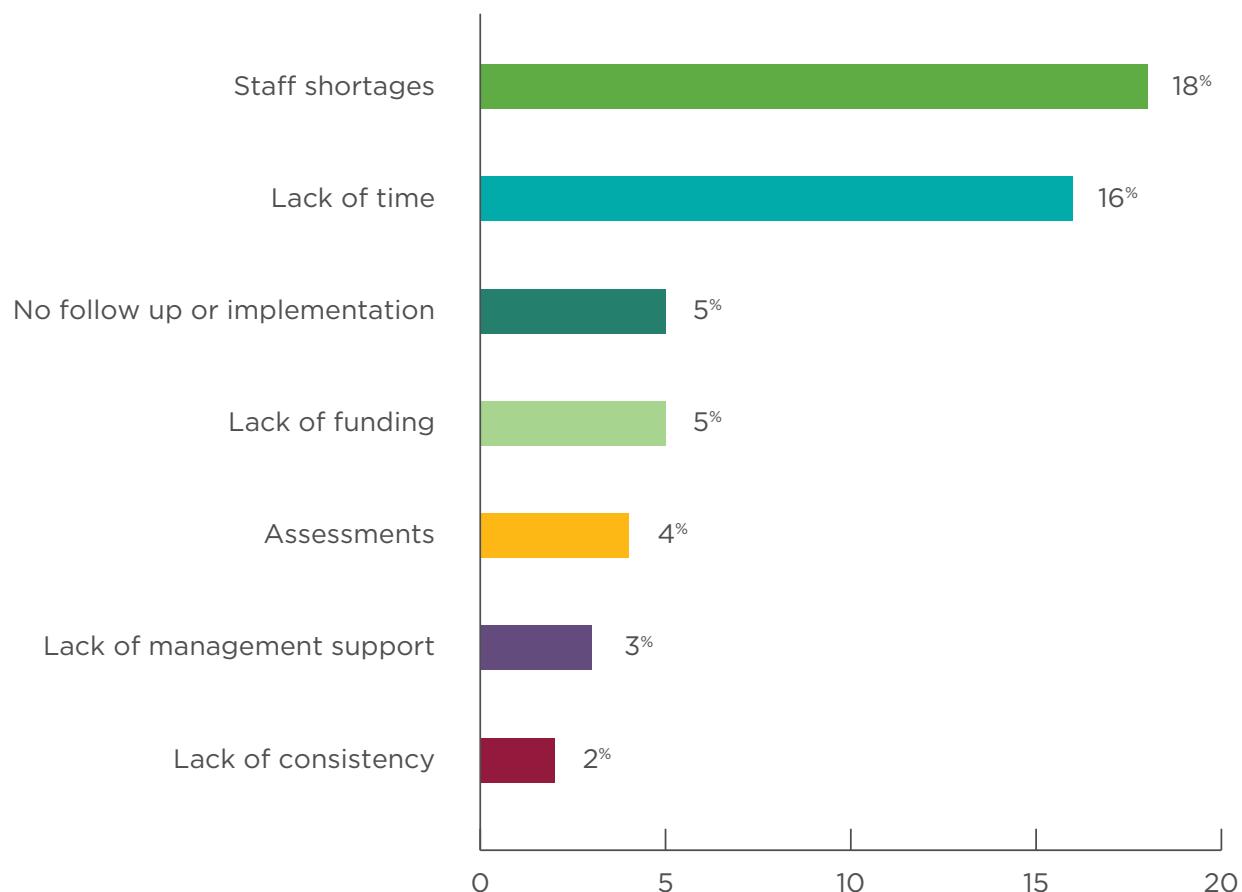
I believe our strength is the consistency in offering staff development and training. All staff are trained regarding the same materials and then specialized for their specific departments.

Frequency of staff trainings.

Abundance of topics to choose from online.

Most Commonly Cited Weaknesses of Staff Development and Training Programs

Staff shortages and lack of time led the responses for healthcare professionals for top weaknesses of training programs. This is consistent across the healthcare sectors surveyed both this year and two years ago.



Across all healthcare sectors, the most common weaknesses of training programs are the same in 2017 as they were in 2015—**being understaffed** and a **lack of time**. The most common strengths are the use of online training and the **flexibility** and **availability** that comes along with it, leading to a conclusion that the flexibility of online training could effectively address the cited weaknesses of being understaffed and not having enough time for a staff development and training program.



“What do you consider to be the top WEAKNESS of your current staff development and training program?

RESPONDENT COMMENTS:

Time is not permitted away from business needs.

Having staff coverage so staff can be available to take the trainings.

Not enough funding for educational needs.

Lack of staff, organization, and funds.

No consistent organized approach to assessing the staff's need for development and training.

Staff don't put what they are taught in practice.

The administration does little to support staff training as a part of ongoing increase in knowledge base for the clinical staff.

Due to staffing we often do not have adequate time to review the materials.

Finding the time for training and following up with the employees to assure they are receiving the training they need.

