

North Dakota



North Dakota's centralized source
of support and information for
Qualified Service Providers

2023



North Dakota Qualified Service Provider Survey Report

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Executive Summary

In 2022, the Aging Services Division within the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services partnered with the University of North Dakota Center for Rural Health to create a centralized “hub” to support North Dakota’s Qualified Service Providers. Qualified Service Providers or QSPs are individuals such as friends, neighbors, and family members who are committed to providing care for people who want to continue to live in their own homes and communities. QSPs do not need to have a special certificate or license, but they do need to prove they have the necessary skills to provide care. The purpose of the North Dakota QSP Hub is to provide support, educational tools, and training opportunities for individual QSPs and QSP agencies. As part of this effort, QSPs and QSP agencies were surveyed to determine their primary needs, to assist in directing the focus of the QSP Hub, and to provide feedback on the QSP Hub’s services. This report provides an overview of the needs and experiences of individual QSPs and QSP agencies in North Dakota.

Key Findings

Individual QSP Survey

- Over half of individual QSPs reported serving clients under 65 years old.
- 49.2% of individual QSPs reported living with a client that they serve and 53.5% of individual QSPs indicated they are related to a client that they serve.
- When asked what would make it easier to become a QSP, the most common response was applications and paperwork that are easier and simpler to complete.
- When asked what would make it easier to stay a QSP, a higher rate for services provided was the most common response.
- The rate of pay for the level of work was the most commonly noted challenge of working as an individual QSP.

Agency QSP Survey

- 25.0% of QSP agencies reported they have been providing services for 16 or more years.
- The most common services provided by QSP agencies were personal care service – SPED (15 min) and homemaker service.
- When asked to report the average wage of QSPs employed by their agency, the most common response was \$18.00 - \$19.00 per hour.
- A higher rate for services provided was the most common response when agencies were asked what would make it easier to hire and retain QSPs.
- According to the opinions and experiences of the responding agencies, the most common reason that QSPs leave their role was because they found another job that pays more.

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Introduction

Qualified Service Providers (QSPs) are individuals or agencies who provide care and services to adults with physical disabilities and older adults in their own homes. For example, this is often seen as one family member caring for another family member in need. QSPs can provide a wide range of services, including homemaking, transportation, case management, residential care, and personal care services.

There are two types of QSPs, which are differentiated by the source of employment. *Individual or independent QSPs* are self-employed contractors. As such, these QSPs are responsible for their own insurance, record keeping, billing, and taxes. Additionally, these QSPs are required to prove they have competency in all the standards to provide a particular service (North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, 2022). On the other hand, *agency QSPs* are individuals employed by an agency that is responsible for the training and financial components of the job. Agencies must verify that their employees have the specific skills needed to provide services.

In North Dakota, individuals are not required to have a certain degree or certification in order to work as a QSP. To become a QSP, individuals fill out the required paperwork and application and are contacted once they are approved. QSPs must have a current Authorization to Provide Services for each client before providing services. The North Dakota QSP Hub serves as a resource center to assist in this process for both QSP agencies and individual QSPs, as well as anyone who would like to become a QSP. The QSP Hub also provides assistance to those who are already working as QSPs in North Dakota. The QSP Hub provides one-on-one individualized support on numerous topics, such as enrollment, billing, documentation, and renewal. The QSP Hub also has a library of tip sheets and guides and provides various trainings on QSP-related topics.

Methods

Survey Development

In order to gather information to guide and enhance the services of the QSP Hub, two separate surveys were conducted: one for QSP agencies and one for individual QSPs. The surveys gathered information about QSPs themselves, their clients, their experiences as a QSP, and their experiences with the QSP Hub. Many of the questions used in these surveys were originally developed through numerous meetings with stakeholders using feedback from multiple entities to ensure the questions were appropriate for the designated audiences.

The surveys were created using Qualtrics survey software. A paper copy of each survey was also created and could be requested by participants who did not want to or were unable to complete the survey electronically.

Survey Dissemination

The surveys were disseminated via email to a listserv consisting of 926 individual QSPs and 120 QSP agencies. Participants had approximately four weeks to complete the survey that corresponded to their role (i.e., QSP agency or individual QSP). Participants also had the option to request a paper copy of the survey, which they could mail in upon completion.

Results

Individual QSP Survey

Response Rate

Out of the 926 electronic invitations sent to individual QSPs, there were 207 records received. Two-hundred and six of those were electronic records in Qualtrics, and one record was a paper copy received via mail. Two of the records were excluded from analyses for only responding to the first question of the survey. Two records were excluded from analyses for only responding to the first three questions of the survey. One record was excluded for only responding to the first five questions of the survey. Thus, 202 records (21.8%) were included in the analyses. Missing data were excluded using the pairwise method, and the number of valid responses is indicated for each question. Some of the questions allowed participants to select more than one response option. Therefore, some of the questions may have response totals greater than the number of respondents or percentage totals greater than 100.0%.

Demographics Summary

Out of the 202 responses to the survey, 70.3% (n = 142) of the respondents provided services as an individual QSP (i.e., self-employed), 24.3% (n = 49) of the respondents were employed by a QSP agency, and 5.4% (n = 11) of the respondents provided services as both.

