



Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center

enhancing
effectiveness of
APS programs

The Impact of Covid-19 on APS Programs: Research by the APS Technical Assistance Resource Center

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APS TARC

Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center

Vision: Support APS programs in improving the safety and well-being of adult victims of maltreatment

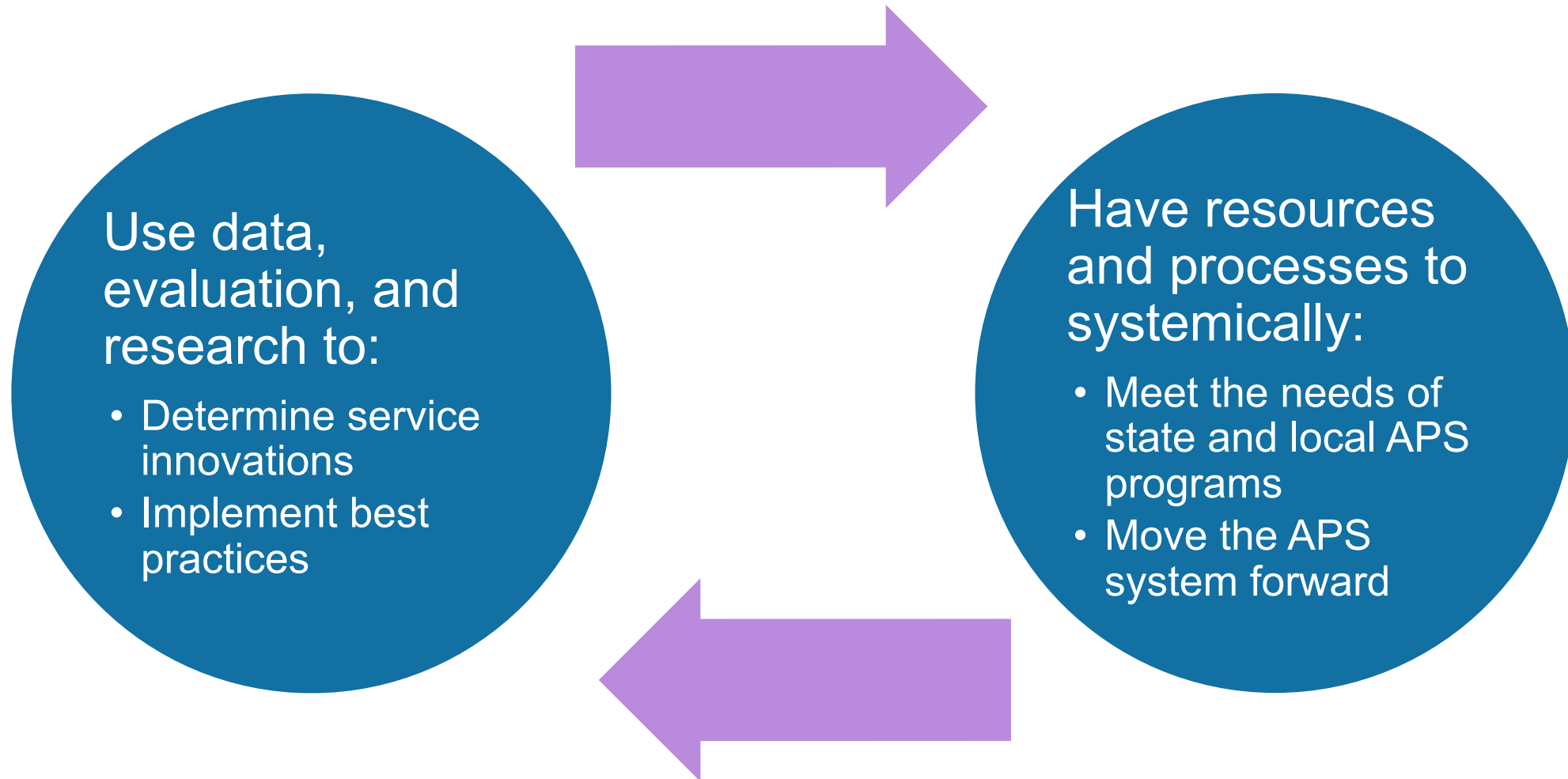


Mission: The APS TARC will enhance the effectiveness of APS Programs

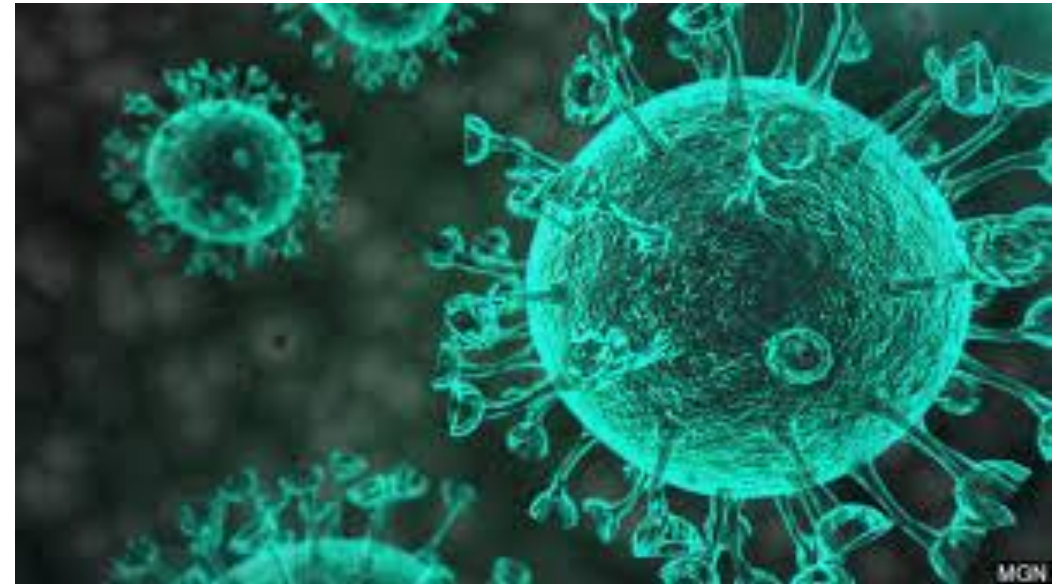
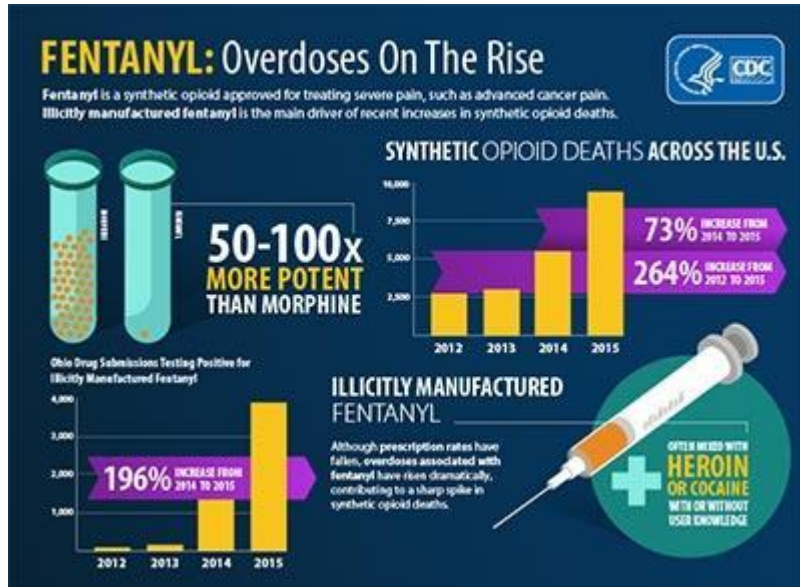


Goal: The APS TARC will build the capacity of APS programs by increasing the use of best/promising/informed practices

APS TARC: A Resource for Enhancing APS Program Effectiveness Through Research and Evaluation



From Opioids to COVID-19



Back to Opioids

Objectives and Overview

Objectives

1. Learn about the impact of COVID-19 on APS programs
2. Learn how APS programs responded to COVID-19
3. Learn how to improve APS program response to COVID-19 and other emergency disasters

Overview

- Background
- Methods
- Limitations
- Findings
- Discussion


How this is going to work

- Lots to cover, so moving fast
- Review 5 categories of findings
- For each category,
 - Poll and chat question to start
 - Review findings
 - **Brief** discussion based on chat

Purpose of the Study

Explore changes implemented to APS programs across the country in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect of these changes on programs.

Research Questions – The Five Ps



**What
impact did
COVID-19
have on:**

- Performance
- Policy and Practice
- Personnel
- Partnerships
- Preparedness

Methods

The research
used a
three-step
(Phases 1-3)
funnel
process:

- Phase I: telephone interviews with eight state-level APS administrators from states considered to be “hot-spots” at the time of the interviews.
 - The findings from the interviews were then used to inform questions for next phases.
