

VDSS April 2012 Conference: Evaluation Findings

Virginia Department of Social Services

June 26, 2012

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results of a one-day Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) conference, titled “A Conversation: Virginia’s Social Services System – Roles, Responsibilities, and Funding”, on April 25, 2012 in Richmond, Virginia. The purpose of the conference was to inform participants about current trends in social services program delivery and about national, state and local fiscal and political factors that may affect future need and performance. In addition, participants were asked to engage in discussion about successes and challenges that they have observed occurring in their localities.

A total of 222 people -- primarily, directors of local departments of social services (LDSS), county and city government officials, and representatives of state professional and service organizations -- attended the conference. Ninety-three (93) local jurisdictions (78% of all local departments of social services) were represented at the meeting.

Round-Table Discussions

During the Conference, participants were tasked with meeting in groups to discuss three questions: 1) “what is going well in delivery of social services” in their area or community, 2) “are there things we could be doing or doing differently” to better serve clients, and 3) “what do we need to get there (to better serve clients)”. The groups were organized by region. Key findings across all regions from the round-table discussions were:

- Participants consistently cited LDSS staff, community partnerships and collaborations, good working relationships between LDSS and local governments, and successful delivery of services with a focus on families (e.g., Child Services Transformation) as strengths.
- Although the regions varied in terms of what could be done differently in social services, two ideas were consistently mentioned: 1) *simplification, streamlining or integration* of policies and processes between social services programs, and 2) *focus on prevention*. Integration could also be applied to information systems as well as delivery of all human services by local agencies.
- As follow-up to the second question (“what do we need to get there”), the regions were almost unanimous in mentioning more training and leadership development (preferably delivered at the local or regional level).
- Responses to questions 2 and 3 varied by region, which indicates that some issues are worth addressing at the local level.

Post-Conference Survey

An email invitation to complete a web-based survey was sent to 233 pre-registered participants the day after the conference. One hundred fifty-six (N=156; 67%) participants responded to the survey. Key survey findings:

- 52% of respondents felt that the Conference was useful to them to some degree.
- The most useful aspects of the conference were the Local Profile Report (and other handouts) and the round-table discussions. The least useful aspects were the presentations on the relationship between state and local social services agencies and the current model of social services delivery from a legal perspective.
- VDSS staff had more positive impressions of the Conference overall than either the LDSS directors or the local government officials. A greater percentage of VDSS staff (70%) thought the Conference was useful, compared to LDSS directors (54%) and local government officials (45%).
- Different aspects of the conference – presentations, activities, and resources -- were perceived as more useful, depending on the audience. For example, the round-table discussions were perceived as less useful to LDSS directors than to local government officials or VDSS staff. The financial forecasting presentation was more interesting to local government officials than either local or state DSS staff. The presentation on the federal perspective and the Secretary’s opening remarks were rated more favorably by VDSS staff members than by LDSS directors or local government officials.
- Less than half (< 50%) of respondents thought that the Conference performed well (i.e., ‘good’ or ‘excellent’) in *improving their understanding* of each key issue presented at the meeting.
- Almost half (45%) of respondents rated the Conference as doing a “good” or “excellent” job in improving their understanding of 1) national, state, and local trends, 2) what is working well in social services, and 3) areas in need of improvement. Only 27% of respondents rated the Conference favorably in regard to improving the participants’ understanding of the current structure of social services delivery in the Commonwealth.
- 84 respondents (54%) commented about the Conference and the state of social services delivery in the Commonwealth. A greater percentage of respondents wrote negative versus positive comments, indicating mixed feelings about both the Conference and the state of social services. In regard to the Conference, respondents felt that it was a “great first step” in improving communication between VDSS and the localities, and further “conversations” should be carried on at the local level and involve local government officials. Respondents were most critical about the Conference not conveying new or useful information and lacking a clear theme or goal.
- In regard to the future of social services and the roles of state and local agencies, respondents mentioned some positive aspects of the system (e.g., local staff and leadership, local and regional partnerships, good working relationships with local government). However, the majority of respondents commented about challenges, such as lack of input and involvement from local stakeholders in policy- and decision-making processes, lack of integrated data systems and processes, and lack of understanding and political support from the state government and state legislature. Many of the comments reiterate what was said during the round-table discussions. Respondents offered suggestions for how to improve the social services system.

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Introduction

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) hosted a one-day conference, titled “A Conversation: Virginia’s Social Services System – Roles, Responsibilities, and Funding”, on April 25, 2012, at the Richmond Convention Center. Local departments of social services directors (LDSS), VDSS, regional directors, VDSS leadership and program staff, county and city government officials, and representatives from state government agencies and state professional organizations were invited to attend. The purpose of the conference was to provide “an opportunity for state and local officials to meet together to analyze our current system structure and how it can best work in the face of changing demographics, technology, federal laws and constrained finances”. The Conference received sponsorship from several external organizations.¹

The conference goals were to:

- Share a common understanding of what is meant by “state-supervised, locally-administered”² human services and how the social services system works in Virginia in regard to funding, roles, and responsibilities.
- Identify what is working well, as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Understand the challenges and opportunities presented by technology.
- Continue the dialogue on improving state and local partnerships.

Conference Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions were:

- 1) What did participants have to say about the strengths and weaknesses (opportunities for improvement) in the current social services delivery model in the Commonwealth?
- 2) From the local perspective, what solutions – new approaches, resources, etc. -- are needed to address these weaknesses?
- 3) To what extent was the Conference valuable to participants? Specifically, did the Conference improve participants’ understanding of key issues related to social services, and was this information useful?
- 4) What did participants have to say about the future of Virginia’s social services system and the roles that state and local agencies play?

¹ The sponsors were: the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), the Virginia Association of Local Human Services Officials (VALHSO), the Virginia League of Social Services Executives (VLSSE), the Virginia Municipal League, the U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Awards for Virginia, and the Virginia First Cities Coalition.

² The current social services model in Virginia is “state supervised, locally-administered”. Virginia is one of ten states that locally administer major social services programs. The other states are California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. VDSS supervises the 120 local departments of social services through which social services programs are locally administered and delivered.

Conference Participants

A personal invitation was sent by Commissioner Martin Brown to the directors of 120 local departments of social services (LDSS)³ and county and city government administrators for each locality. VDSS leadership and program staff, representatives of other state government executive and legislative agencies, and leaders of professional and service organizations (e.g., VLSSE, VACo) were also invited to attend the conference.

Conference Agenda

The conference featured:

- Opening remarks by the Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dr. William Hazel, about the Commonwealth of Virginia's enterprise-wide vision for modernizing information systems in human services state agencies, including VDSS.
- Panel presentations about:
 - State and local roles and relationships in delivering social services program
 - Financial forecasting on state and local levels
 - Virginia's model of social services delivery from a legal perspective
 - Vision and challenges in social services delivery from a national.⁴
 - Round-table discussions among participants about successes and opportunities (challenges) related to social services delivery from their local and regional perspectives.

A copy of the Conference agenda is in Appendix A.

A total of 238 people pre-registered for the conference. The final attendance number was 222 people, a handful of whom had not pre-registered but registered on-site. The breakdown by group was as follows:

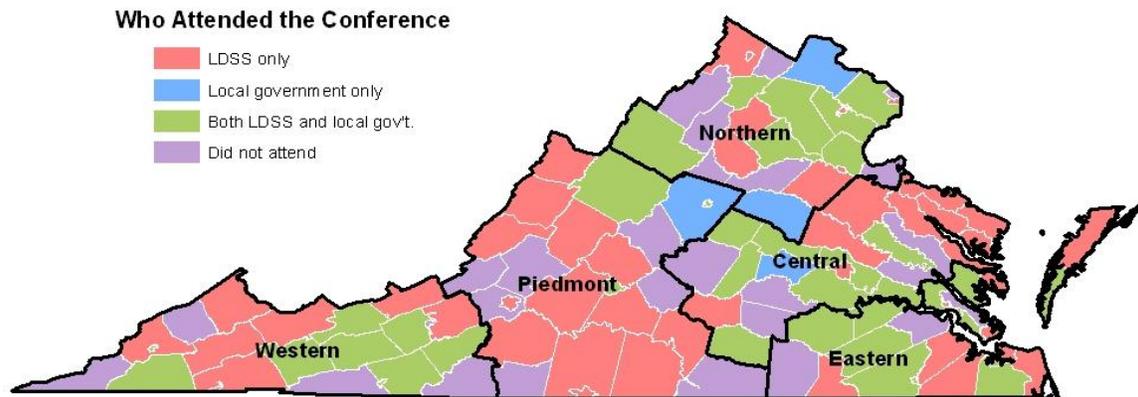
- 111 were local department of social services directors (or other dept. staff)
- 49 were local government officials (incl. two social services board members)
- 46 were VDSS staff (incl. five regional directors)
- 16 were from other state and local government agencies or non-profit organizations

Of the 120 local DSS jurisdictions, 93 (78%) had at least one person (e.g., LDSS director, local government official) from their locality attend the conference. Directors (or other designated staff) from 89 local departments of social services (LDSS) attended. Government officials from 45 localities attended. Forty-one (41) localities sent both a LDSS representative and a government official. Figure 1 shows the local DSS jurisdictions that had a representative from either the local DSS office (e.g., LDSS director), the local government (e.g., City Manager, County Supervisor), or both attend the Conference.

