

# Montana Developmental Center Closure and Client Transition

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT DIVISION | JUNE 2021 | 19P-02

# Montana Developmental Center (MDC) Background

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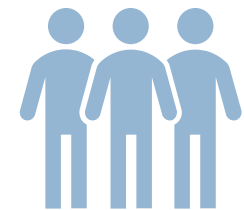
- Placement of last resort for adults with serious developmental disabilities
- 2015 Legislature mandated closure
- Closed October 26, 2018
- Intensive Behavior Center (IBC)



# Audit Objectives & Scope

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- **Closure statute, policies, and other state strategies?**
- **Safety and community inclusion outcomes?**
- **Cost savings for the state?**
  
- Focused on 53 former MDC clients (“cohort”)



# Closure Legislation

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## 2015 LEGISLATION

- June 30, 2017 deadline
- Closure plan
- 15-member advisory council
- Transition most to comm. services

## 2017 LEGISLATION

- Deadline extended to June 30, 2019
- Monitor clients and report results
- Established Intensive Behavior Center

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## Recommendation #1

### We recommend DPHHS...

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Continue to adhere to state law by maintaining a process to report clients' monitoring results to guardians and family authorized to receive the information.

Department Response: **Concur**

# Barriers to Council Fulfilling Responsibilities

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- Concurrent and compressed closure timelines
- Varying levels of expertise
- Council's responsibilities and limitations





# Conclusion

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- Simultaneous planning and implementation
- Prioritize limited resources to meet accelerated deadline
- Planning before closure
  - Increase council's effectiveness
  - More streamlined process for department

# Department Did Not Develop Repurposing Plan

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- MDC idle since October 2018
- Resources used to maintain facility
- Other states: repurposing part of plans



## Recommendation #2

### We recommend DPHHS...

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Develop a repurposing plan for the MDC facility that identifies key information, such as action steps, timelines, benchmarks to measure completion, and parties responsible for each step.

Department Response: **Partially Concur**

# Status of Former MDC Clients

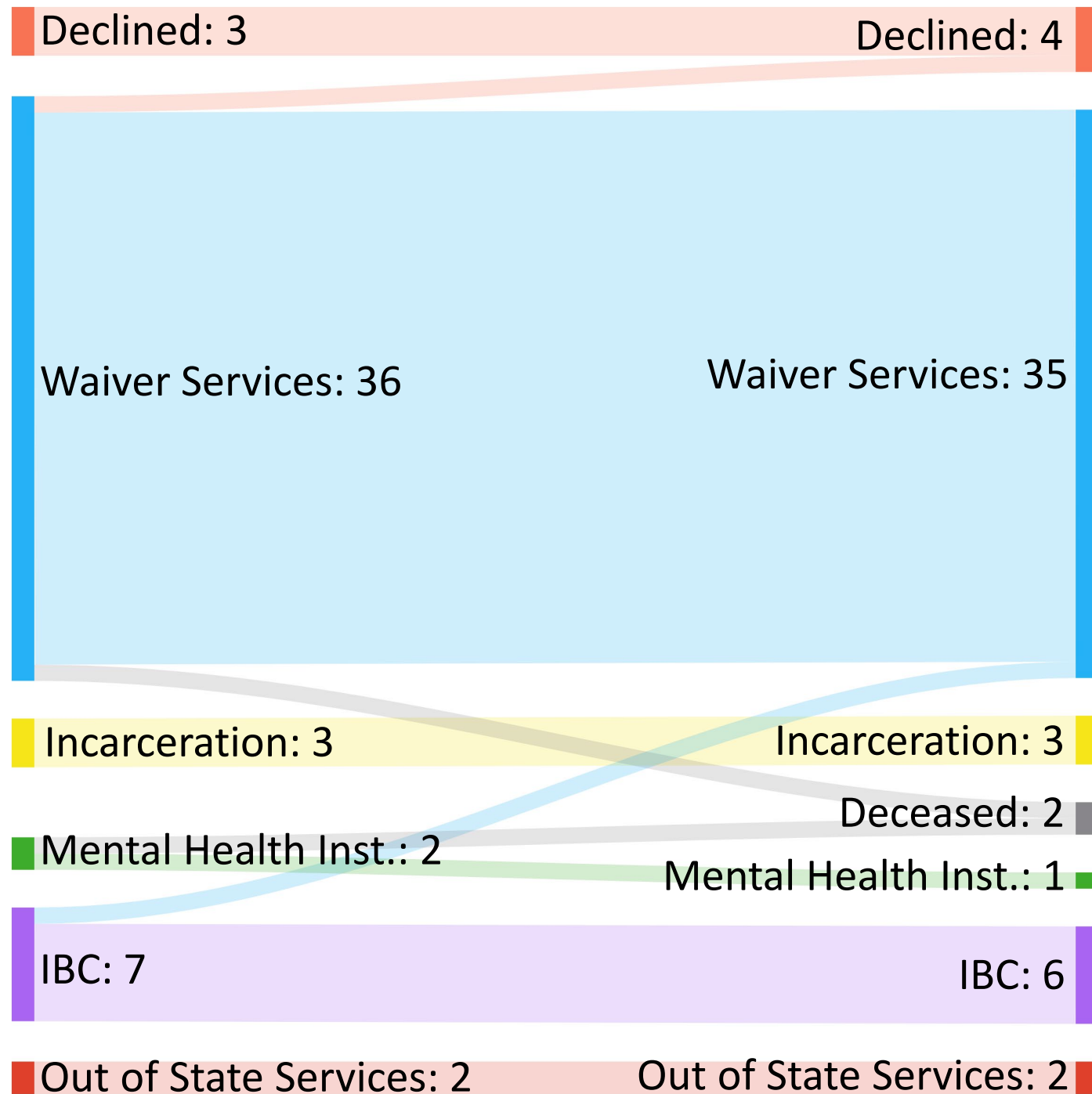
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- Confirmed initial and recent placements for the 53 clients
- Examined the MDC client transition process