- Phase II: national survey of state APS programs
- Phase III: individual and small group interviews with local APS staff

Limitations

- The national survey assumed that all APS programs follow state mandates, policies and procedures. However, several county-administered states expressed frustration that their general answers to the survey were not reflective of some counties in their state.
- Due to the constraints of the study timeline and limitations of field staff, the study team was also not able to interview as many staff or states as originally planned.
- The study was conducted in a window in time of a very fluid situation.

The Big Takeaways

- COVID-19 reinforced the idea that APS programs have a unique role and provide a unique resource to communities around the U.S.
- COVID-19 clearly affected the way that APS conducts its business. Especially at the beginning of the pandemic, APS programs found themselves on the “frontline” for addressing the needs of vulnerable adults in their communities.
- COVID-19 created clear struggles for programs:
 - as non-first responders, where and how to get PPE;
 - how to observe and assess the well-being of clients without being able to conduct face-to-face visits;
 - how to respond to an emergency even though many agency emergency plans did not anticipate or address a pandemic;
 - how to support other programs within the community who need front-line resources; and
 - how to work remotely without having equipment or management processes in place to support it.

Performance

Determine the short-term impact of COVID-19 on program work and workload as measured by the impact on the number and types of cases and workload.

What Has Been Your Experience?

Answer the following poll question: What has been the **long-term** effect of COVID-19 on your workload?

- No Impact
- Slight decrease
- Significant decrease
- Slight increase
- Significant increase

Put the reason why it changed your workload in the chat box.