Basic demographic information was collected from the survey respondents, such as their age and gender. The age breakdown of survey respondents (n = 202) was as follows: 2.5% (n = 5) were 18-25 years old, 26.7% (n = 54) were 26-44 years old, 54.0% (n = 109) were 45-64 years old, and 16.8% (n = 34) were 65 years or older. The gender breakdown of respondents (n = 201) was as follows: 88.1% (n = 177) female, 10.4% (n = 21) male, 1.0% (n = 2) preferred not to say, and 0.5% (n = 1) two-spirited.

Examining the highest level of education among respondents (n = 202) revealed that 4.5% (n = 9) completed some high school, 31.2% (n = 63) received a high school diploma or GED, 23.8% (n = 48) received an associate's degree or 2-year degree, 28.2% (n = 57) completed some college, 6.4% (n = 13) received a bachelor's or 4-year degree, 4.5% (n = 9) received a post-graduate degree, and 1.5% (n = 3) preferred not to answer.

Survey participants were asked to report their annual household income. Of the 202 QSPs who responded, 20.8% (n = 42) preferred not to answer the question. The next most common responses were \$20,000 - \$29,999 (13.9%, n = 28) and \$40,000 - \$49,999 (10.4%, n = 21).

When asked if English was their second language, 200 participants responded. An overwhelming majority of participants (91.0%, n = 182) indicated English was not their second language, while only 9.0% (n = 18) of participants indicated English was their second language. Participants were also asked if English was the second language of any of their QSP clients. Out of the 194 responses, 87.6% (n = 170) indicated English was not the second language of any of their clients, whereas 12.4% (n = 24) indicated that it was the second language of their clients.

Participants were asked if they had any other jobs aside from working as a QSP. Of the 202 responses, over half (63.4%, n = 128) indicated they did not have any other jobs, while 36.6% (n = 74) indicated they did have one or more other jobs. Those who reported having additional jobs were asked to indicate the average number of hours per week they work at those jobs. Of the 73 responses to that follow-up question, 24.7% (n = 18) reported working an average of 30-39 hours per week, 19.2% (n = 14) reported working an average of 0-9 hours per week, 17.8% (n = 13) reported working an average of 10-19 hours per week, and 17.8% (n = 13) reported working an average of 40-49 hours per week.

Clients Served

Figure 1. Average Number of Public Pay (n = 197) and Private Pay/Other Third-Party Insurance (n = 196) Clients Served per Month

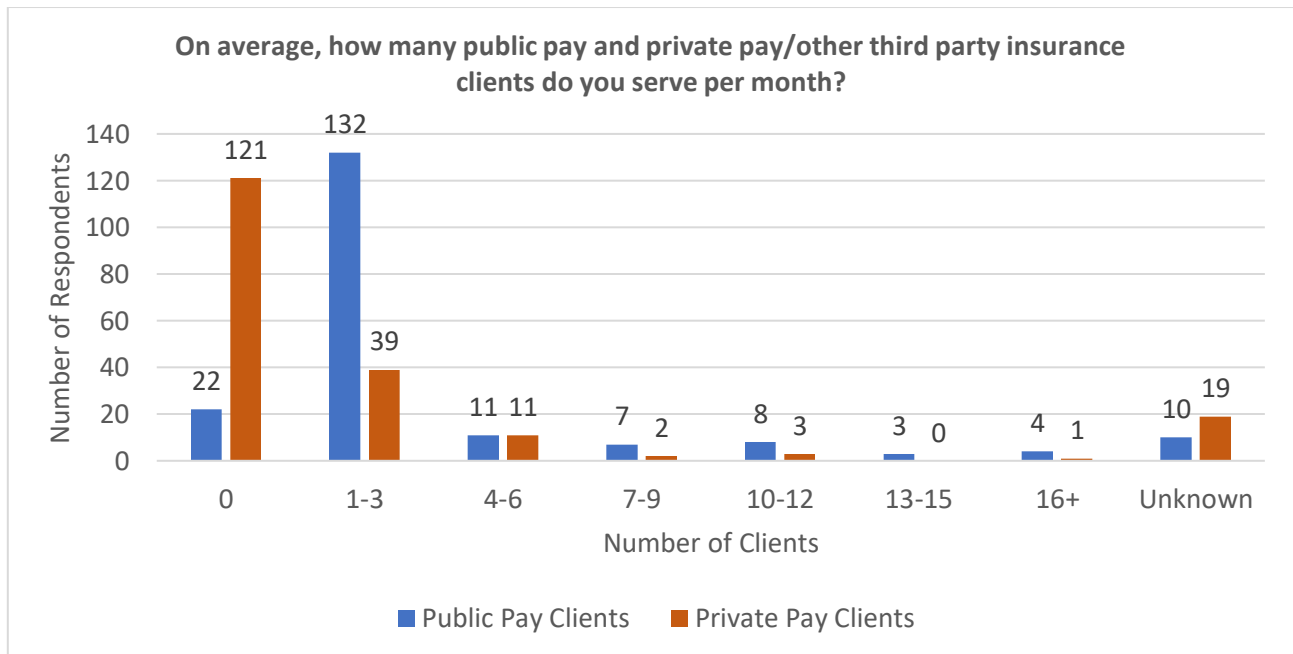
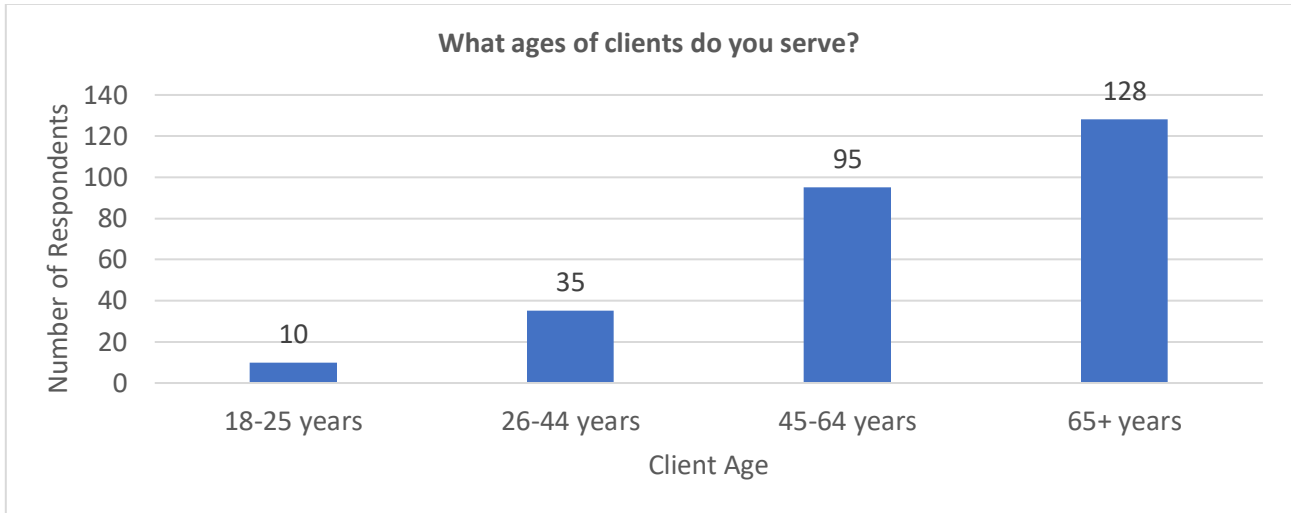