³ The state is divided into 120 local departments of social services that serve a combined total of 134 counties and independent cities. Most departments serve residents of a single county or city; however, several departments had previously consolidated to serve multiple localities. The local departments fall within five regional jurisdictions in Virginia -- Central, Eastern, Northern, Piedmont, and Western -- which are headed by VDSS regional directors.

⁴ Invited speakers came from state and national, public and private organizations (i.e., Virginia state finance agency, Virginia attorney general's office, Virginia Association of Counties, American Public Human Services Association).

Figure 1 – Attendance at the April 2012 VDSS Conference by Local DSS Jurisdictions



Source: VDSS, Conference Registration Database.

Table Discussions

One and one-half (1-1/2) hours were allotted for the round-table discussions. Lunch was served during that time. Each participant was assigned to sit at a table with other participants from their region. Four to five tables (table seating capacity: 10) per region were set up. VDSS staff members were assigned to facilitate the discussions at each table and record discussion comments on flip charts. The discussion questions were:

- What is going well in the delivery of social services within your municipalities?
- Are there things we could be doing or doing differently to help individuals and the families we serve?
- What would help us get there? What do we need to get there?

With 15 minutes left in the time allotted for the discussion, the group was asked to prioritize ideas (i.e., identify 3-4 most important ideas) before reporting. During a planned break, each VDSS regional director met with facilitators of table discussions that occurred among participants from their region. The task was to compile the top priority ideas selected by each table and summarize these into themes. The regional director typed this information into Microsoft Office PowerPoint slides, which were later “reported out” for the audience after the break. The “report out” was the last assigned activity on the agenda before the meeting concluded. After the Conference, each VDSS regional director was assigned to provide a written summary of the major themes identified across participants from his or her region.

The responses were compiled by the VDSS regional directors and summarized for each region. Appendix B contains the summary of themes for each region. The major themes reported below are based on a synthesis of the five regional summaries conducted by the local regional directors. These themes were found to be common to most, if not all, five regions.

What is Going Well in Delivery of Social Services

Per the regional directors' reports, the most commonly mentioned themes revolving around "what is going well in delivery of social services" in the localities were:

- Strong and effective community partnerships and collaboration across localities and planning districts
- Locality staff are experienced, committed, and motivated
- Successful delivery of services despite caseload increases, staff turnover, and limited resources
- Changes implemented as part of the Children's Services Transformation, which put the focus on families in communities, and have resulted in reductions of children in foster care and increases in permanency
- Strong working relationships between LDSS, county and city administrators, and local boards

Also cited as strengths by individual regions were:

- Ability of the localities to be creative (or innovative) and adaptive when problem-solving and meeting challenges (Eastern)
- Fiscal management despite limited resources (Piedmont)
- Technological initiatives, such as CommonHealth (Northern)

Are There Things We Can Do Differently

Across all regions, the most common themes revolving around "things that we could be doing (or doing differently)" to better serve communities were:

- Invest in prevention; include a consistent definition and capture data on efforts
- Streamline and integrate processes and policies across programs
- Improve funding flexibility; base allocations on caseload and a defined standard of care
- Include those impacted by decisions (e.g., clients, LDSSs) in the decision-making and timeframes
- Improve technology (i.e., mobile devices, shared network drives, integrated data systems)
- Improve our ability to "tell our story" and show the ROI (return on investment) to members of local governments, General Assembly, and educators about the contributions of social services
- Increase the amount and availability of training
- Foster integrated service delivery with other local agencies (e.g., community service boards, health departments, courts)
- Develop performance measures that take into account compliance, quality, process and outcomes, and are based on meeting local needs

As seen above, many strategies were listed, thus indicating little consensus among the regions in selecting the top 2 or 3 ideas. This may indicate that the regions experience unique challenges and, therefore, should have different solutions proposed.

Four of the five regions mentioned *simplification, streamlining, or integration* of program policies, processes, and data systems. Three of the five regions mentioned more investment or focus on *prevention* as a top strategy. The Eastern and Northern regions mentioned doing a better job of *promoting social services programs* – by using outcome data, ROI studies, and “success stories”—to local governments, the state legislature, and even to ourselves (“find ways to tell the positive story”). Other mentioned themes included: *better communication* between VDSS and local departments, *increased funding* and/or funding flexibility, and focusing on *performance measures* and/or *outcomes*.

What Do We Need To Get There

Across all regions, the most common themes revolving around “what we need to get there” were:

- Flexible funding at the programmatic and administrative levels; reduced reporting requirements, streamlined/collapsed budget lines and eliminated redundancies
- More and better integrated technology
- Real time management reports; analysis of trend data to promote sustainability
- Training that is timely and comprehensive; partner with higher education for delivery
- Increased recognition of staff
- Grass roots (locality-wide) teams for non-LDSS initiatives
- Stronger collaboration between VDSS and other state human services organizations
- Enhanced, consistent communication between VDSS and the localities
- A streamlined approach to issuing policy
- Strong state direction and leadership
- Policy and business processes driven by identified outcomes
- A comprehensive human services plan developed by each community

As seen above, there were many enumerated themes, thus indicating little consensus among the regions in selecting the top 2 or 3 needs and much regional variation in terms of needs. Need for *training and leadership development* (preferably delivered at the local or regional level) was a theme mentioned by four regions. *Integrated or coordinated IT systems and technology* was mentioned by the Central and Northern regions; the Western region cited “new technology”. The Northern and Piedmont regions each mentioned *stronger state leadership*. Piedmont cited a “*comprehensive human services plan*” developed by the community, which was supported by the Western region’s need for “better collaboration between VDSS and other state human services organizations”. The Central and Eastern regions mentioned a need for *flexibility in using their funding*.

Post-Conference Survey

A survey was sent to conference participants to assess what aspects of the Conference they thought were most useful and to capture their thoughts about the existing state social services model.

Survey Participants

A request to complete a web-based (SurveyMonkey®) survey was sent to 233 of the 238 pre-registered conference participants who each provided a valid email address. Five registered participants had previously opted out of receiving email notifications from SurveyMonkey® and therefore were not included in the sample. Random sampling was not used in this evaluation design.

The initial request was sent the day after the conference (April 26) and the survey data collection period extended for six days (through May 3rd). Two reminder email messages were sent in the interim to increase the response rate.

Survey Content

The 8-item survey included a mix of fixed-choice, rating scale, and open-ended questions. Included in the survey were items that asked for:

- Ratings on a five-point semantic differential scale (1='poor'; 5='excellent') of how well the conference overall increased the participant's understanding of several issues.
- Ratings on five-point Likert scales (1='extremely useful'; 5= 'not useful') of how useful the conference overall and certain aspects were to the participant.
- Participants' "thoughts about the future of Virginia's social services system and the role of state and local governments" written in an open-ended text field. A second open-ended question ("Any other comments?") was more of a catchall item in case participants had something to say that was not captured in the previous survey questions. Many participants used the second question to provide feedback about the Conference itself.
- Participants' organizational affiliation (e.g., LDSS, VDSS, local government) and locality (i.e., county, city).

Skip patterns were inserted in the survey, including the first question about whether or not the respondent attended the conference. If the participant had not attended the conference (i.e., a 'no' response to Question 1), the survey skipped to the end, where the participant left the survey web site and was re-directed to the VDSS public web site (<http://www.dss.virginia.gov>). With the exception of the first question, the participant was not required to fill in a response for each question. As part of the introduction, the participant was informed that they may leave any question blank, if they wished. A copy of the survey questionnaire is in Appendix C.

Survey Data Analysis

For some of the rating questions, responses were re-coded into binary variables. For example, "very good" and "excellent" responses to Question 2 were collapsed into one category, and all other responses (e.g., "poor" to "average") were collapsed into a second category. Descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, means) were used to analyze the fixed-choice and rating scale questions. Item ratings were examined within subgroups (e.g., LDSS staff, local government officials, VDSS staff) to compare responses by organizational affiliation. For open-ended questions, text analysis was performed to determine the most common themes mentioned. The count and percentage of respondents who gave a comment that fell into a specific categorical theme was analyzed and reported. Responses were examined separately by organizational affiliation.

Post-Conference Survey Results

A total of 156 people responded to the first question on the survey (“Did you attend the VDSS Conference on April 25th?”), for a response rate of 67%. One hundred fifty-two (152) respondents indicated that they attended the conference, whereas four did not. The findings discussed below are based only on responses from respondents who attended the conference (N=152).

Who participated in the Evaluation Survey?