Performance

More than half (66%) of respondents had fewer reports of adult maltreatment and 15% had many fewer reports (total 81%) while 9% had more reports. Eleven percent (11%) experienced no change in the number of reports.

Slightly over half (52%) of respondents indicated that the level of client need had increased, while 42% saw no change in client need.

Nearly half of respondents (48%) indicated that, on average, there was no change in client willingness to engage with APS as a result of COVID-19, while nearly the same percent (46%) indicated that clients were less willing to engage with APS.

The vast majority (80%) of respondents indicated that there was no change in the level of client involvement in planning and decision-making concerning the help and services they needed or received as a result of COVID-19.

Half of APS respondents (50%) indicated that there was less investigation of cases and for 7% much less investigation as a result of COVID-19, while nearly a third (30%) experienced no change.

Half of APS respondents (52%) indicated that they were limited to providing fewer services to clients, while 24% had no change, and 20% were providing even more services as a result of COVID-19.

Change in Reports of Maltreatment

	Large Decrease	Small Decrease	No Change	Small Increase	Large Increase	Don't Know
Physical Abuse	5%	16%	39%	14%	2%	25%
Sexual Abuse	5%	18%	46%	0%	2%	30%
Neglect	5%	16%	37%	19%	0%	23%
Self-Neglect	2%	16%	23%	30%	23%	2%
Financial Exploitation	5%	20%	18%	23%	9%	25%

Performance Impact Discussion

Personnel

Identify the impact on staff in areas such as job satisfaction, job readiness, and safety and determine how to reduce the negative impacts during future emergencies.

What Has Been Your Experience?

Answer the following poll question: What has been the effect of COVID-19 on staff (e.g., job satisfaction, job readiness, and safety)

- No Impact
- Slight impact
- Significant impact

Put some of the more notable impacts in the chat box.

Personnel

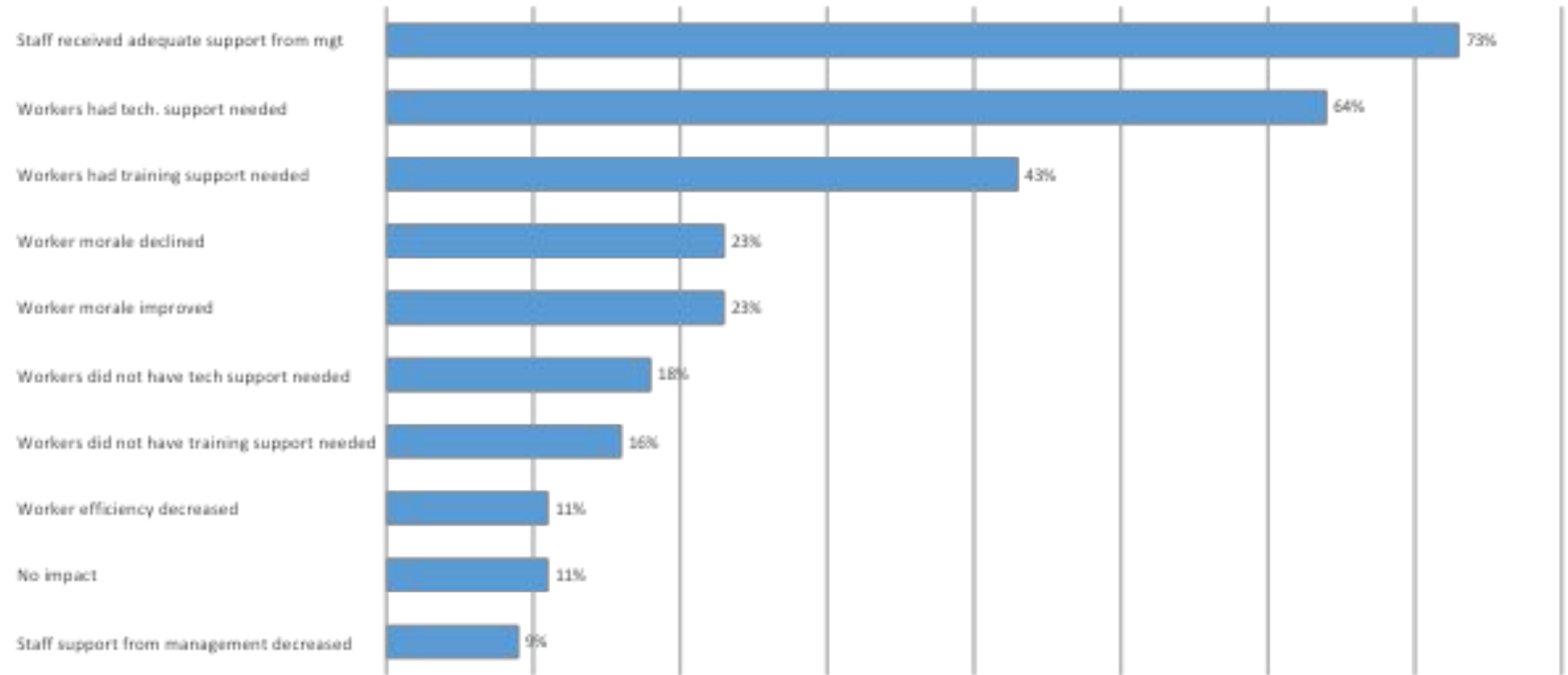
- The vast majority (73%) of APS staff were able to continue to receive adequate support from management; alternately, 9% of APS supervisors reported that staff support from management decreased as a result of COVID-19.
- Well over half (64%) of APS staff had the technology support they needed, while 18% did not have adequate technology support.
- Nearly half (43%) of APS staff had the training support that they needed, while 16% did not have adequate training support.
- APS supervisor respondents were equally divided (23%) in their responses concerning worker morale.
- Eleven percent (11%) of respondents indicated that worker efficiency had decreased.