Figure 2. Ages of Clients Served (n = 193)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

QSP Work/Services Provided

Figure 3. Length of Time Providing QSP Services (n = 195)

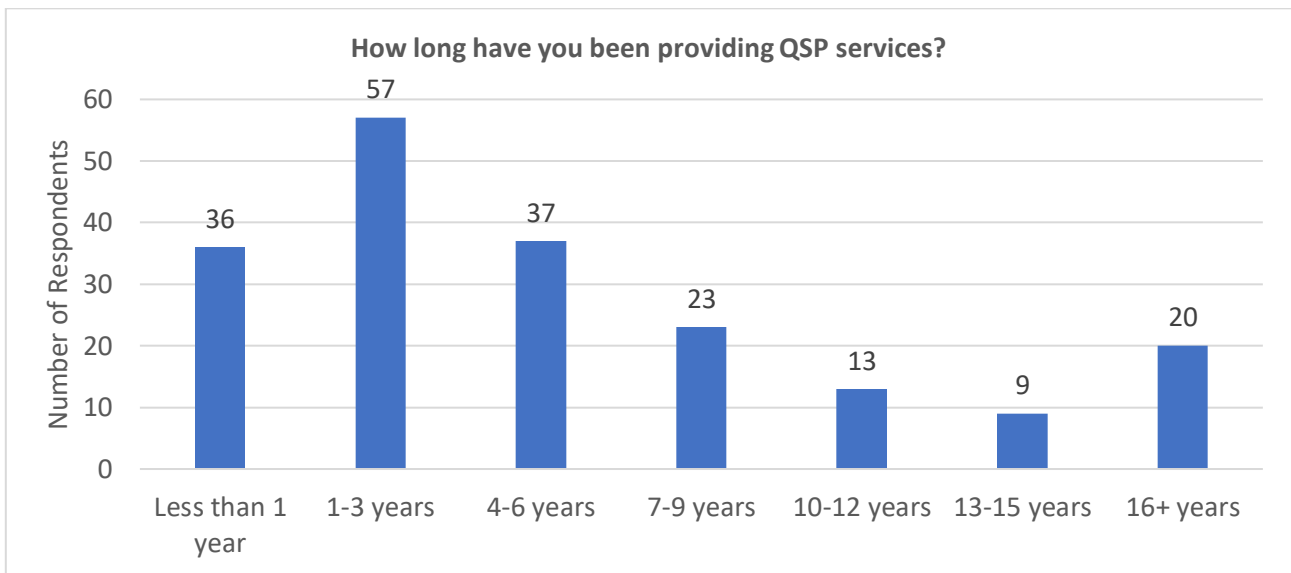


Figure 4. Typical Number of Hours Worked per Week as an Individual QSP (n = 122)