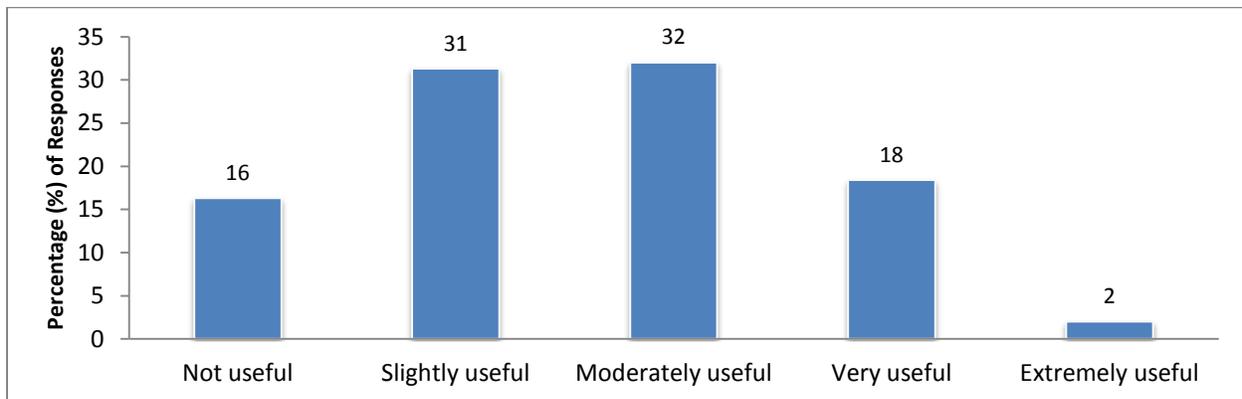
The majority of respondents (N=129; 60%) reported that they were from local departments of social services. Thirty respondents (23%) were local government officials. Twenty-two respondents (17%) were VDSS employees. One respondent was a member of a professional association. Three respondents provided an “other” response.

A total of 91 respondents reported coming from 69 different localities. Eleven respondents said that they came from organizations that served statewide interests. Seventy-nine (79) respondents were from local DSS agencies, representing 56 different localities.

How useful was the information presented at the conference overall to participants?

Half (52%) of respondents said that the conference was useful (defined as a rating of “moderately useful”, “very useful”, or “extremely useful”). When looking at the distribution of responses in Figure 2, ratings were slightly slanted toward not being useful (i.e., “slightly useful”, “not useful”).

Figure 2 – How useful was the Conference information overall to participants



Fewer LDSS directors and local government officials (Figures 3 and 4, respectively) said the conference information was useful compared to VDSS staff members (Figure 5). Local government officials were least likely to consider the conference information to be of great utility. Note: The sample sizes of local government officials and VDSS staff were small (≤ 30); the LDSS director sample was two to three times greater in number than either of the other two groups. Detailed tables of response counts and percentages for Question 3 are shown in Appendix D.

Figure 3 – How useful was the Conference information overall to *LDSS Directors (N=79)*

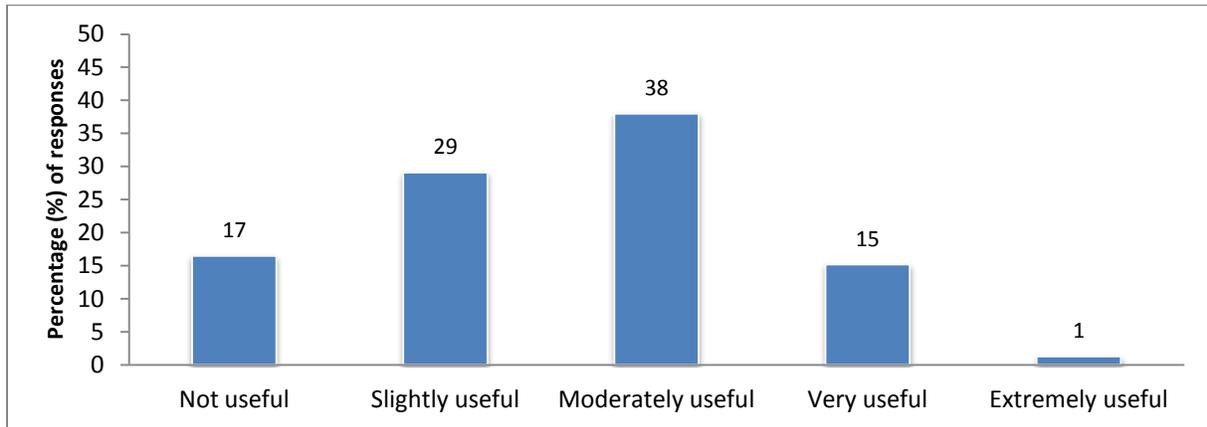


Figure 4 - How useful was the Conference information overall to *Local Government Officials (N=30)*

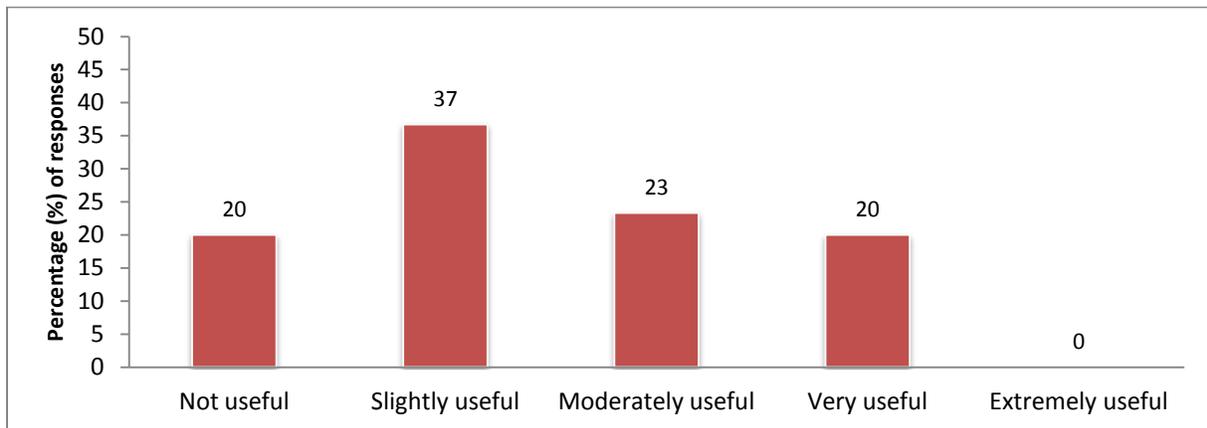
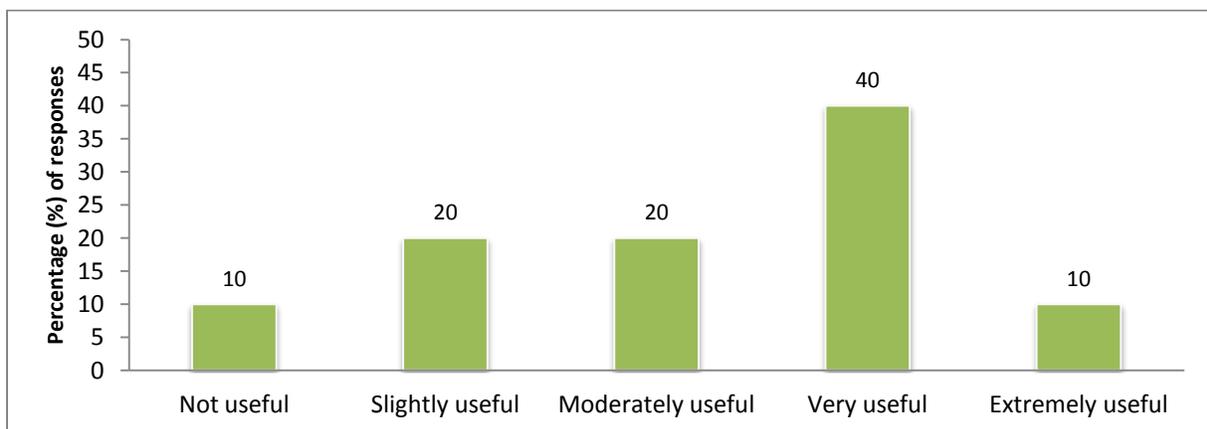


Figure 5 - How useful was the Conference information overall to *VDSS Staff (N=20)*

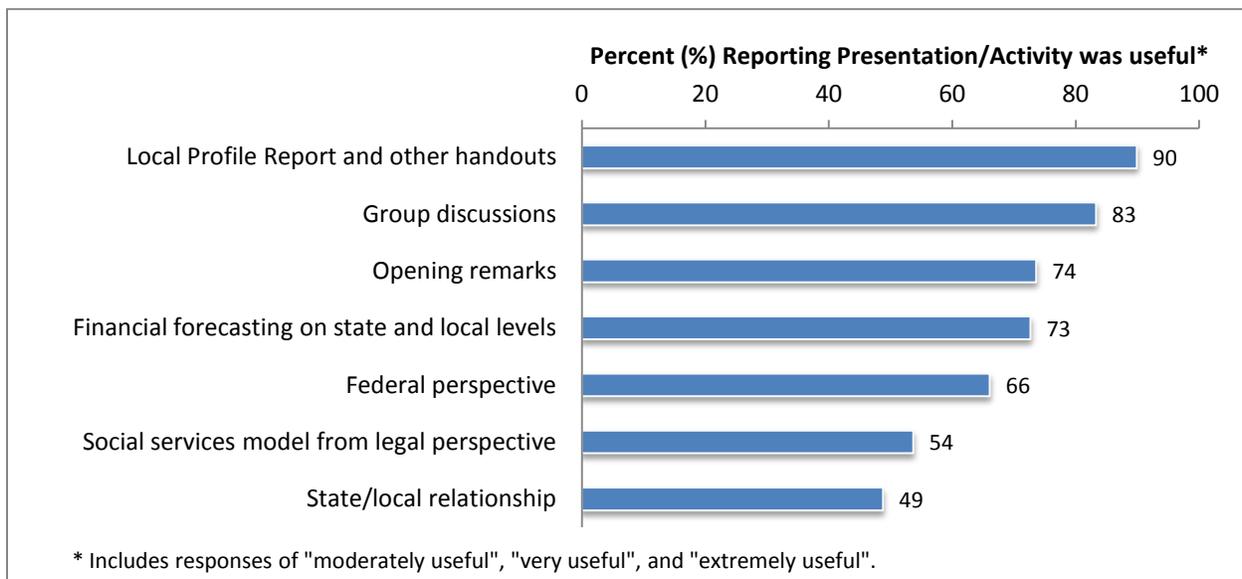


How useful were specific aspects of the conference to participants?

