



Olmstead Quality of Life Survey – First Follow-up Survey 2018 Summary

Researchers discussed findings of the “Olmstead Quality of Life Survey - First Follow-up 2018” study at the January 28, 2019 Olmstead Subcabinet meeting. This report is a follow-up to the comprehensive Quality of Life (QOL) Baseline Survey conducted in 2017, which is the first study in the country that includes people with disabilities of all types and ages in segregated settings, or at risk of being placed in segregated settings.

The Subcabinet authorized this comprehensive survey to track progress of the quality of life of Minnesotans with disabilities as the Olmstead Plan is being implemented. The results of the QOL surveys are shared with state agencies implementing the plan so that they can evaluate their efforts and better serve Minnesotans with disabilities.

Key Facts about the First Follow-up Survey

- A total of 511 people completed the survey. Follow-up survey respondents were selected from a random sample of 2,005 baseline survey respondents.
- The Olmstead Quality of Life Survey is a multi-year effort to assess the quality of life for people with disabilities who receive state services in potentially segregated settings. Minnesota Department of Human Services identified places such as group homes, nursing facilities and center-based employment as having the potential to be segregated settings.
- The results in this report reflect the experiences of the respondents and speak directly to the settings from which the sample was drawn. *Therefore, results cannot be generalized to all people with disabilities in Minnesota.*

Highlights from the First Follow-up Survey

The goal is to track progress of quality of life over an extended period of time. Researchers caution noticeable change is difficult to detect in a short period. When comparing data from the baseline to the follow-up survey, which took place in the span of one year, the results have not yet significantly shifted. People with disabilities reported their overall quality of life to be “good” – Minnesota’s average baseline score (76.6) and follow-up score (77.4) were similar. The scale was from “very bad” to “very good.”

“Through the work of Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan, we are fundamentally shifting our understanding how people with disabilities choose to live, learn, work and enjoy life,” said Darlene Zangara, Executive Director of the Olmstead Implementation Office. “This initial follow up survey deepens our baseline understanding of critical quality of life issues for people with disabilities and we are committed to continuing to measure that progress.”

Researchers detected no definitive changes but some interesting information surfaced.

- The data showed the more people get out and are allowed to interact with the broader community, their quality of life increases. Outing interaction scores are low. Minnesota's baseline average score (37.7) and follow-up (36.5) were similar. This indicates people are generally segregated from the broader community during daily activities. Finding ways to further integrate daily activities will help to improve quality of life for the focus population.
- We now know there are differences in quality of life for different regions of the state. Depending on where people live, they will have different experiences. For example, while there are fewer outing interactions in the Metro Area, this area has a higher score for decision control. Variables impacting these scores may range from how agencies provide services to how providers network with each other.
- Respondents' perceived they have a moderate ability to make their own choices. Minnesota's average baseline score (66.2) and follow-up score (67.6) remained close. However, if you take a closer look, you find that respondents with guardians report less decision control and a lower quality of life than respondents without a guardian. This contrast is more glaring when we examine the types of guardianships. People with public guardians tend to have a lower quality of life than those with private guardians.

Initial analysis of the follow-up survey results have shown the nature of a long-term study is valuable and has already helped to identify important characteristics affecting overall quality of life. Researchers recommend waiting a longer period of time before resurveying respondents.

Background

The Olmstead Subcabinet selected the Center for Outcome Analysis (COA) Quality of Life survey tool, developed by Dr. Jim Conroy for the study. This tool was selected because it is reliable, valid, low-cost and could be used with all people with disabilities. The OIO then conducted a pilot survey to test the effectiveness of the tool.

For a more detailed summary of the report, you can see the executive summary which starts on page 7 of the ["Olmstead Quality of Life Survey: First Follow-up – 2018."](#)

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