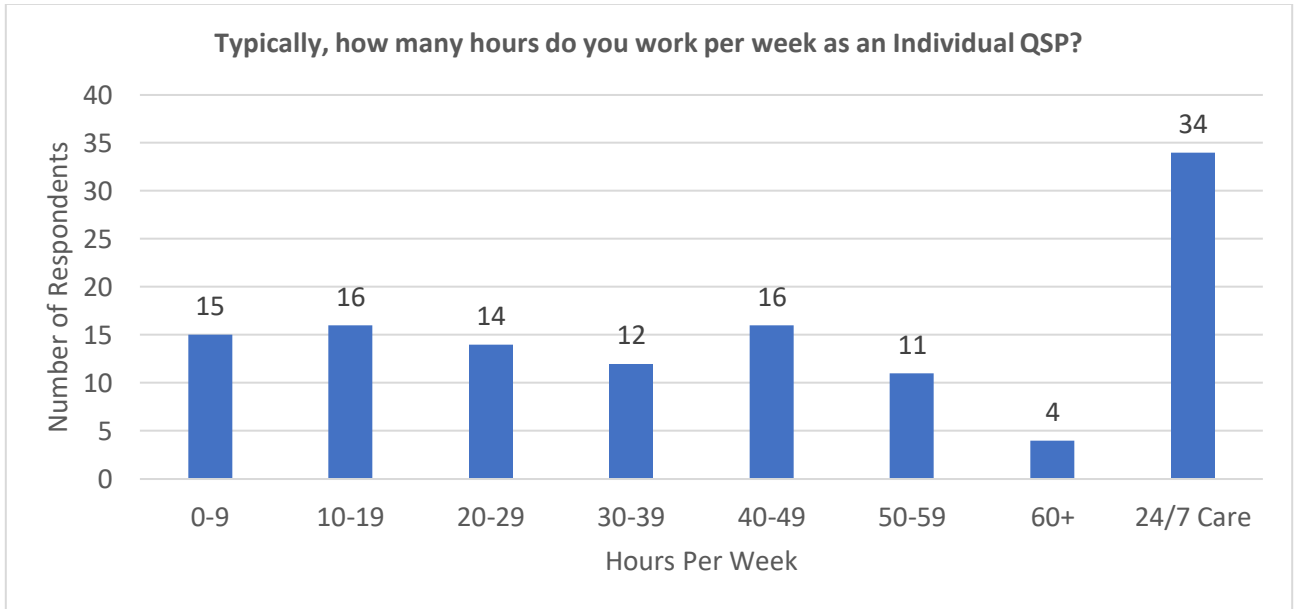


Figure 5. Typical Number of Hours Worked per Week for a QSP Agency (n = 48)