Personnel, continued

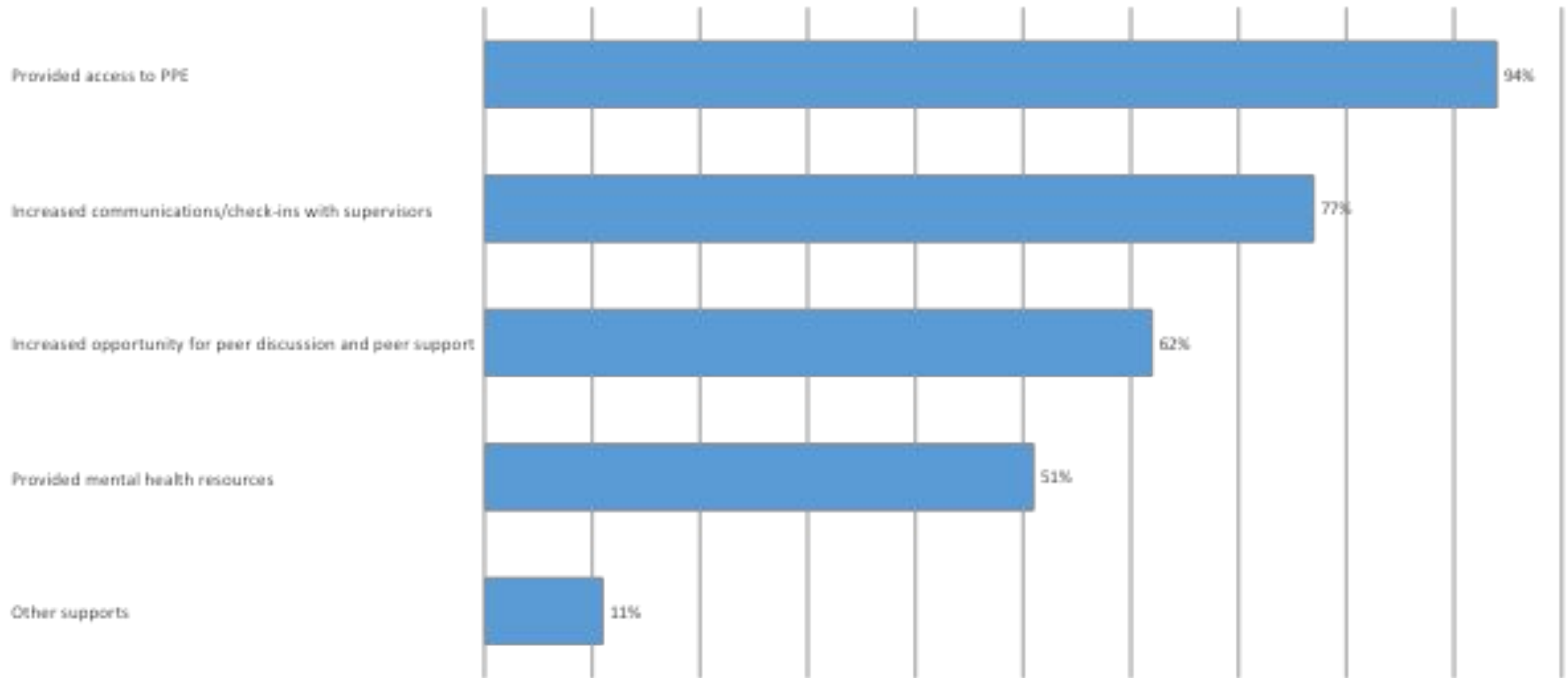
Supports Provided to APS Staff

- The overwhelming majority (94%) of APS staff were provided access to personal protective equipment.*
 - *This is contrary to the anecdotal information we heard, particularly at the beginning of the pandemic
- Most (77%) of APS staff had increased communications/check-ins with their supervisors.
- Over half (62%) of APS staff increased opportunities for peer discussion and peer support.
- Approximately half (51%) of APS staff were provided access to mental health resources.