# Closure Placement

# Placement Spring 2020



# Conclusion

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- Transition consistency affected by hectic environment
- Providers generally felt ready to serve clients
- Nearly all who transitioned to waiver are still enrolled



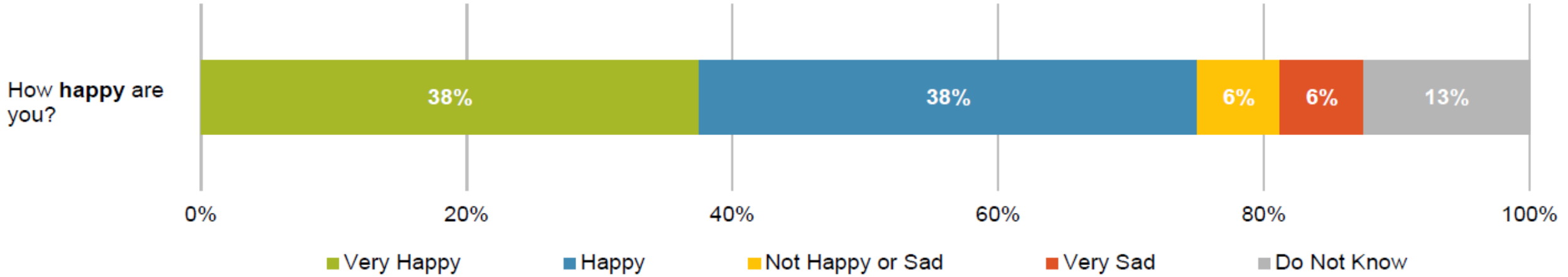
# Survey of Former MDC Clients

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- Learn about clients' closure experiences and how they are doing now
- Population of 29
  - 17 responses, 59%