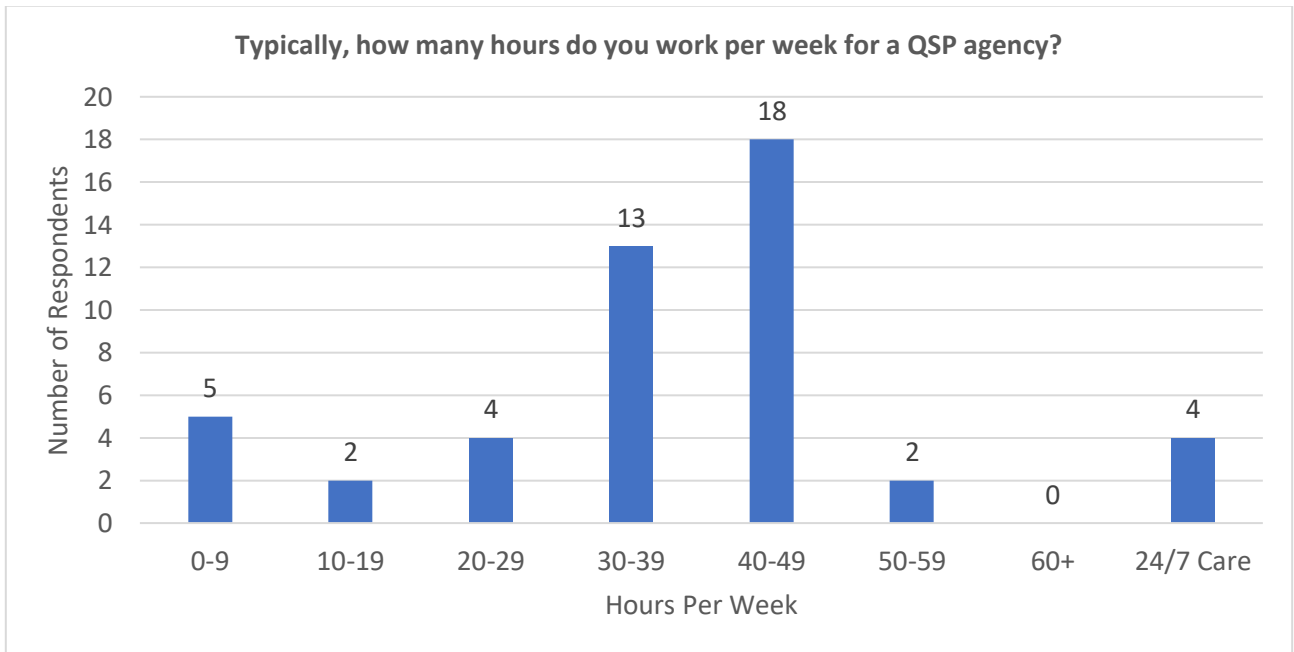
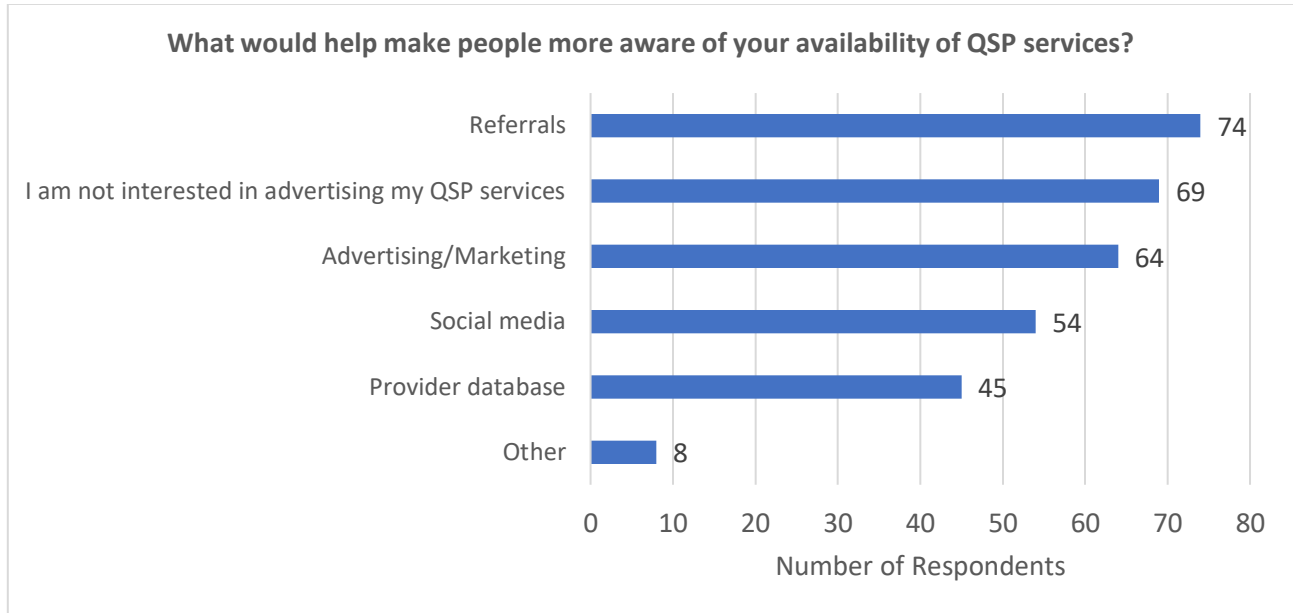


Table 1. Services Provided to Clients by QSPs (n = 188)*

Service	Number of Respondents Providing Service
Homemaker service	81
Personal care service – SPED (15 min)	70
Family home care	58
Non-medical transportation – local and out of town	58
Non-medical transportation – Escort	48
Family personal care	47
Companionship services	44
Chore – Labor (includes snow removal)	37
Personal care service – SPED (Daily)	37
Respite care	37
Extended personal care	33
Supervision	27
Adult day care	20
Extended personal care – Nurse	12
Home delivered meals	10
Specialized equipment	6
Adult foster care	5
Nurse education care	3
Environmental modification	2
Other	8

*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 6. Factors to Make People More Aware of QSP Services (n = 168)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