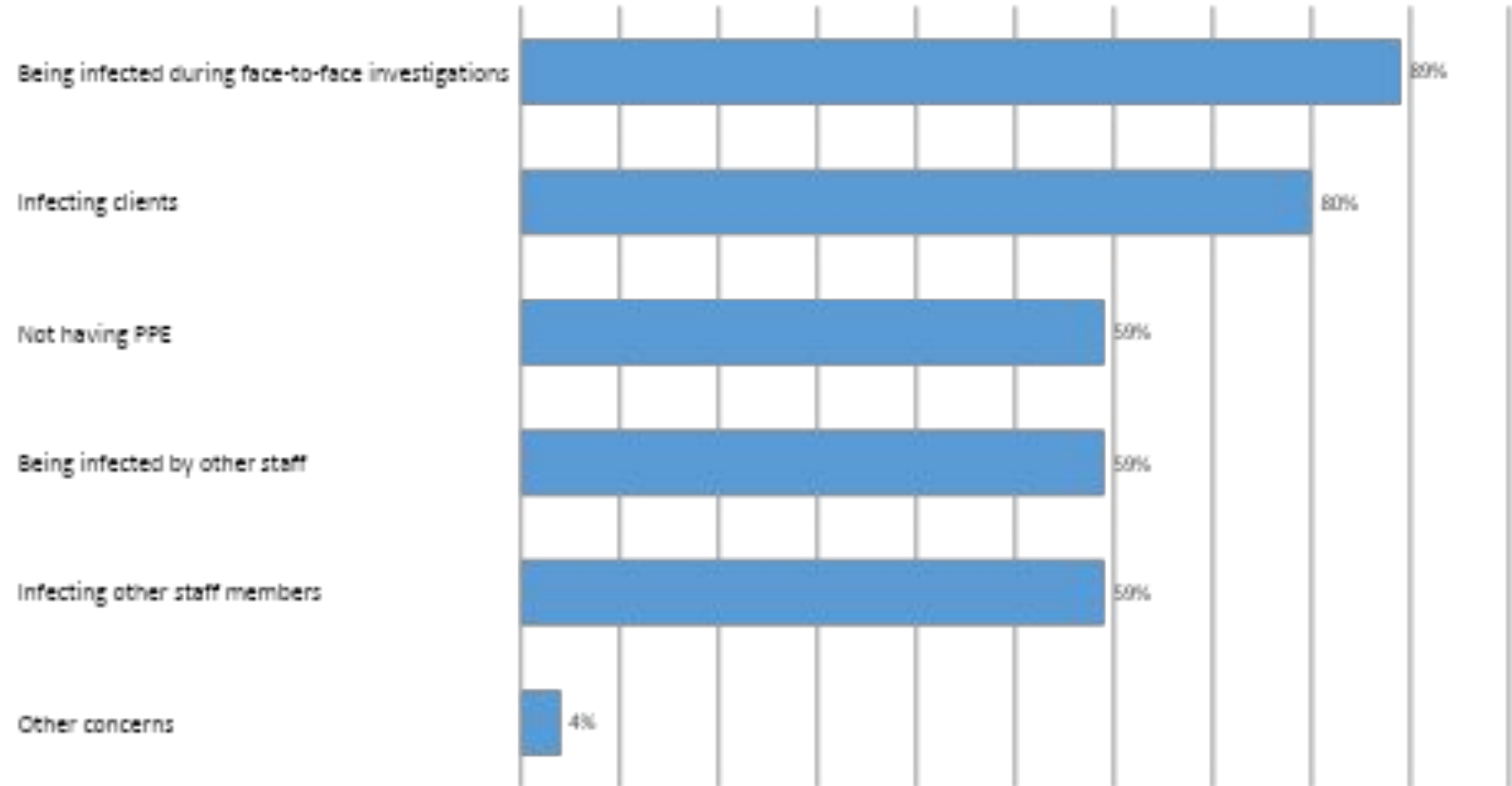
Overall impact of remote work *(multiple responses)*



Supports provided to APS workers as a result of COVID-19 *(multiple responses)*



Safety Concerns that Staff Raised (*multiple responses*)



Personnel, continued

Worker Safety

- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of states reported that staff were concerned with being infected during face-to-face investigations.
- Eighty (80%) of states reported that staff were concerned with infecting clients.
- Over half (59%) of states reported that staff were concerned with not having enough PPE.
- Over half (59%) of states reported that staff were concerned with infecting other staff members.

Personnel Impact Discussion

Policy and Practice

Identify, categorize and analyze the impact of policy and practice changes implemented as a result of COVID-19 and document what changes were considered successful and not successful. Specifically, identify the issues that are arising from the policy and practice changes and document how APS staff have addressed them.

What Has Been Your Experience?

Answer the following poll question: What has been the **long-term** effect of COVID-19 on your policy and practice?