Outlook

Desired Training

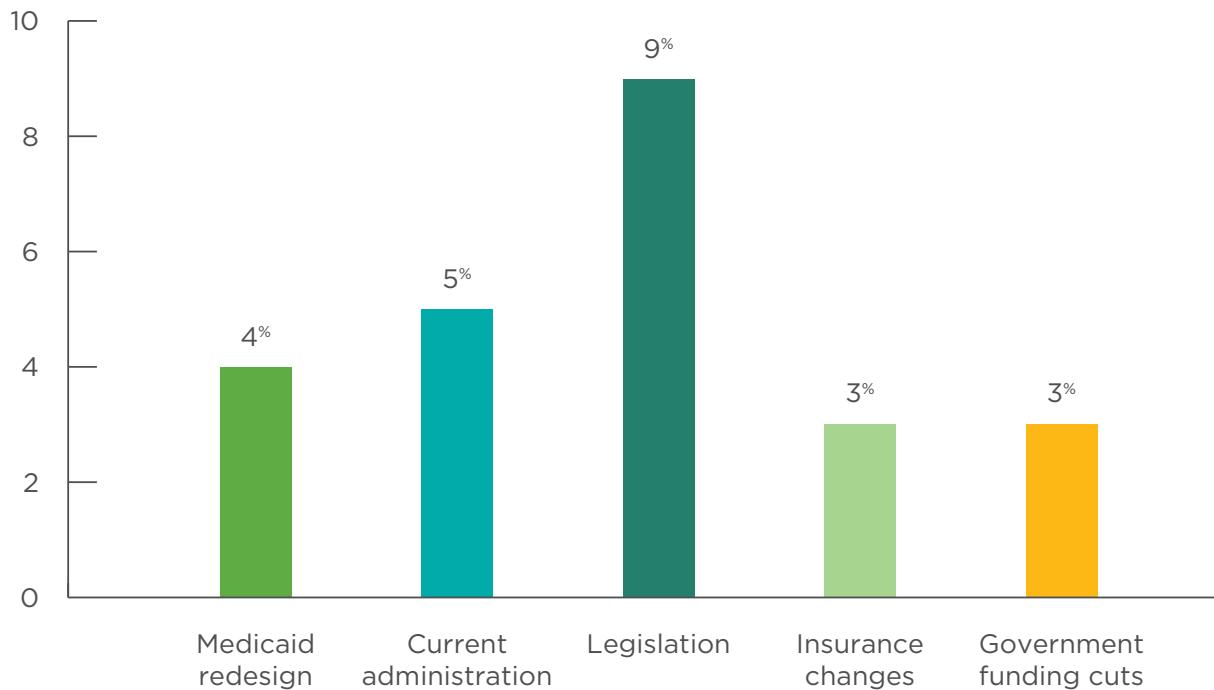
We asked survey respondents what training is currently not offered at their organization that they would like to see added. About half of the respondents left the answer blank, and 7% of those who did respond answered “None,” which is more than double the percentage of any other answer. This indicates that many healthcare professionals are satisfied with the current offering. Among the other desired training topics mentioned, “Leadership & Management” and “Clinical” had the most responses at 3% each.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING THAT RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE OFFERED



Macro-Environment Changes

More than 60% of respondents reported there would be specific changes in the macro-environment that will have a substantial impact on training and staff development in the next few years. More than 20% of the respondents indicate their foreseen change relates to government, namely the current administration, general legislative changes, Medicaid redesign, and government funding cuts. Respondents across the healthcare sectors predict insurance changes in the next few years.



“ What is that change in the external macro-environment that you foresee?

RESPONDENT COMMENTS:

Changes to policy at the federal level.

The newly appointed administration.

Concerns about how changes in insurance reimbursement will impact educational offerings/etc. in the future.

Changes in Medicaid funding models could create a further negative impact on caregiver wages and retention of caregivers.

ACA changes will cause knowledge trickle down, changes in administration of products and rules related to their development, implementation and ongoing.

New state regulations that have been proposed.

Increased requirements by funders and potentially state regulations.

WORTH NOTING: Approximately 11% of the payer & insurer sector and 6% of the pre-acute and acute care sector respondents predict that changes to the Affordable Care Act will impact staff development and training.



Survey Methodology

We invited 138,819 healthcare executives, managers, and training personnel to participate in this online survey. We also made links to the survey available through several national associations to their memberships and through social media channels. As an incentive, the first 500 respondents were entered a drawing for a gift certificate for one of six \$150 Amazon gift cards.

The survey was open during the period from March 14, 2017 through April 4, 2017. This report provides a synopsis of findings for 5,056 respondents in the following healthcare sectors: acute and pre-acute care, post-acute care, payer and insurer, applied behavior analysis, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and health and human services.

Data was received and processed by the Center for Outcome Analysis (COA), a non-profit research organization. The quantitative survey data was analyzed using SPSS and STATA statistical software. Some of the questions involved free text responses which were analyzed using Atlas.ti qualitative statistical software.