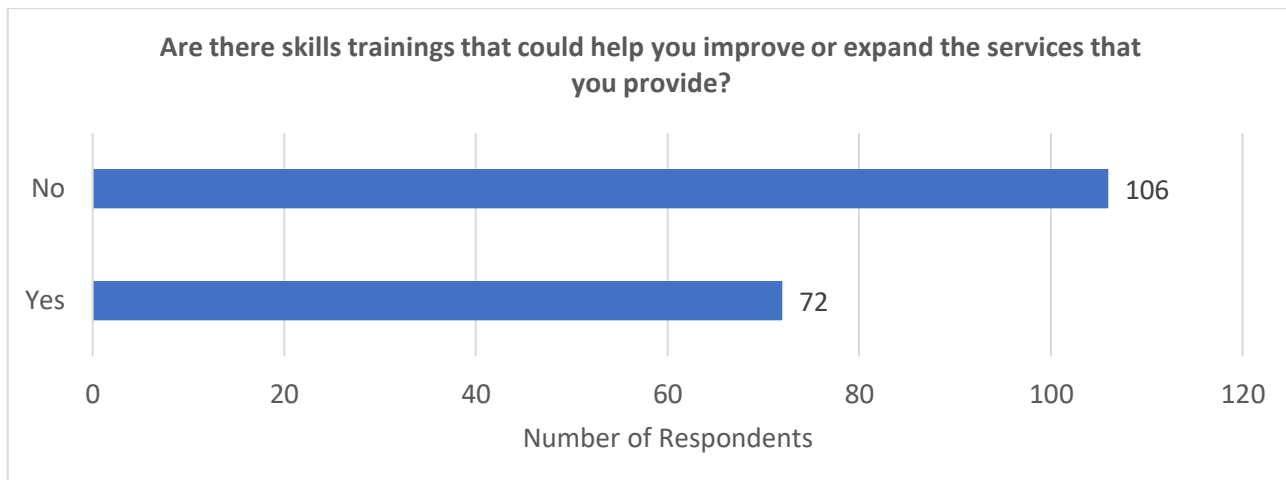
Client Relationships

Table 2. Client Relationships

Question	Yes (n)	Yes (%)	No (n)	No (%)	Missing (n)
Do you live with any of the clients that you serve?	89	49.2%	92	50.8%	21
Are you related to any of the clients that you serve?	99	53.5%	86	46.5%	17
Did you have a close personal relationship with any of the individuals you serve that started before you became their QSP?	89	48.4%	95	51.6%	18

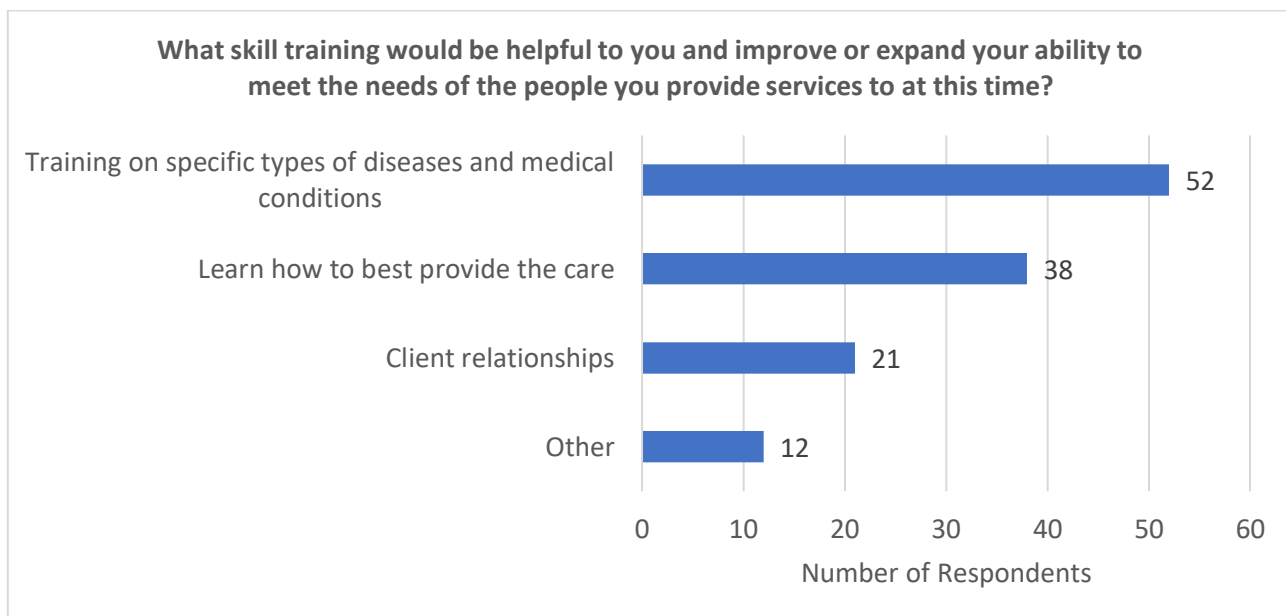
Trainings

Figure 7. Breakdown of QSPs who Believe There are Skills Trainings That Could Help Improve or Expand the Services They Provide (n = 178)