- No Impact
- Slight impact
- Significant impact

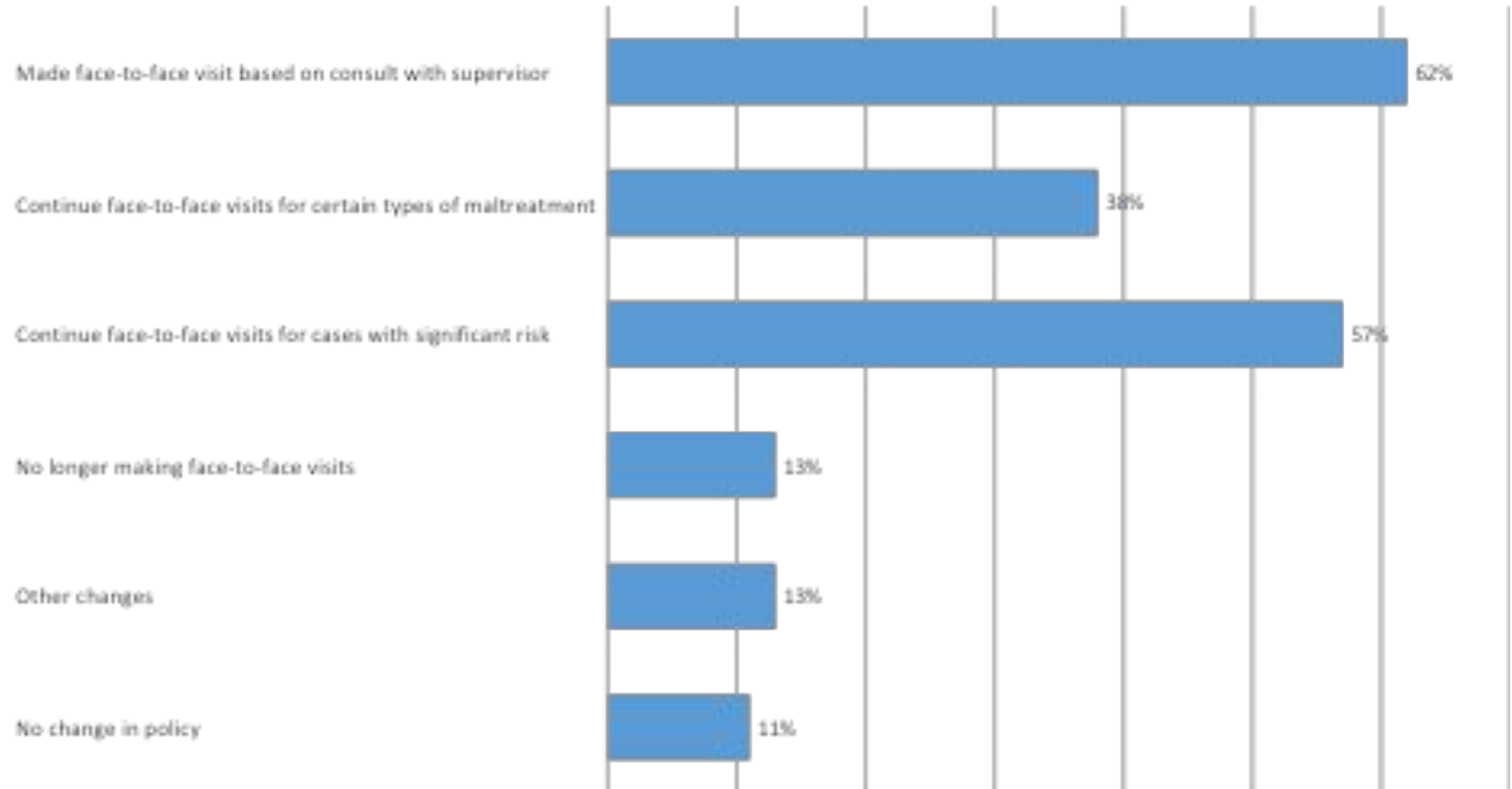
Put some of the more notable impacts in the chat box.

Policy and Practice

Policy Changes for In-Person Visits

- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of states made at least one change in their policies regarding face-to-face visits with clients and other parties in the allegation.

Policy changes for in-person visits with clients and other parties involved in the allegation because of COVID-19 (multiple responses)



Policy and Practice, continued

Adjustments to Timeline Requirements

- Eighty-seven percent (87%) of states made no policy changes to timeline for case initiation.
- Ninety-four percent (94%) of states made no policy changes to timeline for completion of investigations.
- Nine percent (9%) of states increased the allowable time for case initiation and four percent
- Four percent (4%) of states increased the allowable time for completion of investigations.
- Four percent (4%) of states removed the time requirement for case initiation and two percent (2%) removed the time requirement completions of investigations.

Adjustments to timeline requirements because of COVID-19

	No Change in Policy	Increased Allowable Time	Removed Time Requirement
Case Initiation	87%	9%	4%
Completion of the Investigation	94%	4%	2%

Policy and Practice Impact Discussion

Partnerships

Identify the impact of COVID-19 on relationships between APS and its community partners (e.g., law enforcement, healthcare, mental health) and determine how those relationship can be improved in an ongoing basis and in preparation for the next emergency. In addition, identify any new or pronounced partnerships, such as social services, and how these relationships can be better prepared or established during times of emergency.

What Has Been Your Experience?

Answer the following poll question: What has been the effect of COVID-19 on your community partnerships?

- No Impact
- Slight impact
- Significant impact

Put some of the more notable impacts in the chat box.

Partners

- More than half of states reported no change in their interactions with mental health services (60%), food banks (57%), and other services (75%) because of COVID-19.
- At least one-third of the states reported increases in interactions because of COVID-19 with health care (43%), law enforcement (41%), and food banks (39%).
- Less than one-fourth of the states reported less interactions with critical APS partners and referral services because of COVID-19 (law enforcement, 21%; health care, 13%; mental health services, 13%; food bank referrals, 4%; and other types of referrals, 9%).

Interaction with critical APS partners and referral services because of COVID-19

	Much Less Interaction	Less Interaction	No Change in Amount of Interaction	More Frequent Interaction	Much More Frequent Interaction
Law Enforcement	2%	21%	36%	30%	11%
Health Care	---	13%	45%	34%	9%
Mental Health Services	---	13%	60%	21%	6%
Food Bank Referrals	---	4%	57%	35%	4%
Other Referrals	---	9%	75%	11%	6%

Partnership Impact Discussion

Preparedness Plans

Identify the impact of COVID-19 on the emergency preparedness plans of APS programs and determine how those plans can be improved, particularly in preparation for the next emergency.