ABOUT THE TEAM

Executive Sponsors: Gerald McCleery, Ph.D.; Alex Osadzinski; and Tess Mitchell

Authors: M. Courtney Hughes, Ph.D. and Steven J. Devlin, Ph.D.

Data Analysis: Center for Outcome Analysis / Steven J. Devlin, Ph.D.; M. Courtney Hughes, Ph.D.; and Gerald McCleery, Ph.D.

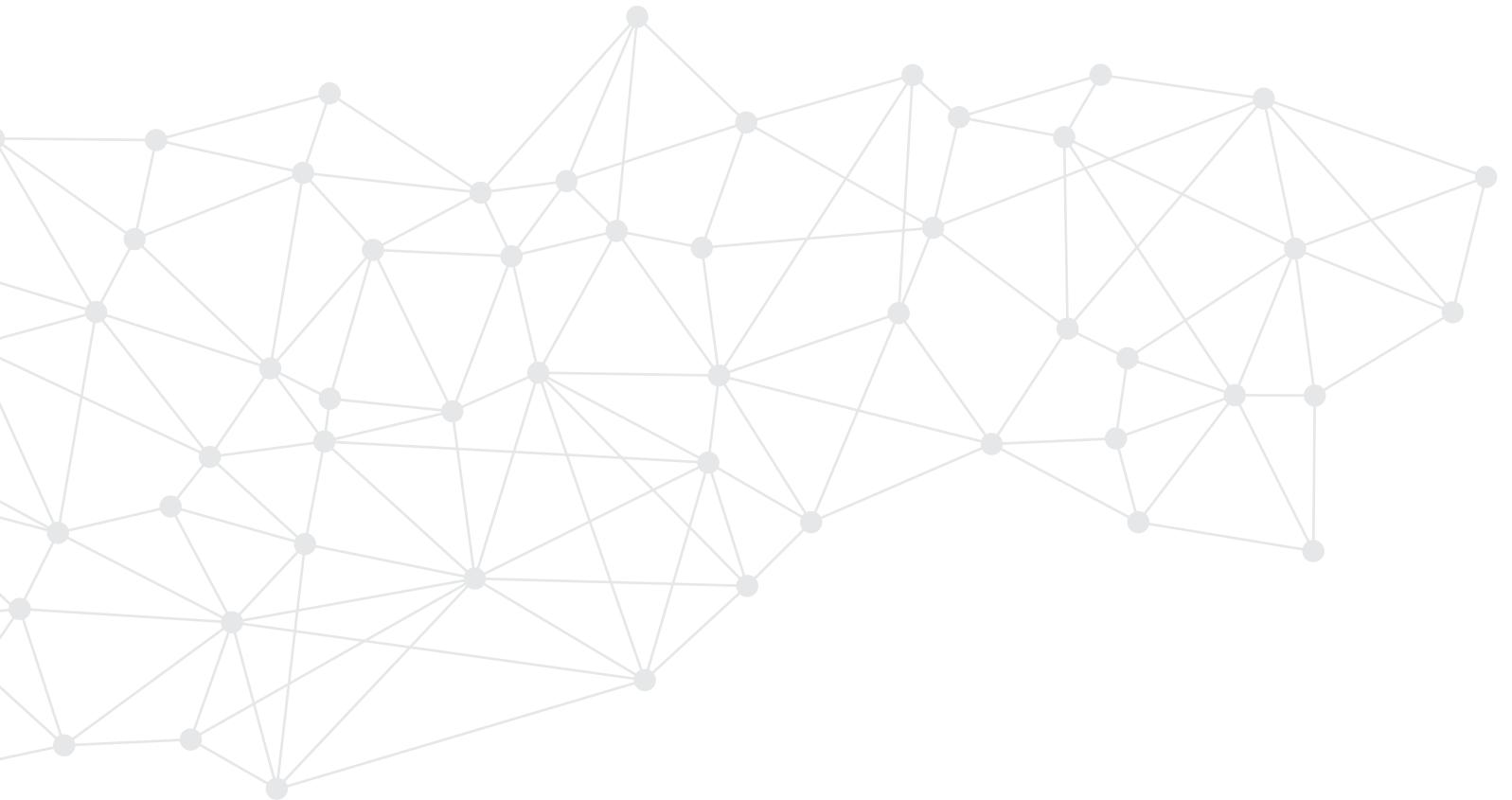
Report Manager: Jeanine D'Alusio

Report Design: Irene Storm and Cheryl Mills

ABOUT RELIAS

Relias provides online analytics, assessments, and learning for approximately 6,000 healthcare providers across the continuum of care, covering both physical and mental health needs, as well as public safety organizations. Relias offers unrivaled content, provides the ability for clients to create their own content, and allows for the demonstration of skill and performance, all in a singular, powerful learning management system.

Share this report!



RELIAS

www.relias.com