## Most Respondents Indicated They are Very Happy or Happy

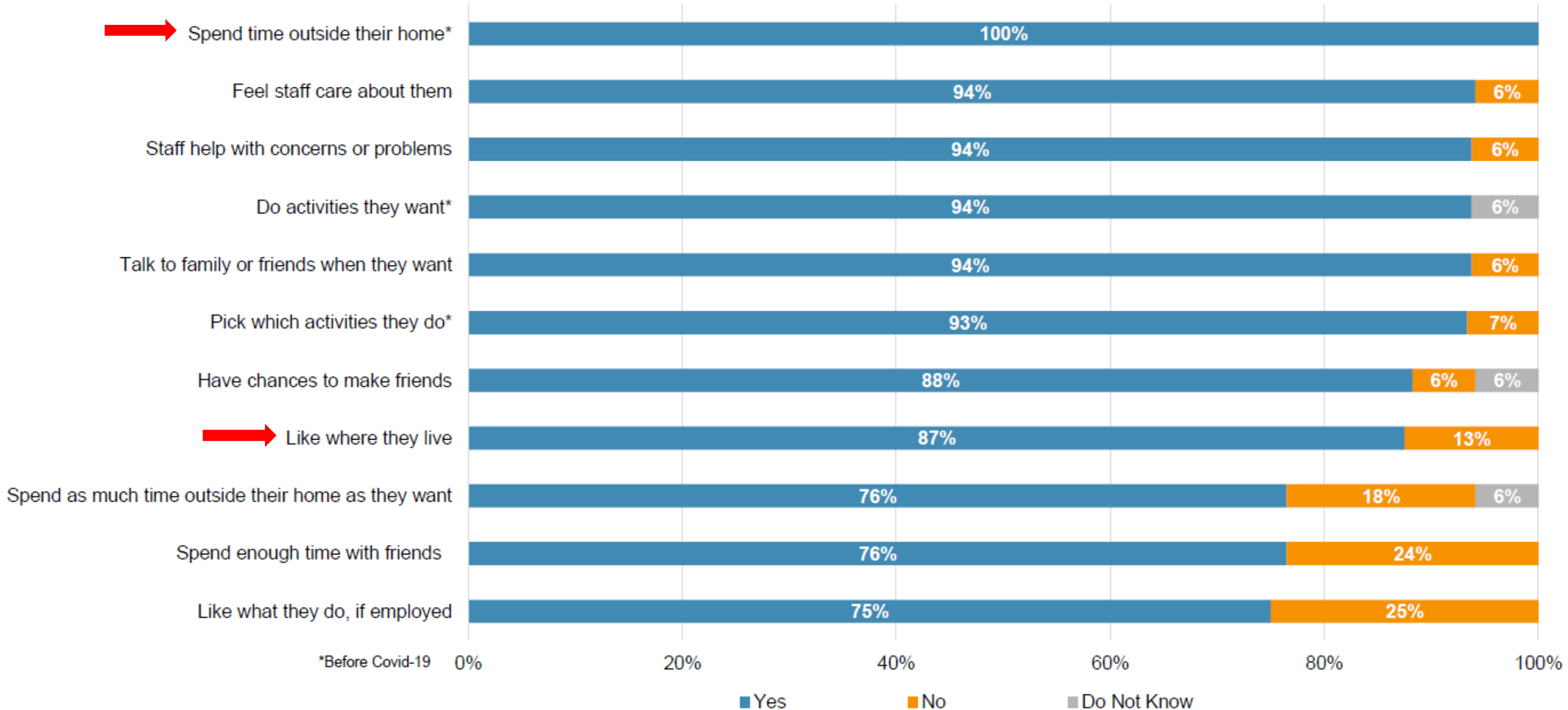


### Happiness:

- Having more freedom or privacy
- Living with friends and pets
- Food they eat
- Doing activities/hobbies/jobs