What Has Been Your Experience?

Answer the following poll question: Was your agency/program prepared for a pandemic?

- **Not prepared;** it caught us by surprise
- **Somewhat prepared:** we had some plans and supports in place that helped us adjust
- **Significantly prepared:** we had plans and supports that allowed us to quickly adjust

Put how you could have been more prepared in the chat box.

Preparedness Plans

Sixty-three percent (63%) of states reported having APS emergency preparedness plans in place before COVID-19. Even so, only twenty-five percent (25%) of APS supervisors noted no unmet and under met staff needs. Eleven percent (11%) of states reported that their clients had unmet or under met needs.

“Most of what our preparedness was for hurricanes, tropical storms, natural disasters, but as a program, we didn't have a plan. Now, at the state level, I know there's a state-level pandemic plan that was in place.”

Current Needs for Staff

- Sixty percent (60%) reported that the greatest need of their staff was for childcare.
- Work-related needs for staff included PPE (46%), internet capability (29%), and technology support (23%).
- At least one-fourth of states indicated that their staff needed emergency funds for financial problems (40%), care for adult dependents (37%), and mental health services (29%).
- Twenty-six percent (26%) of states reported that staff needed emergency shelter and 14% indicated that their staff needed food banks.

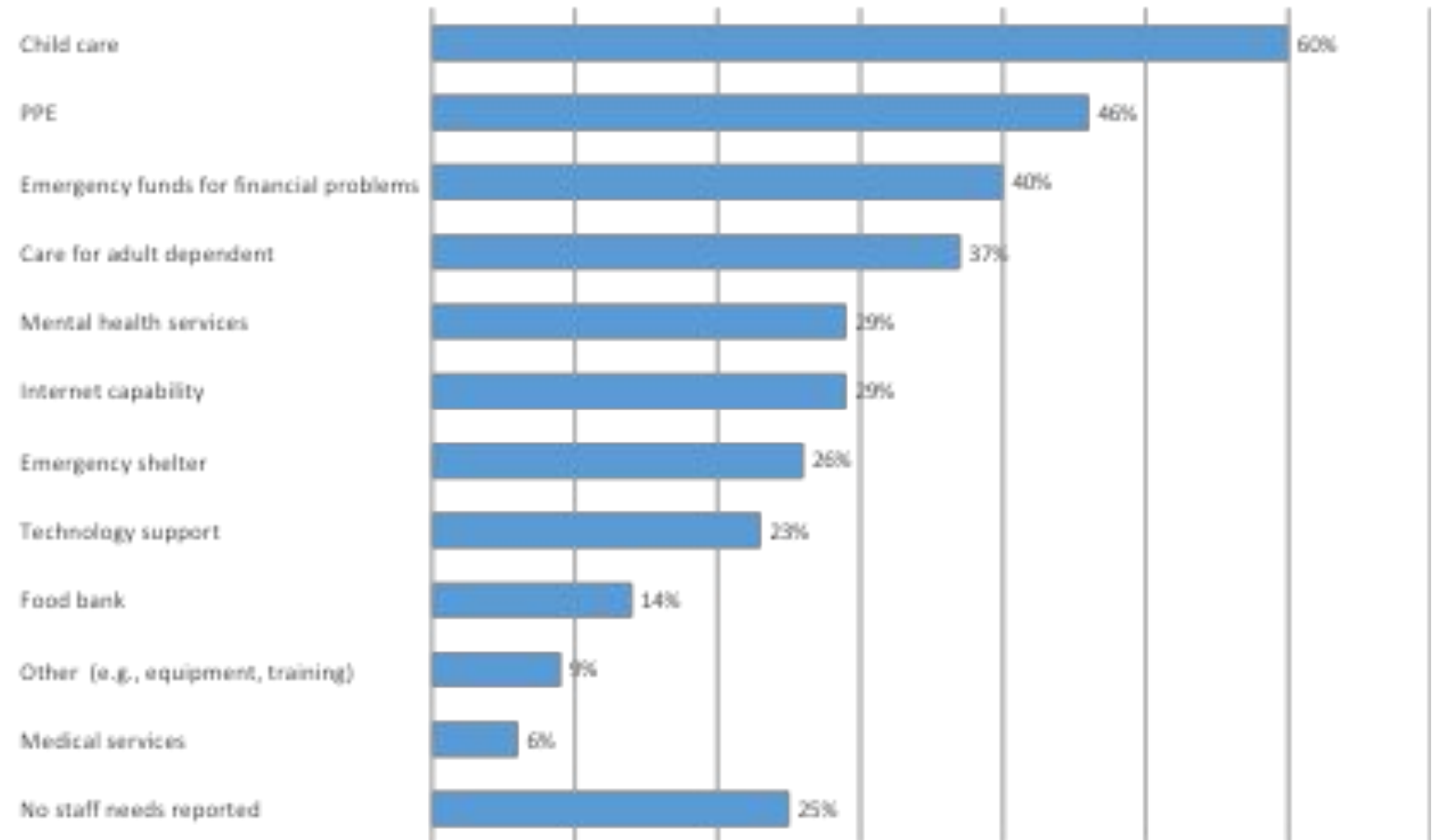
Preparedness Impact Discussion

Current Needs Summary