The respondents who said that the conference overall was “not useful” to Question 3 were not asked to respond to Question 4. The remaining 129 respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of individual aspects (e.g., presentations, activities, resources) of the conference.

Overall, respondents said that the Local Profile Report (and other handouts) and the group discussions were the most useful aspects of the conference (Figure 6). Ninety percent (90%) of respondents rated the Local Profile Report as at least “moderately useful”; 83% said the same about the group discussions. Only 49% of respondents reported that the presentation on the relationship between state and local DSS agencies was at least moderately useful.

Figure 6 – How useful* were specific aspects of the conference to participants



LDSS directors, local government officials, and VDSS staff rated each aspect of the Conference in very similar ways (Figures 7 to 9). For example, all three groups rated the Local Profile Report and the group discussions as very useful. The presentations on the state/local relationships and the current model of social services from a legal perspective were least useful to all three groups. However, comparisons of responses by each group showed that:

- LDSS directors (76%) were less likely than either local government officials (96%) or VDSS staff (100%) to find the group discussions useful.
- The financial forecasting presentation was more interesting to local government officials than either the local or state DSS staff.
- The presentation on the federal perspective and the Secretary’s opening remarks were rated more highly by VDSS staff members than by LDSS directors or local government officials.

Detailed tables of response counts and percentages for Question 4 are shown in Appendix D.

Figure 7 - How useful* were specific aspects of the conference to LDSS Directors

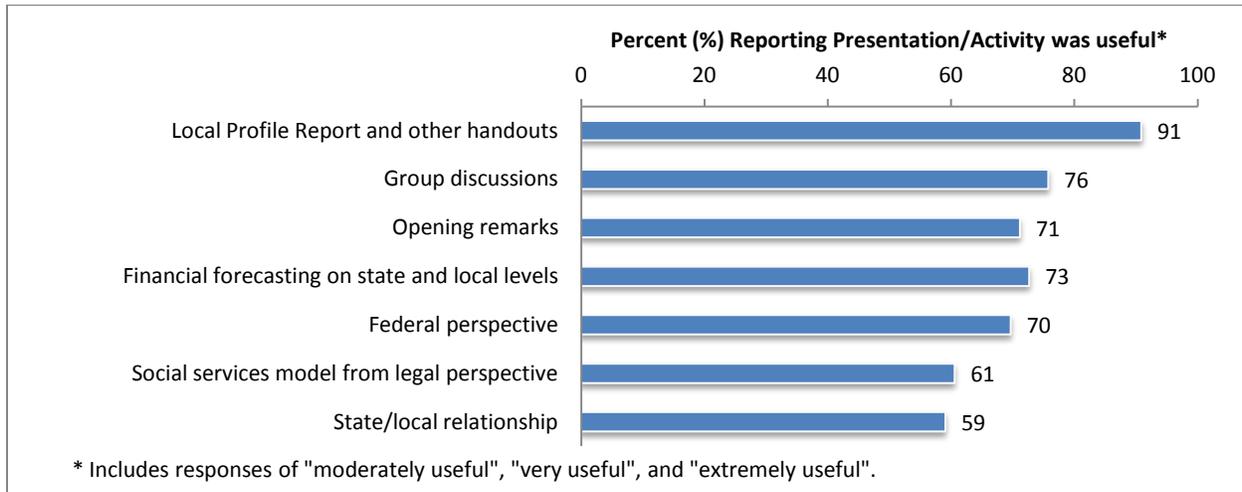


Figure 8 - How useful* were specific aspects of the conference to Local Government Officials

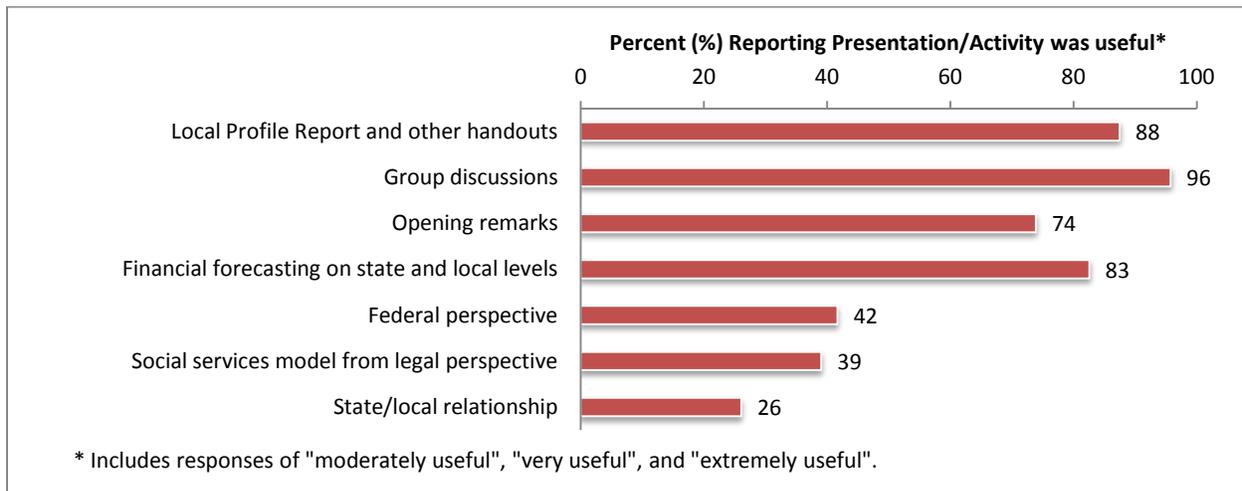
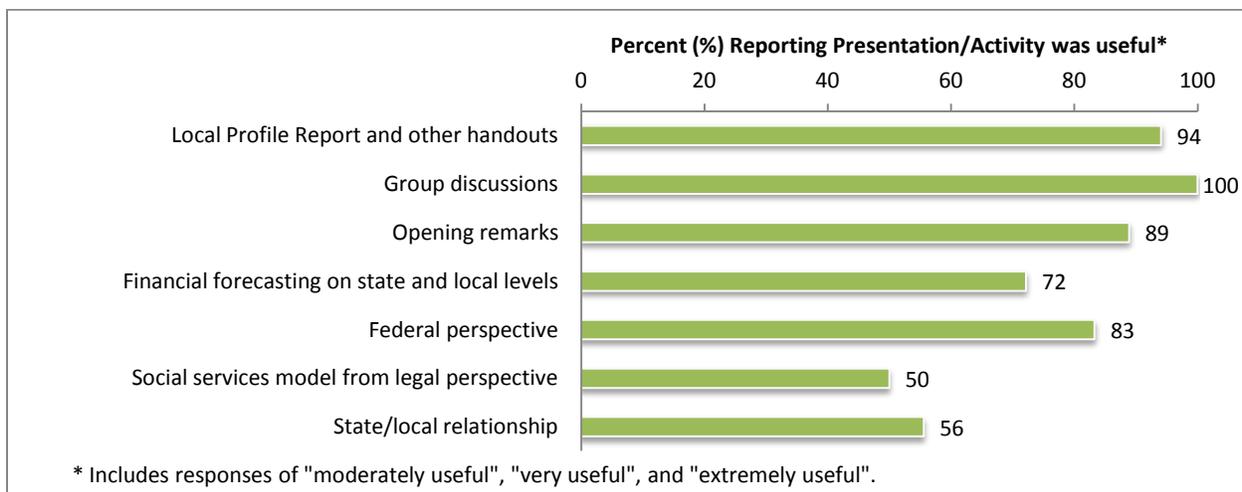