## Most Respondents Said Yes When Asked if They/Their...



# Survey of Natural Supports

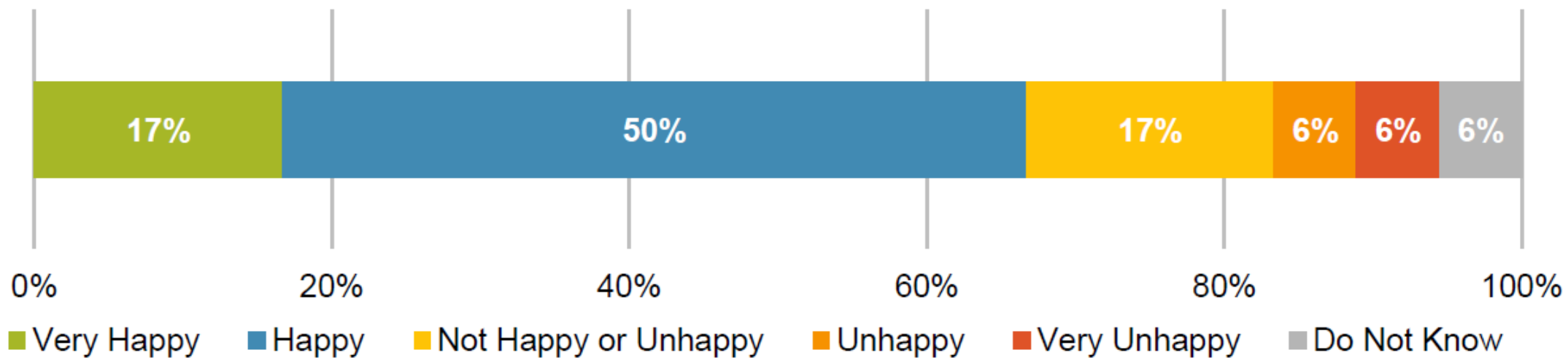
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- Non-paid (natural) relationships with the individual
- Questions paralleled client survey
- Population of 43
  - 18 responses, 42%