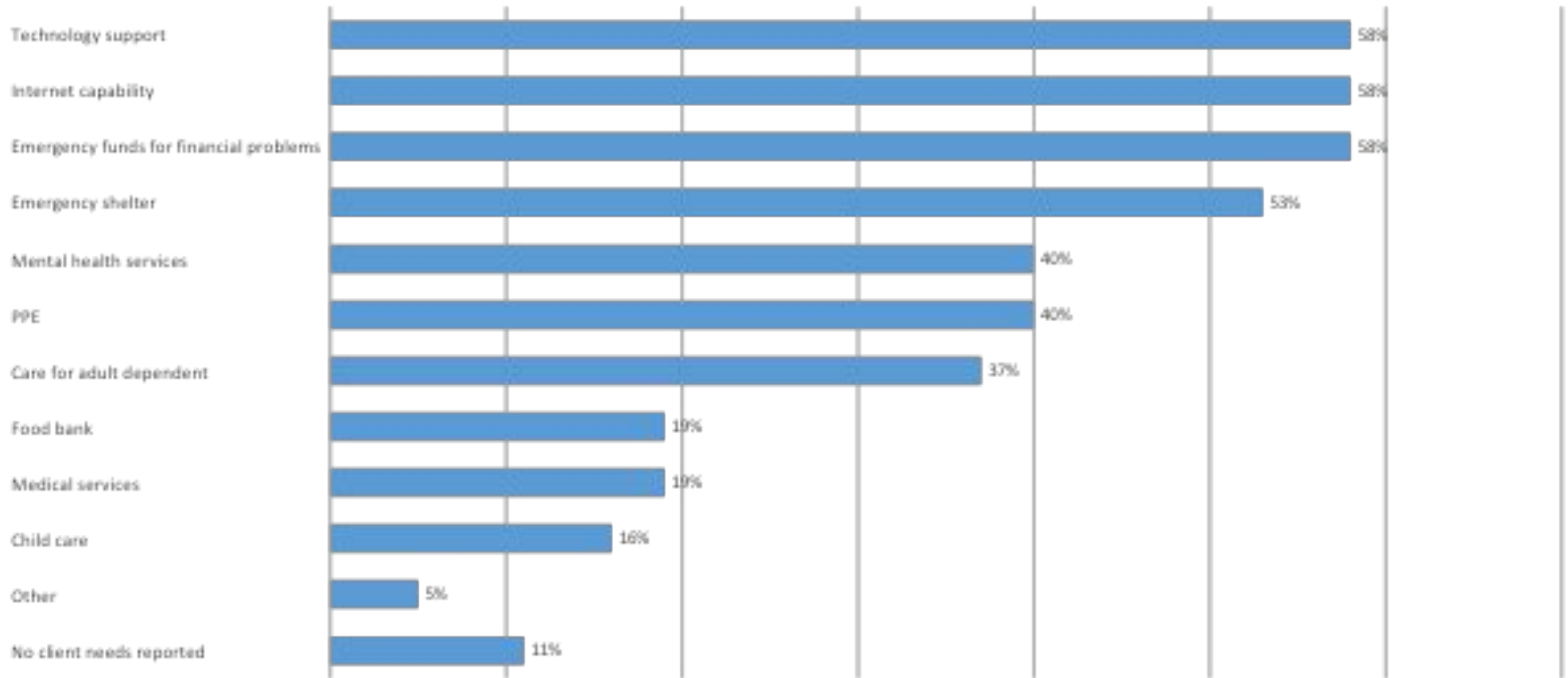
Current Needs for Clients

- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of states reported that their clients needed technology support and internet capability, respectively, respectively.
- Approximately one-half of the states indicated that their clients needed emergency funds for financial problems (58%) and emergency shelter (53%).
- More than one-third of states reported that clients needed mental health services (40%) and care for adult dependents (37%).

Current needs for staff that states do not have at all or do not have enough (*multiple responses*)



Current needs for clients that states do not have at all or do not have enough (*multiple responses*)

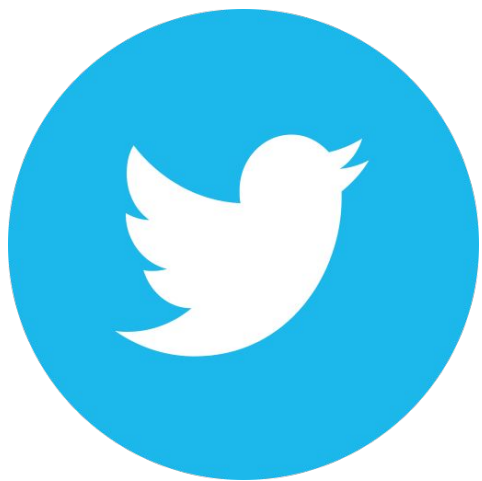


Final Discussion Question

What was the most important lesson your program learned from your Covid experience?

Final Word Goes to Local APS Staff

Just one last thing that I wrote down that my staff talked about and it's that they know that they're often the only one that can protect and care for some of our most abused and neglected elders. And without them, my staff, going out there, I mean it's the only thing that stands between them and harm and that's not a minor thing and my staff takes that very seriously and I love my staff for it. I have mad respect for them and how much they care about our endangered adults. So I just wanted to mention that because I thought it was important that they mentioned it to me.



Contact Us

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