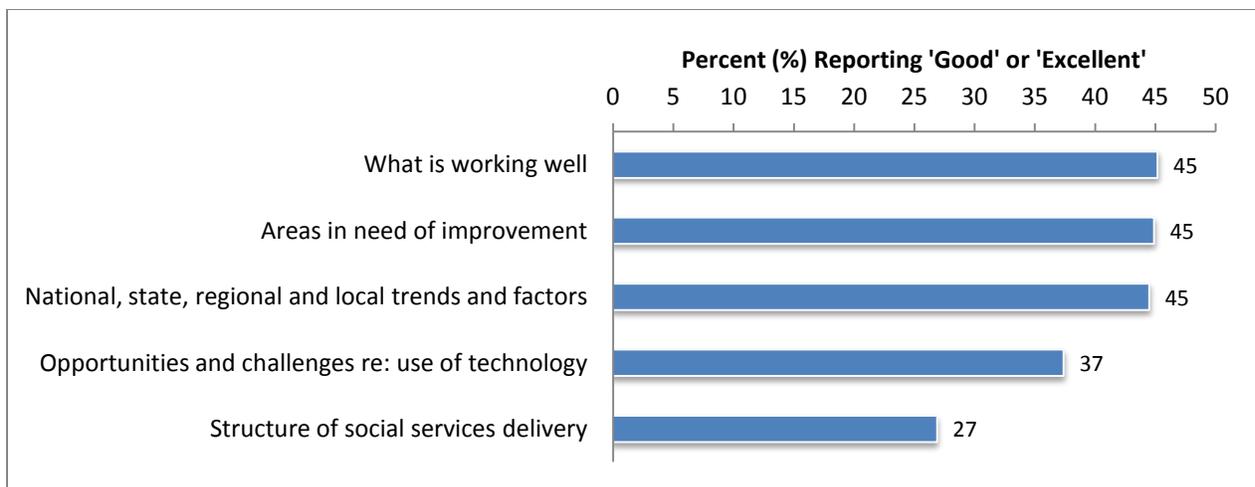
Figure 9 - How useful* were specific aspects of the conference to VDSS Staff



How well did the Conference increase participants' understanding of key social services issues?

Respondents were asked to rate how well the Conference increased their understanding of certain issues. Fewer than half (<50%) of respondents rated the Conference as doing a “good” or “excellent” job in increasing their understanding of various topics presented at the meeting (Figure 10). Almost half (45%) of respondents rated the Conference as doing a “good” or “excellent” job in improving their understanding of 1) national, state, and local trends, 2) what is working well in social services, and 3) areas in need of improvement. The Conference received the lowest performance rating (27%) in regard to improving participants’ understanding of the current structure of social services delivery in the Commonwealth. This may reflect the fact that most respondents are part of the social services delivery structure and feel that they already understand it well.

Figure 10 – How well did the Conference improve participants’ understanding of key issues



LDSS directors and local government officials were typically less likely to give positive ratings (i.e., ‘good’ or ‘excellent’) for how well the Conference improved their understanding of most key issues (Figures 11 and 12, respectively), compared to VDSS staff (Figure 13). Respondents in all three groups were least likely to give high ratings for increased understanding of the current social services delivery structure. Detailed tables of response counts and percentages for Question 2 are shown in Appendix D.

Figure 11 - How well did the Conference improve understanding of key issues among LDSS Directors

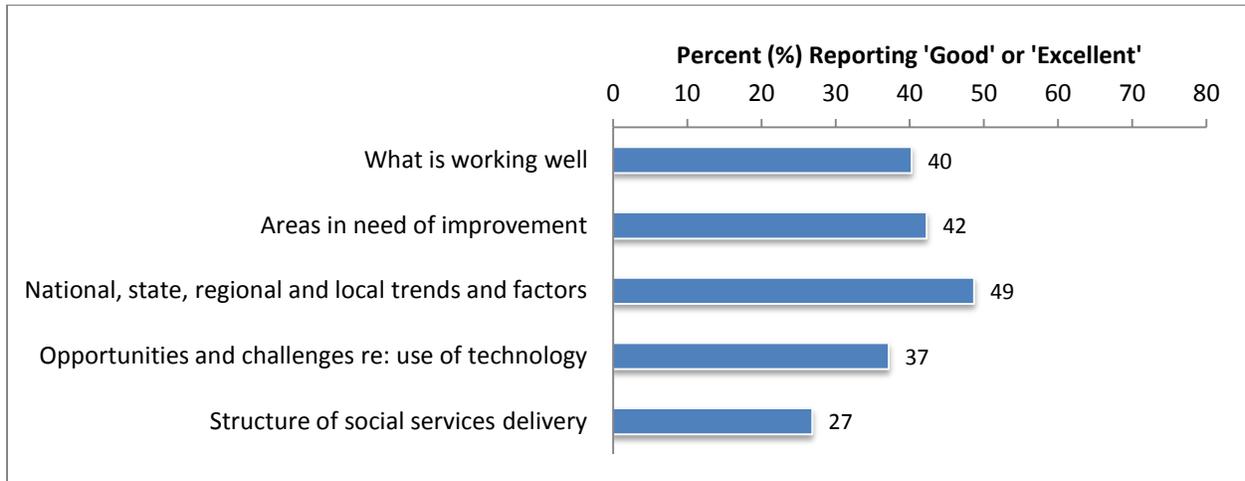


Figure 12 - How well did the Conference improve understanding of key issues among Local Government Officials

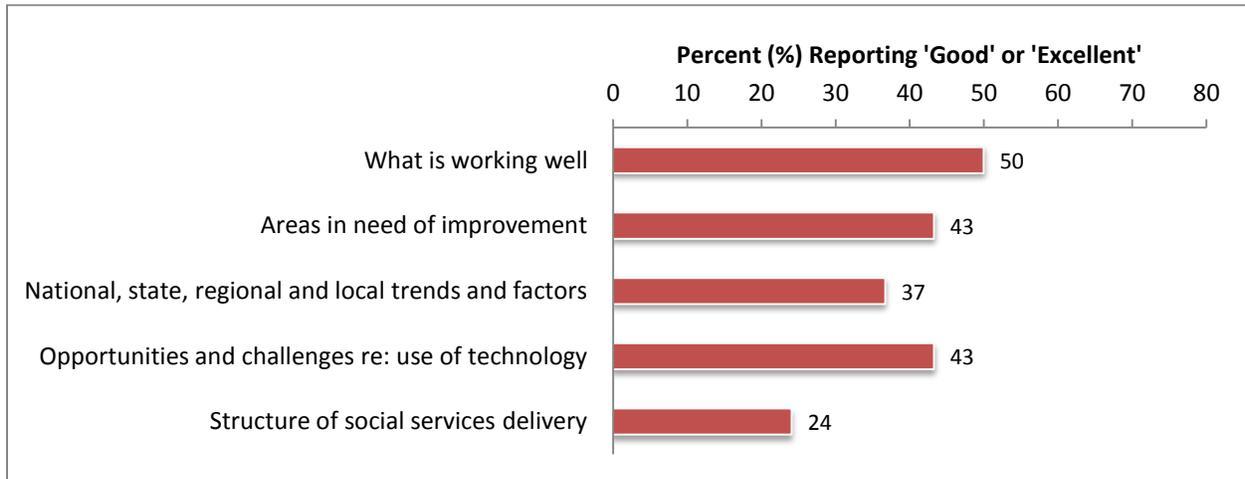
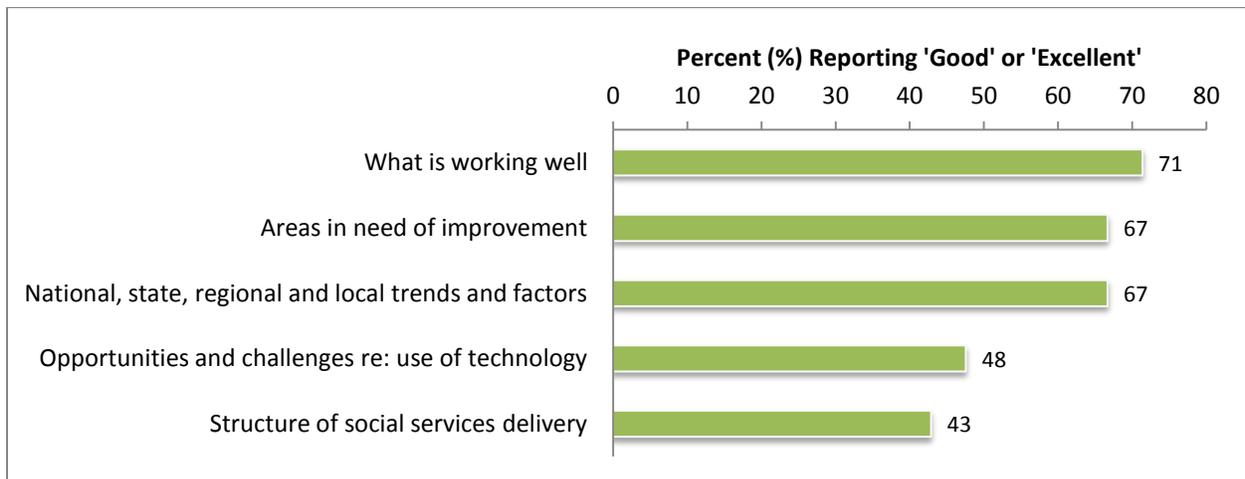


Figure 13 - How well did the Conference improve understanding of key issues among VDSS Staff



Analysis of Participants' Survey Comments

Eighty-four (84) respondents – over half (54%) of the participants who completed the survey -- provided responses to one or both open-ended questions on the survey. The distribution of responses was as follows: 53 (62%) were from LDSS representatives, 16 (19%) were from local government officials, ten (12%) were from VDSS staff, and one (1%) was from a representative of a state professional organization. Four participants (5%) did not identify their organizational affiliation.