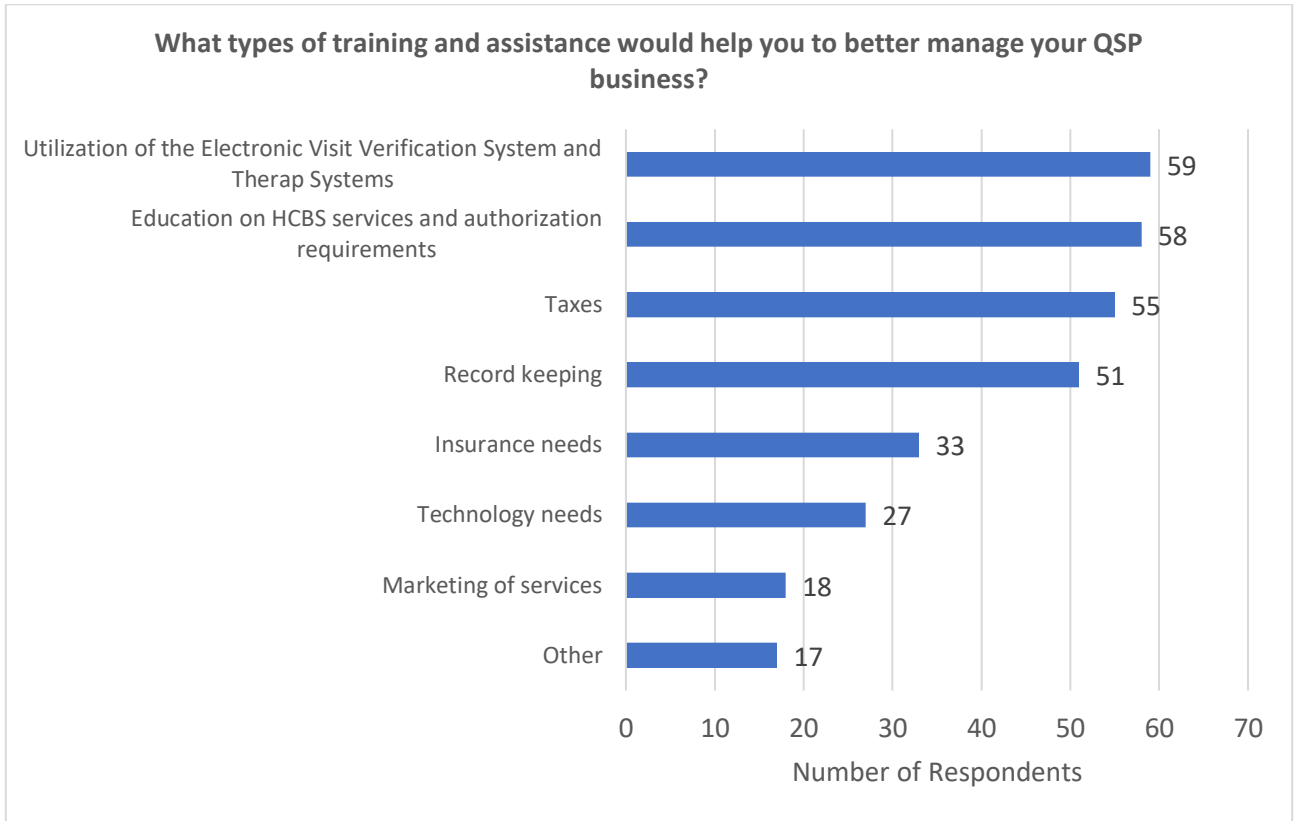
To better understand the skills trainings that QSPs believe would be most helpful, the 72 participants who responded 'Yes' in Figure 7 were asked to indicate specifically what skills training would be helpful to improve or expand their ability to meet the needs of those they provided services to at this time. The results of that follow-up question are shown below in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Breakdown of Skills Trainings That Would Be Helpful to Improve or Expand Ability to Meet Clients' Needs (n = 68)*



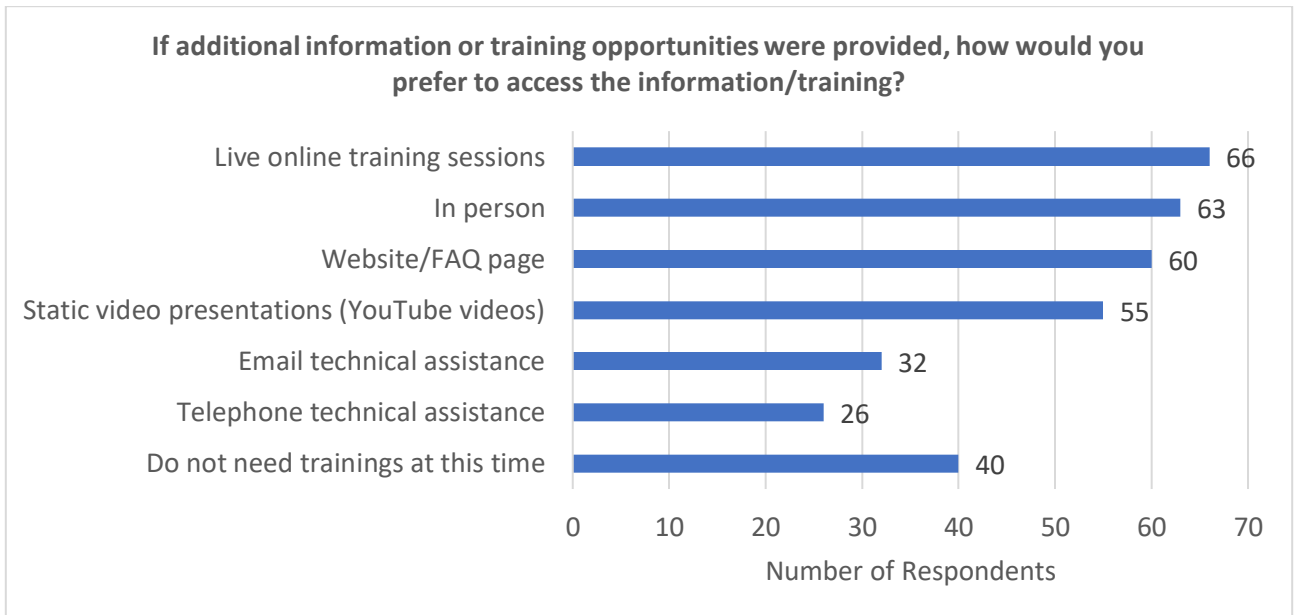
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question. This question was only displayed to the 72 participants who answered 'Yes' in Figure 7.