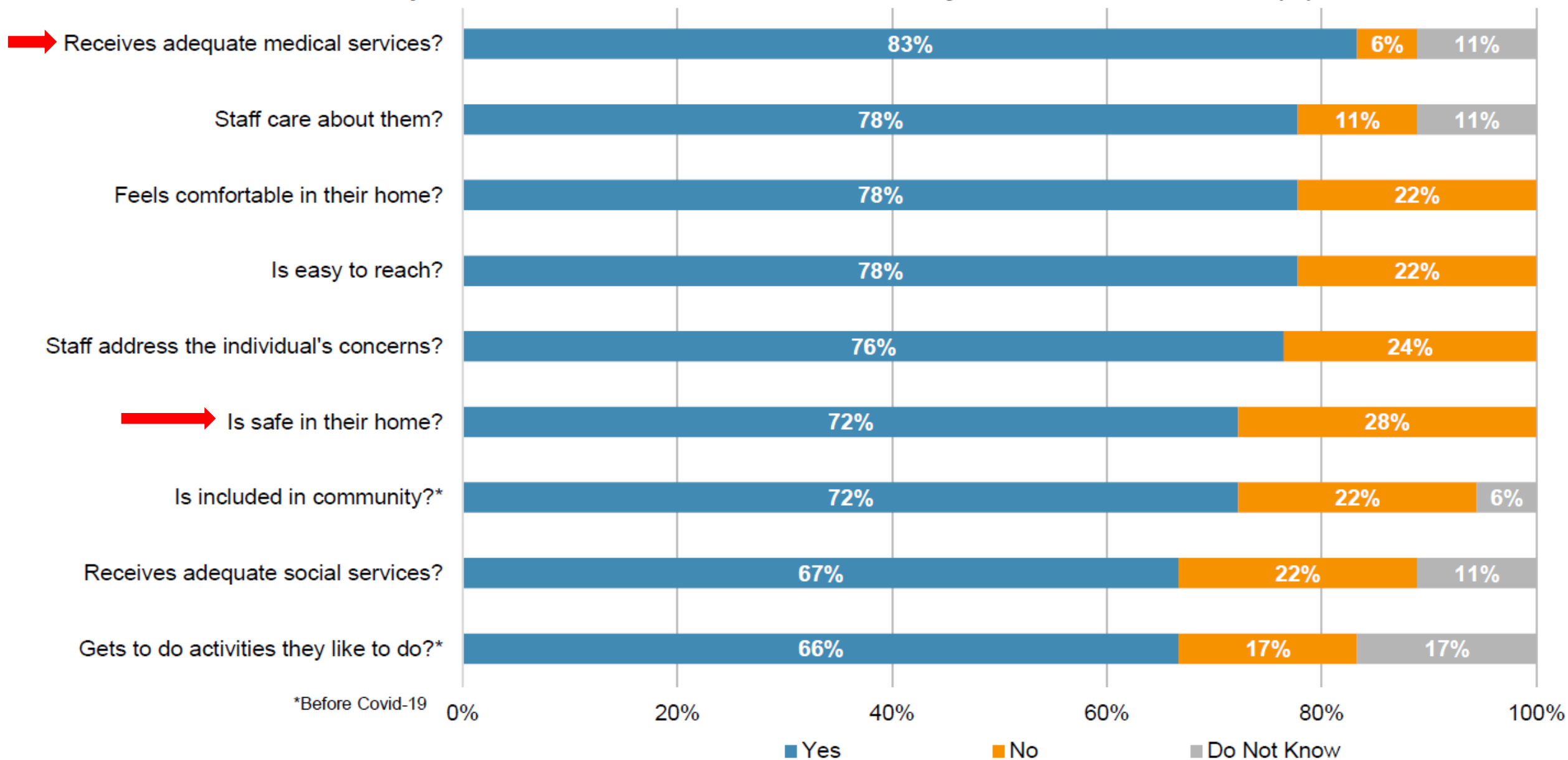


## Two-Thirds of Respondents Believe the Individual Is Very Happy or Happy

In your opinion,  
**how happy** is  
the individual?



## Most Respondents Said Yes When Asked if They Believe the Individual(s)...



# Conclusion

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- Individuals feel safe where they live and are happy
- More clients feel positively than their natural supports
- Client choice and provider staff are perceived contributors to quality of life



# Client Care and Safety

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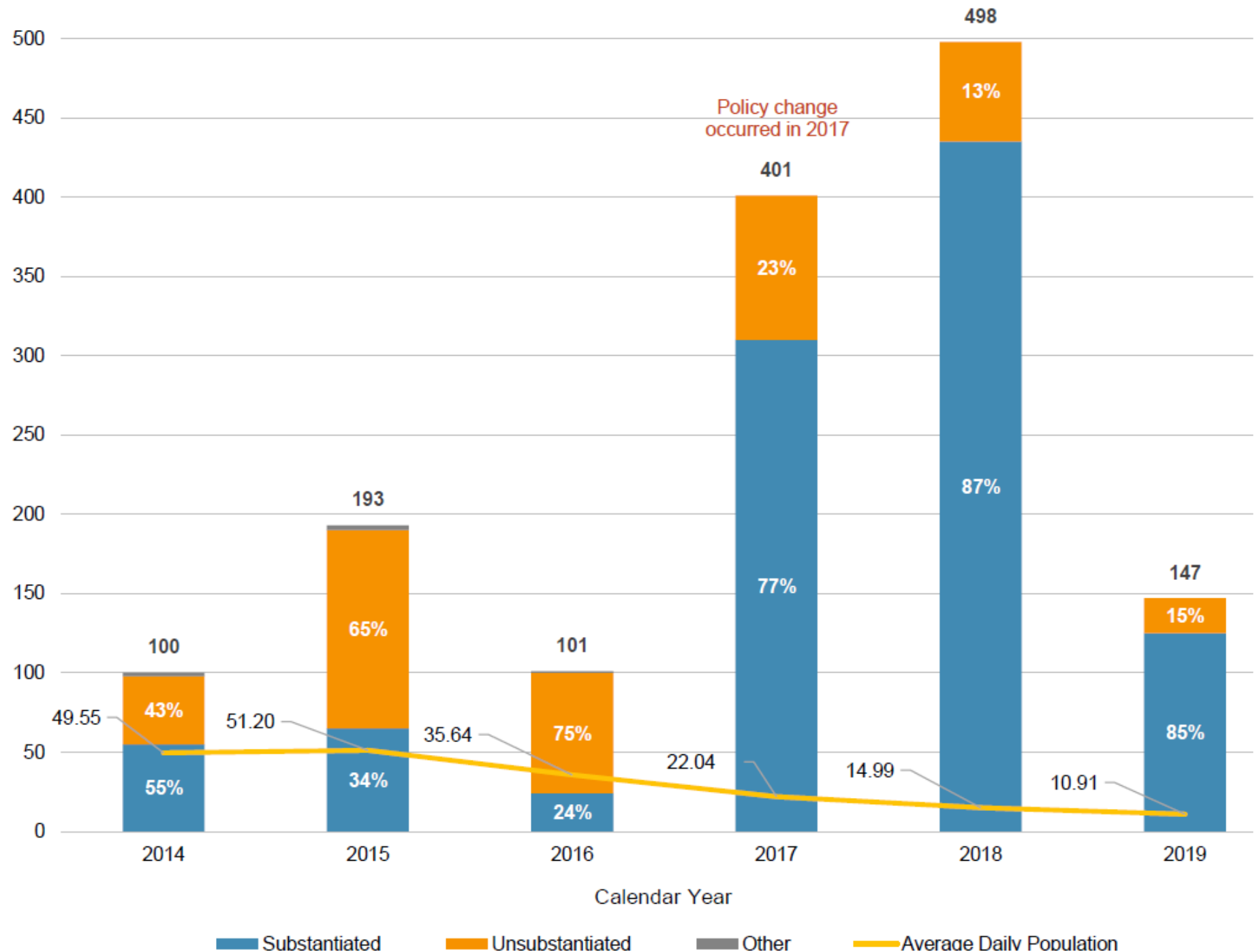
- Whether closure ensured safety and inclusion
  - Incident reports at MDC/IBC
  - Waiver plans of care