Since there was overlap in types of comments made between the two open-ended questions, the responses were combined in the content analysis. The analysis made a distinction between comments about the Conference and comments about the social services system. Each participant's response was coded by category or theme. The findings below report the number and percentage of participants who made a particular type of comment.

Comments about the Conference

Sixty-six (n=66; 79%) of 84 respondents who answered the open-ended questions made at least one comment about the Conference. Significantly more respondents wrote negative (n=57; 68%) versus positive (n=28; 33%) comments.⁵ This trend appeared among local DSS directors (64% vs. 38%), local government officials (75% vs. 19%), and VDSS staff (70% vs. 40%). In general, local government officials were most likely to share negative opinions and least likely to share positive opinions about the Conference, compared to the other two groups.

Positive Comments. Positive comments about the Conference tended to focus on the following three themes:

1. **The Conference was a great first step to initiate a dialogue** between VDSS, local DSS agencies, and local government officials about respective roles and responsibilities, the nature of state-local relationships, etc. (n=15; 18%). This included remarks about how useful it was to have local government officials present at the meeting. Continuing in the same vein, respondents recommended that the dialogue should be continued at the local level and that future meetings should involve local government representatives, when possible. All three groups – LDSS directors, local government officials, and VDSS staff -- were in agreement about this idea.
2. **The Conference provided a great opportunity for networking and meeting local government officials**, who are typically not included in these types of discussions (n=7; 8%).
3. **The Conference provided useful information through the presentations** (n=6; 7%).

The round-table discussions and the Local Profile Report also elicited positive comments.

Negative Comments. Negative comments about the Conference tended to focus on the following themes (listed in order of frequency from highest to lowest):

⁵ Respondents who provided negative comments versus respondents who provided positive responses were not mutually exclusive groups. Many respondents included both negative and positive opinions in their responses to the open-ended questions.

1. **The Conference did not provide any new or useful information** (n=22; 26%). This included comments about the Conference not taking the opportunity to address topics of interest to the audience, such as funding allocation methodology and alternative service delivery models.
2. **The goal, purpose, and theme of the Conference were not clear** or clearly communicated to participants before and during the meeting (n=20; 24%). Respondents mentioned being aware of the last-minute change in the title and theme for the Conference, which may indicate disorganization on the part of the conference planners.
3. **The Conference failed to achieve its objectives** by not delivering the information promised on the agenda (n=14; 17%).
4. **The Conference resulted in unproductive time and wasted resources** (n=13, 15%). Most of these same respondents indicated that they would not attend another event such as this, unless the purpose and final agenda were fully disclosed before the meeting.
5. **The format for the Conference could have been better** (n=13; 15%). Specifically, the Conference could have taken place at the local or regional level, taken up less time, and been interactive.
6. **The Conference raised questions and concerns** (perhaps suspicions) (n=9; 11%).

Other themes that came up: *lack of next steps* or call-to-action for after the meeting (n=7; 8%), *the discussion activity could be improved* (e.g., more dedicated time, more provocative topics, better trained facilitators and recorders) (n=7; 8%), and *failed opportunity to engage local officials*.

Local government officials were most likely to comment about the lack of clear goals/theme for the conference (31%) as well as the lack of new/useful information (31%). LDSS staff were most likely to comment about the lack of new/useful information (25%), followed by the lack of a clear goal/theme (21%). VDSS staff members were most likely to comment about the need for a better meeting format (30%).

Comments about the Social Services System

Compared to comments about the Conference, fewer respondents (n=48; 57%) shared “thoughts about the future of social services and/or state and local roles and responsibilities”. The number of respondents who wrote negative comments (n=47; 56%) outnumbered positive comments (n=11; 13%) by a ratio of four-to-one (4:1). This trend held true for LDSS directors (55% vs. 11%), local government officials (75% vs. 19%), and VDSS staff (50% vs. 20%). In general, local government officials were most likely to share negative opinions (75%), and LDSS directors were least likely to express positive opinions (11%) about social services.

Positive Comments about Social Services

The majority of positive comments referred to assets identified within the social services system. These included: local and regional partnerships (e.g., between local DSS and local government, between local DSS and community agencies, among local DSS agencies); use of technology (e.g., CommonHelp) to integrate and streamline processes; skilled and dedicated local agency staff; ability of local DSS agencies to deliver services in the face of challenges; and use of data for benchmarking local agency performance. All of these assets were mentioned during the round-table discussions.

Negative Comments about Social Services

Negative comments about the current state of social services focused on the following challenges:

1. **Lack of input and involvement from local stakeholders** (e.g., LDSS, local government, community groups, clients) when developing plans, policies, and processes (n=13; 15%).
2. **Lack of integrated data systems, inability to use technology to improve processes** (n=12; 14%). Although supportive of the idea, some respondents expressed skepticism that IT projects, like CommonHelp, would be implemented well or have a major impact.
3. **Lack of political support**, especially from the state government and state legislature, resulting in unfunded mandates and cuts to program funding (n=11; 13%)
4. **Need for integrating human services, streamlining processes, and reducing duplication of effort** (n=9; 11%)

Although less frequently mentioned, these themes also came up: need for *better communication* between VDSS, local DSS agencies, and local governments (n=8; 10%); need for *more local funding* for staffing and services (n=8; 10%); discussion of *alternative service delivery models and best practices* (n=7; 8%); need for *stronger VDSS leadership and direction* (e.g., state strategic plan)(n=6; 7%); and the *need for more VDSS support* in regard to training, technical assistance, and funding (n=6; 7%). All of these challenges were mentioned during the round-table discussions.

Local government officials tended to focus on need for more local involvement in policy and decision-making processes (38%) and the need for integrated, streamlined processes (25%). The most commonly mentioned challenges from the LDSS perspective were lack of political support/unfunded mandates (13%) and need for IT integration and technological solutions (13%). Responses were more varied among VDSS staff; no consistent themes were identified in this group.

Appendices

A – Conference Agenda

B -- Major Themes in Responses to Round-Table Discussion Topics by LDSS Region

C – Evaluation Survey Questionnaire

D – Detailed Data Tables for Evaluation Survey Questions 2 through 4

A Conversation: Virginia's Social Services System
Roles · Responsibilities · Funding
April 25, 2012

Agenda

Purpose: To offer an unprecedented opportunity for state and local officials to meet together to analyze our current system structure and how it can best work in the face of changing demographics, technology, federal laws and constrained finances.

Expected Outcomes For Attendees:

- Share a common understanding of what is meant by state-supervised, locally-administered human services and how the social services system works in Virginia (e.g. funding, roles, and responsibilities).
- Identify what is working well, as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Understand the challenges and opportunities presented by technology.
- Continue the dialogue on improving state and local partnerships.

8:30 – 9:00 AM **CHECK IN AND COFFEE**

9:00 – 9:15 AM **WELCOME**
Commissioner Martin D. Brown
Virginia Department of Social Services

9:15 – 10:00 AM **OPENING REMARKS**
Virginia's Secretary of Health and Human Resources
William A. Hazel, M.D.

- The enterprise-wide vision for information systems modernization within Virginia's Health and Human Resources Secretariat with an emphasis on its impact on the business and relationship to health system reform.

10:00 – 10:45 AM **PANEL DISCUSSION**
Moderator: Bryan Elliott
Assistant County Executive, Albemarle County

Panelist 1 – Beau Blevins, Government Relations Liaison, Virginia Association of Counties
The State/Local Relationship

- A perspective on the state/local relationship in Virginia's social services delivery system.

Panelist 2 – Virginia's Secretary of Finance, Richard (Ric) D. Brown
Financial Forecasting On A State/Local Level

Appendix A. Conference Agenda

Panelist 3 – Allen Wilson, Senior Assistant Attorney General
State Supervised/Locally Administered
From The Legal Perspective

- Defining what is meant by state supervised/locally administered.
- Legalities, authorities associated with this implementation system.

10:45 – 11:00 AM **BREAK**

11:00 – 12:00 PM **PANEL DISCUSSION (CONTINUED)**

Panelist 4 – Tracy Wareing, Executive Director
American Public Human Services Association
The National Perspective

- Vision and challenges to sustaining the nation’s human services system.

12:00 – 12:15 PM **BREAK**

12:15 – 2:00 PM **WORKING LUNCH - GROUP WORK AT TABLES**
Facilitators will support participant discussions and capture major themes.

2:00 – 2:30 PM **BREAK**

2:30 – 3:15 PM **GROUP REPORT OUT**
Groups will report out on their work. Regional Directors will share key themes and ideas.

