

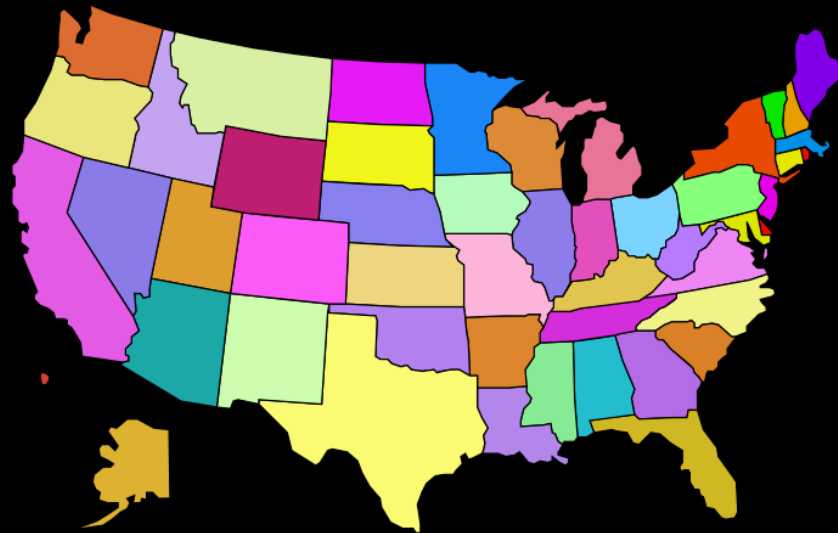
DeafBlind Access to Healthcare and the use of Support Service Providers (SSPs)

Presented By:

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National Statistics

- 2.4 Million DeafBlind Across the nation
 - North Carolina: 83,648 individuals with combined vision and hearing loss in NC.



Increased Risks in Older Adults who have Vision and Hearing Loss

- Cognitive Impairments
- Depression
- Mortality

Challenges

- Communication Access
- Orientation and Mobility
- Access to environment
 - informed choices
- Transportation

Support Service Provider

- Visual and Environmental Information
- Human Guiding
- Transportation
- Access to written materials
- Support with informal communication



Support Service Provider

- Enhances Independence
- Should be trained
- Assists in a variety of settings: work, home, recreation, and social
- Adheres to RID CPC
- Can either be voluntary or paid



National SSP Services

- HKNC list of SSP Programs across the nation
- SSP Services in other states
 - Funding source
 - Eligibility
 - Program design



Services in NC



- NCDDBA Volunteer Database
 - NCDDBA Camp Dogwood DeafBlind Weekend
 - NCDDBA Conference
 - DeafBlind events
- DHHS DeafBlind Employees & Consumers
 - DSSVPL, contracted and paid for services

Purpose of the SSP Survey

- Ran from March 2018-March 2019
- Three versions; Consumers, Family Members, and Providers.
- Distributed at events, home visits, and via email and Facebook.
- Reading/Signing of the survey was provided upon request.

Total completed: 258

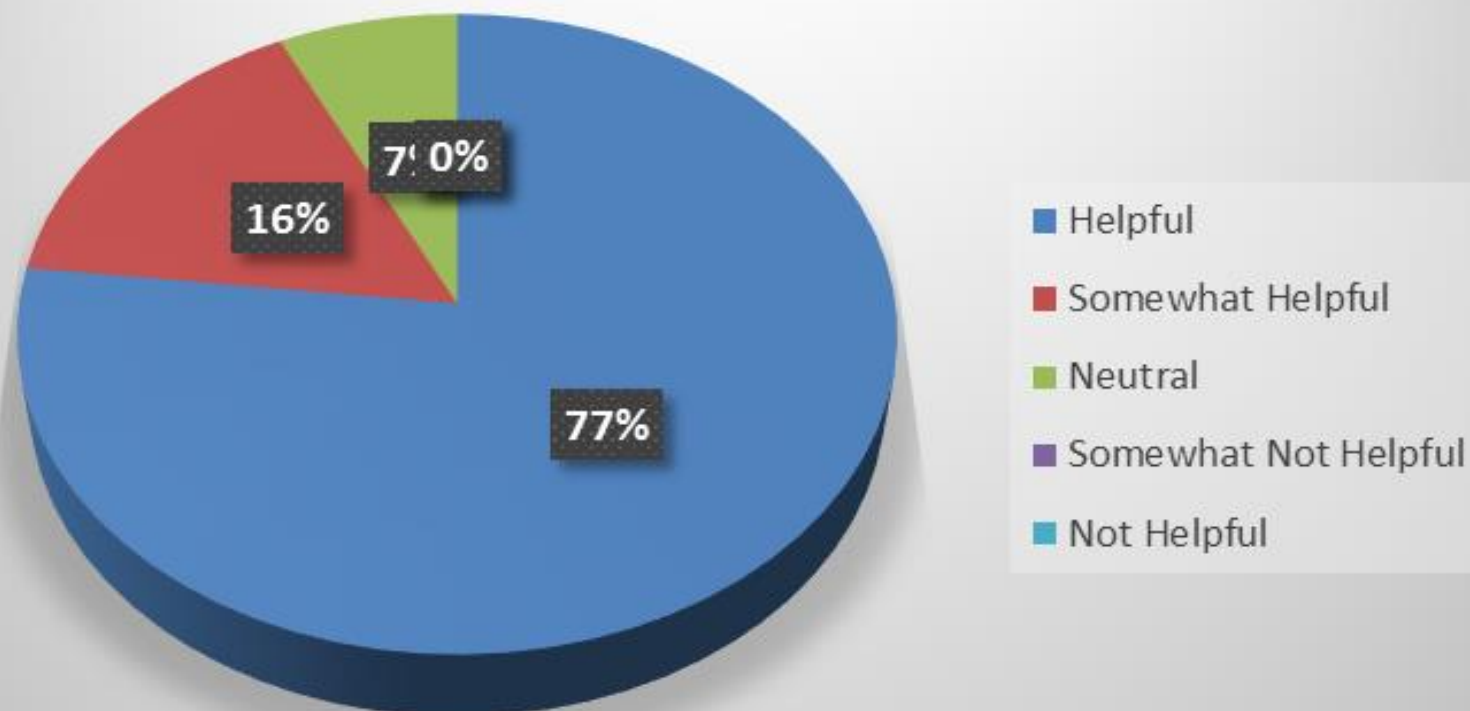
Consumers: 101

Family: 35

Providers: 122

How helpful are SSPs?

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Medical Appointments



71% of consumer responses indicate they rely on the support of family members to gain access to medical appointments.

"Having an SSP will help to keep my medical appointments"

"I go to doctor appointments less often"

Top two for “If you had access to SSP services, which activities would (you, your family member, your consumer) regularly attend...”

Consumers: - Medical appointments
 - Grocery shopping

Family: - Medical appointments
 - Family events

Providers: - Community events
 - Medical appointments

"SSP, the little service that I do get at events have been a life changing thing for me."

"People in my situation would very much like to feel as independent as possible. More than that, we need to be safe from harm. Some of us has fallen, tripped, and have hurt ourselves with friends and family members. SSPs do so much for us."

Recommendations

- To look to DHHS for the establishment of SSP services.
 - Access to SSPs will increase independence which improves quality of life, life expectancy and well-being.
- Education of front line staff to have basic understanding of how to assess for DB and the appropriate next steps.
 - Early identification and appropriate referrals for support services is vital.