# MDC Incident Reporting Background

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- Allegations of mistreatment, neglect, abuse, and injury of unknown source reported to DOJ
- DOJ investigates and (un)substantiates

Average Daily Population & Investigations

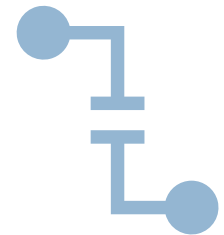




# Lack of Coordination Over Time

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- System changes over time not readily available
- Lack of coordination affects data interpretation



## Recommendation #3

We recommend DPHHS...

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Work with the Department of Justice to develop and maintain a memorandum of understanding that defines roles, expectations, and processes for IBC incident reporting.

Department Response: **Concur**

# Conclusion

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- System differences impacted using incidents as proxy for safety
- MDC incidents were higher than community suspected to involve abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Limitations on concluding caused by differences in the safety of the environments

# Personal Support Plans (PSP)

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- Developed annually by client and care team
- Must be person-centered
- Providers submit quarterly reports
- PSP and Quarterly Report review
  - Not consistently maintained
  - Not consistently person-centered

# PSP Requirements Outdated, Not Perceived as Meaningful

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- Requirements antiquated and unmeaningful;
- Duplicative or administratively burdensome

## Recommendation #4

### We recommend DPHHS...

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- A. Update and centralize policies, procedures, and/or administrative rules for PSPs to increase administrative efficiencies, ensure greater consistency, and reflect person-centered planning,**
- B. Provide ongoing, statewide training for case managers and providers regarding policies, procedures, and administrative rules, and**
- C. Monitor PSPs for adherence to requirements to help ensure ongoing person-centered planning across regions and providers.**

Department Response: **Concur**

# Dept. Could Improve Management Information Availability

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- Generates and archives a wide range of client care information
- Does engage in analysis activities
- Some data not readily available or maximized
  - To aggregate and evaluate client outcomes

## Recommendation #5

### We recommend DPHHS...

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**Develop a data management plan and processes to:**

- A. Identify data needs for measuring and aggregating client outcomes**
- B. Develop protocols for collecting reliable and accurate data**
- C. Ensure more consistent and centralized data storage, and**
- D. Establish analysis procedures and reports to make informed management decision and inform stakeholders on client outcomes**

Department Response: **Concur**



# Costs of Serving Former MDC Clients in Community

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- Cost savings an argument for closure
- Costs of serving individuals in the community
- Estimated post-closure cost savings

# Costs of Serving Former MDC Clients in Community

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- Cohort avg. expenditures > avg. enrollee
  - FY 2019: \$190,983 vs. \$45,853
- Former MDC clients often need more support

# Closure Resulted in Cost Savings

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<b>FY 2015 Benchmark</b>	<b>FY 2019 Total</b>	<b>Difference</b>
\$14,950,828	\$13,977,793	\$973,035

<b>FY 2015 Benchmark</b>	<b>Estimated FY 2020 Total</b>	<b>Difference</b>
\$14,950,828	\$12,484,305	\$2,466,523

<b>Total Estimated Savings:</b>	<b>\$3,439,558</b>
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# Conclusion

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- Former MDC clients generally have greater service needs and, therefore, above-average waiver costs
- IBC cost per client increased due to census decline
- Closure resulted in overall cost savings to the state