3:15 – 3:30 PM **WRAP-UP/NEXT STEPS**
Commissioner Martin D. Brown
Virginia Department of Social Services

*Many thanks to our partners: The Virginia Association of Counties, The Virginia Association of Local Human Services Officials,
The Virginia League of Social Services Executives, The Virginia Municipal League,
The U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Awards For Virginia and Virginia First Cities Coalition*

Appendix B. Major Themes in Responses to Round-Table Discussion Topics by LDSS Region

1. What is going well in the delivery of social services within your municipalities?

Region	Major Themes
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good community partnerships and collaboration to augment local department of social services delivery • Locality staff are experienced, committed, and competent
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localities have utilized grassroots and collaboration with community partners to meet the needs of their client. There is creativity and innovation to solve problems. • Local staff is highly invested, resourceful and adaptive to change and provide effective customer service despite increasing caseloads. Meeting increased needs without additional resources. • Local governments are aware of the importance of Social Services; great working relationships with county administrator and local board • Model of local administration allows for flexibility and cooperation to address local issues • Early results of Transformation of Children’s Services put the focus on families in communities and show reductions in children in care, increases in permanency. • Effective support from Regional Office Staff
Northern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with partners • Family Focused (Keeping families together in the community) • Encouraging new IT such as CommonHelp
Piedmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed, motivated, experienced staff who manage to serve despite caseload increases • Management of funds with limited resources • Child welfare outcomes • Responsible, knowledgeable state staff • Collaborations through Practice Model, Family Partnership Meetings, Prisoner Re-entry, Random Moment Sampling
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful delivery of services despite caseload increases, staff turnover, and limited resources • Strong working relationship between county and city administrators and LDSS • Strong, intentional collaboration amongst community partners, neighboring localities, and planning districts within region • Committed, quality employees despite retention challenges

2. Are there things we could be doing or doing differently to help individuals and the families we serve?

Region	Major Themes
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on prevention • Consistent definition based on the COV (Commonwealth of Virginia) • Increased funding • Streamline processes & policies • Include those impacted by decisions (e.g., clients, LDSS) in the decision-making and timelines
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to invest in prevention and capturing data on these efforts. • Better education of local governments, General Assembly, educators (our funders) about the importance of social services. Improve our ability to tell our story and show the social return on investment. • More integrated service delivery (e.g. CSBs, Health Dept., Courts) • Define and develop a standard of care and then fund it. (multiple programs) • Improve communication from VDSS in terms of planning and policy development. Use newer, innovative tools to manage change and complex transitions. • Performance measures must be tied to local needs.
Northern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify and integrate policies across programs • Increase training availability for workers and more sites • Flexibility with funding • DSS has difficulty in celebrating success - find ways to tell the positive story
Piedmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved funding allocations, equitable based on caseload • Improve technology (i.e., mobile devices, shared network drives, systems that connect, and utilizing end users) • Streamline and clarify policies and make paperless
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need better emphasis and commitment of resources for prevention and early intervention services (i.e. substance abuse) • Communication is often inconsistent and/or lacking from VDSS • Inconsistencies in development of policy/guidance • Focus on compliance and outcomes vs. quality and process – should be balance between both

3. What would help us get there? What do we need to get there?

Region	Major Themes
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass roots (locality-wide) teams for non-LDSS initiatives • Flexible funding to move money between programs when needed (like prevention) • More and better coordinated technology • Training (timely, comprehensive)
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and business process should follow desired outcomes • Reinstate VDSS Fraud Unit • Increase recognition of staff and be sensitive to staff burnout • Systematically analyze trend data to promote sustainability • Actually allow flexible use of funding, at the programmatic and administrative levels. Reduce reporting requirements, streamline/collapse budget lines and eliminate redundancies. • Training could be handled on a regional basis, in conjunction with localities. Training specialists at the local level could be shared. Split costs by multiple localities.
Northern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated IT systems (hardware and software) • Real time management reports • Regional structure to continue to be an advocate between locals. • To provide more technical training to local agencies. • Strong state direction and leadership
Piedmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with higher education on training • Stronger state leadership especially in funding and IT • Ongoing conversations amongst VDSS and LDSS • Comprehensive human services plan by each community
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider capacity and limitations specific to each region in order to meet needs when resources are strapped • Commitment to training, leadership development, and technical assistance in order to best meet human service needs • Need for better collaboration between VDSS and other state human services organizations • Defragment the system through better communication, streamlined approach to issuing policy, new technology • Need for reinvestment strategies

Appendix C. VDSS Conference: Evaluation Survey

Instructions

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is conducting a brief survey of participants' impressions of the April 25 Conference in Richmond ("A Conversation: Virginia's Social Services System - Roles, Responsibilities, & Funding"). Your responses will be kept confidential. The first question requires a response. However, for the remainder of the survey, you may choose to not answer a particular item. The last two questions regarding your background are optional, but your responses would be helpful to the researchers. Only aggregate (summary) findings will be reported; no response will be linked to any individual. The survey will take about 5 minutes to complete. We appreciate your assistance in completing this survey and providing feedback about the conference. Thank you!

1. Did you attend the VDSS Conference on April 25th?

- Yes
- No (skip to End of Survey)

2. Rate the VDSS-LDSS Conference overall in increasing your understanding of the following topics.

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
2a) The structure of social services delivery (e.g., "state-supervised, locally administered")	<input type="radio"/>				
2b) National, state, regional and local trends and factors affecting social services delivery	<input type="radio"/>				
2c) Identifying what is working well in terms of social services delivery	<input type="radio"/>				
2d) Identifying areas for improvement (challenges) in providing social services	<input type="radio"/>				
2e) Opportunities and challenges in using technology to improve efficiencies in delivering social services	<input type="radio"/>				

3. Overall, how useful was the information presented at the conference to you?

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Moderately useful
- Slightly useful
- Not useful (skip to Question 5)

VDSS Conference: Evaluation Survey

4. Rate how useful each aspect of the conference was to you (1="not useful"; 5="Extremely useful").

	Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful
4a) Opening Remarks (Sec. Hazel)	<input type="radio"/>				
4b) State/Local Relationship (TBD)	<input type="radio"/>				
4c) Financial Forecasting on State/Local Level (R. Brown)	<input type="radio"/>				
4d) State Supervised/Locally Administered from Legal Perspective (A. Wilson)	<input type="radio"/>				
4e) Federal Perspective (T. Wareing)	<input type="radio"/>				
4f) Group Discussions/Working Lunch	<input type="radio"/>				
4g) Local DSS Profile Report and other handouts	<input type="radio"/>				

Next Steps

5. If you would like to share any thoughts about the future of Virginia's social services system and the role of state and local governments, please do so here.

6. Any other comments?

Background

Please tell us a little about yourself. No personally identifying information is requested.

VDSS Conference: Evaluation Survey

7. What type of organization do you represent?

- Local DSS
- VDSS
- Other state government
- County/city government
- Professional Association (e.g., VaCO, VLSSE)

Other (please specify)

8. Which county or city do you represent? Select the locality from the drop-down box. If statewide, select "Virginia". If you represent a local DSS agency with jurisdiction over multiple counties and cities, select the primary county in your jurisdiction.

County/City

Other (please specify)

End of Survey

Thank you for completing this survey.

If you have any questions or comments about the survey, you may contact Erik Beecroft, VDSS Office of Research and Planning, at (804)726-7617 or Erik.Beecroft@dss.virginia.gov.

Appendix D. Detailed Data Tables for Conference Evaluation Survey Questions 2 through 4.

Table 1 – Rating of the VDSS Conference overall in increasing participants’ understanding of select topics (Question 2)

“Rate the VDSS Conference overall in increasing your understanding of the following topics...”	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Mean Rating	Response Count
2a) The structure of social services delivery (e.g., "state-supervised, locally administered")	46 (31.7%)	31 (21.4%)	29 (20.0%)	37 (25.5%)	2 (1.4%)	2.43	145
2b) National, state, regional and local trends and factors affecting social services delivery	15 (10.3%)	38 (26.0%)	28 (19.2%)	54 (37.0%)	11 (7.5%)	3.05	146
2c) Identifying what is working well in terms of social services delivery	21 (14.4%)	24 (16.4%)	35 (24.0%)	51 (34.9%)	15 (10.3%)	3.10	146
2d) Identifying areas for improvement (challenges) in providing social services	20 (13.6%)	27 (18.4%)	34 (23.1%)	53 (36.1%)	13 (8.8%)	3.08	147
2e) Opportunities and challenges in using technology to improve efficiencies in delivering social services	23 (15.6%)	29 (19.7%)	40 (27.2%)	39 (26.5%)	16 (10.9%)	2.97	147
<i>answered any question</i>							147
<i>skipped all questions</i>							5

Table 2 - Rating of the VDSS Conference overall in increasing participants' understanding of select topics (Question 2) By Participant Type

2a) The structure of social services delivery (e.g., "state-supervised, locally administered")		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	12 (41.4%)	7 (24.1%)	3 (10.3%)	7 (24.1%)	0 (0.0%)	29 (100.0%)
	LDSS	21 (26.9%)	16 (20.5%)	20 (25.6%)	20 (25.6%)	1 (1.3%)	78 (100.0%)
	VDSS	5 (23.8%)	3 (14.3%)	4 (19.0%)	8 (38.1%)	1 (4.8%)	21 (100.0%)
Total		38 (29.7%)	26 (20.3%)	27 (21.1%)	35 (27.3%)	2 (1.6%)	128 (100.0%)

2b) National, state, regional and local trends and factors affecting social services delivery		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	5 (16.7%)	7 (23.3%)	7 (23.3%)	9 (30.0%)	2 (6.7%)	30 (100.0%)
	LDSS	7 (9.0%)	20 (25.6%)	13 (16.7%)	33 (42.3%)	5 (6.4%)	78 (100.0%)
	VDSS	2 (9.5%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (9.5%)	10 (47.6%)	4 (19.0%)	21 (100.0%)
Total		14 (10.9%)	30 (23.3%)	22 (17.1%)	52 (40.3%)	11 (8.5%)	129 (100.0%)

2c) Identifying what is working well in terms of social services delivery		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	3 (10.0%)	10 (33.3%)	2 (6.7%)	13 (43.3%)	2 (6.7%)	30 (100.0%)
	LDSS	11 (14.3%)	11 (14.3%)	24 (31.2%)	23 (29.9%)	8 (10.4%)	77 (100.0%)
	VDSS	3 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (14.3%)	10 (47.6%)	5 (23.8%)	21 (100.0%)
Total		17 (13.3%)	21 (16.4%)	29 (22.7%)	46 (35.9%)	15 (11.7%)	128 (100.0%)

2d) Identifying areas for improvement (challenges) in providing social services		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	3 (10.0%)	7 (23.3%)	7 (23.3%)	12 (40.0%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100.0%)
	LDSS	10 (12.8%)	16 (20.5%)	19 (24.4%)	25 (32.1%)	8 (10.3%)	78 (100.0%)
	VDSS	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.8%)	3 (14.3%)	10 (47.6%)	4 (19.0%)	21 (100.0%)
Total		16 (12.4%)	24 (18.6%)	29 (22.5%)	47 (36.4%)	13 (10.1%)	129 (100.0%)

* Excludes persons from other organizations or who did not report an organizational affiliation.

2e) Opportunities and challenges in using technology to improve efficiencies in delivering social services		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	5 (16.7%)	6 (20.0%)	6 (20.0%)	11 (36.7%)	2 (6.7%)	30 (100.0%)
	LDSS	12 (15.4%)	12 (15.4%)	25 (32.1%)	21 (26.9%)	8 (10.3%)	78 (100.0%)
	VDSS	3 (14.3%)	3 (14.3%)	5 (23.8%)	4 (19.0%)	6 (28.6%)	21 (100.0%)
Total		20 (15.5%)	21 (16.3%)	36 (27.9%)	36 (27.9%)	16 (12.4%)	129 (100.0%)

* Excludes persons from other organizations or who did not report an organizational affiliation

Table 3 – How useful *overall* the information at the Conference was to participants (Question 3)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Extremely useful	2.0%	3
Very useful	18.4%	27
Moderately useful	32.0%	47
Slightly useful	31.3%	46
Not useful (skip to Question 5)	16.3%	24
<i>answered question</i>		147
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Table 4 – How useful *overall* the information at the Conference was to participants (Question 3) By Participant Type

“Overall, how useful was the information presented at the Conference to you?”		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	6 (20.0%)	11 (36.7%)	7 (23.3%)	6 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	30 (100.0%)
	LDSS	13 (16.5%)	23 (29.1%)	30 (38.0%)	12 (15.2%)	1 (1.3%)	79 (100.0%)
	VDSS	2 (10.0%)	4 (20.0%)	4 (20.0%)	8 (40.0%)	2 (10.0%)	20 (100.0%)
Total		21 (16.3%)	38 (29.5%)	41 (31.8%)	26 (20.2%)	3 (2.3%)	129 (100.0%)

* Excludes persons from other organizations or who did not report an organizational affiliation.

Table 5 – How useful each aspect of the Conference was to participants (Question 4)

"Rate how useful each aspect of the conference was to you."						
Answer Options	Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Response Count
4a) Opening Remarks	7 (5.8%)	25 (20.7%)	40 (33.1%)	39 (32.2%)	10 (8.3%)	121 (100%)
4b) State and Local Agency Relationship	25 (20.7%)	37 (30.6%)	42 (34.7%)	13 (10.7%)	4 (3.3%)	121 (100%)
4c) Financial Forecasting on State/Local Level	7 (5.8%)	26 (21.5%)	44 (36.4%)	34 (28.1%)	10 (8.3%)	121 (100%)
4d) State Supervised/Locally Administered from Legal Perspective	15 (12.4%)	41 (33.9%)	39 (32.2%)	20 (16.5%)	6 (5.0%)	121 (100%)
4e) Federal Perspective	12 (9.9%)	29 (24.0%)	40 (33.1%)	31 (25.6%)	9 (7.4%)	121 (100%)
4f) Group Discussions/Working Lunch	7 (5.8%)	13 (10.8%)	32 (26.7%)	45 (37.5%)	23 (19.2%)	120 (100%)
4g) Local DSS Profile Report and other handouts	1 (0.8%)	11 (9.2%)	25 (21.0%)	45 (37.8%)	37 (31.1%)	119 (100%)

* Excludes participants who answered 'Not useful' to Question 3.

Table 6 - How useful each aspect of the Conference was to participants (Question 4) by Participant Type

4a) Opening remarks		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	1 (4.3%)	5 (21.7%)	8 (34.8%)	7 (30.4%)	2 (8.7%)	23 (100.0%)
	LDSS	3 (4.5%)	16 (24.2%)	21 (31.8%)	20 (30.3%)	6 (9.1%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	0 (0.0%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (16.7%)	11 (61.1%)	2 (11.1%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		4 (3.7%)	23 (21.5%)	32 (29.9%)	38 (35.5%)	10 (9.3%)	107 (100.0%)

4b) State and local agency relationship		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	7 (30.4%)	10 (43.5%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (100.0%)
	LDSS	9 (13.6%)	18 (27.3%)	28 (42.4%)	9 (13.6%)	2 (3.0%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	3 (16.7%)	5 (27.8%)	7 (38.9%)	2 (11.1%)	1 (5.6%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		19 (17.8%)	33 (30.8%)	39 (36.4%)	13 (12.1%)	3 (2.8%)	107 (100.0%)

4c) Financial forecasting at the state and local levels		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	0 (0.0%)	4 (17.4%)	8 (34.8%)	9 (39.1%)	2 (8.7%)	23 (100.0%)
	LDSS	2 (3.0%)	16 (24.2%)	28 (42.4%)	15 (22.7%)	5 (7.6%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	4 (22.2%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (11.1%)	8 (44.4%)	3 (16.7%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		6 (5.6%)	21 (19.6%)	38 (35.5%)	32 (29.9%)	10 (9.3%)	107 (100.0%)

4d) State-supervised/Locally administered model from a legal perspective		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	3 (13.0%)	11 (47.8%)	5 (21.7%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (100.0%)
	LDSS	7 (10.6%)	19 (28.8%)	24 (36.4%)	11 (16.7%)	5 (7.6%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	2 (11.1%)	7 (38.9%)	4 (22.2%)	4 (22.2%)	1 (5.6%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		12 (11.1%)	37 (38.9%)	33 (22.2%)	19 (22.2%)	6 (5.6%)	107 (100.0%)

4e) Federal perspective		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	4 (16.7%)	10 (41.7%)	6 (25.0%)	3 (12.5%)	1 (4.2%)	24 (100.0%)
	LDSS	5 (7.6%)	15 (22.7%)	26 (39.4%)	17 (25.8%)	3 (4.5%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	1 (5.6%)	2 (11.1%)	5 (27.8%)	6 (33.3%)	4 (22.2%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		10 (9.3%)	27 (25.0%)	37 (34.3%)	26 (24.1%)	8 (7.4%)	108 (100.0%)

4f) Group round-table discussions		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	0 (0.0%)	1 (4.2%)	8 (33.3%)	11 (45.8%)	4 (16.7%)	24 (100.0%)
	LDSS	6 (9.1%)	10 (15.2%)	15 (22.7%)	21 (31.8%)	14 (21.2%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (16.7%)	11 (61.1%)	4 (22.2%)	18 (100.0%)
Total		6 (5.6%)	11 (10.2%)	26 (24.1%)	43 (39.8%)	22 (20.4%)	108 (100.0%)

4g) Local Profile Report and other handouts		Not useful	Slightly useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Total
What type of organization do you represent?*	Local government	0 (0.0%)	3 (12.5%)	8 (33.3%)	7 (29.2%)	6 (25.0%)	24 (100.0%)
	LDSS	0 (0.0%)	6 (9.1%)	9 (13.6%)	26 (39.4%)	25 (37.9%)	66 (100.0%)
	VDSS	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.9%)	3 (17.6%)	8 (47.1%)	5 (29.4%)	17 (100.0%)
Total		0 (0.0%)	10 (9.3%)	20 (18.7%)	41 (38.3%)	36 (33.6%)	107 (100.0%)

* Excludes persons from other organizations or who did not report an organizational affiliation.