Figure 9. Types of Training and Assistance That Would Help QSPs Better Manage Their Business (n = 146)*



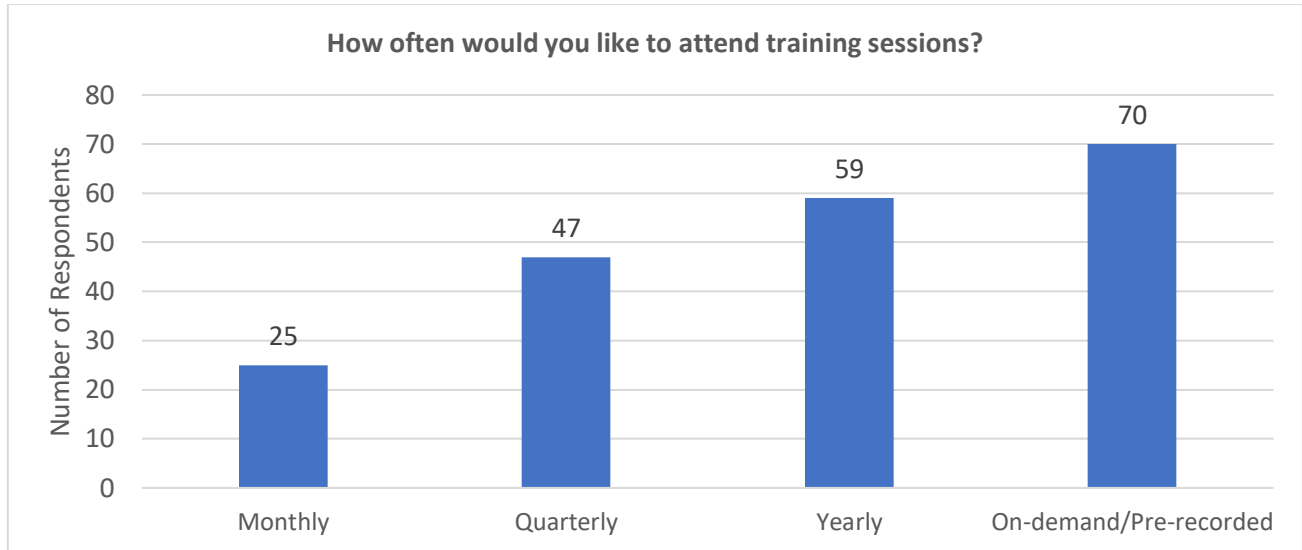
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 10. Preferred Method of Accessing Information/Training (n = 173)*



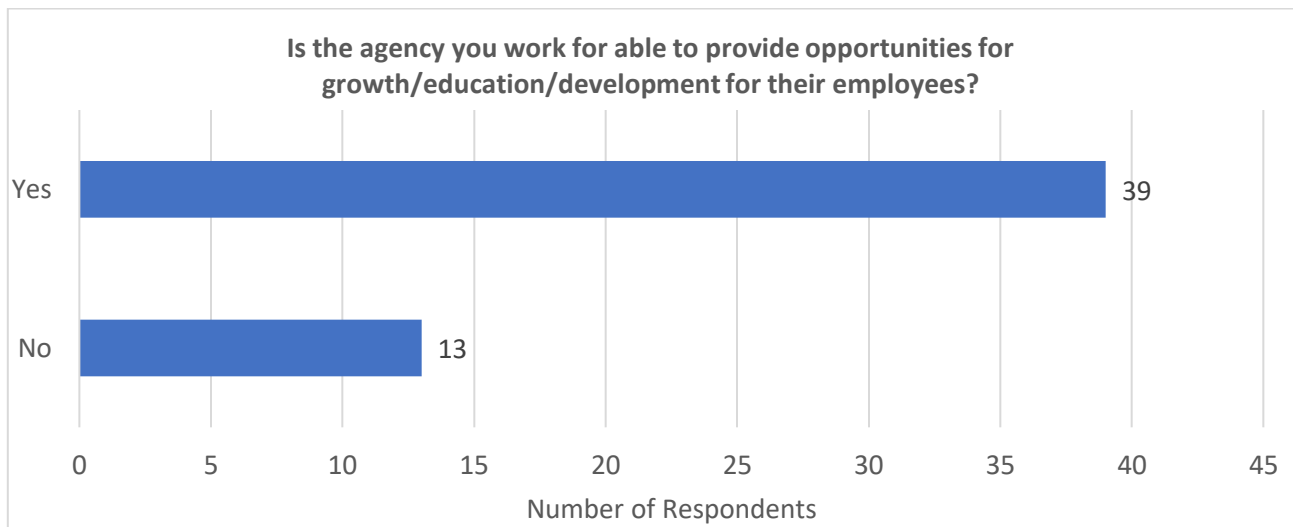
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 11. Desired Frequency to Attend Training Sessions (n = 167)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 12. Breakdown of QSPs who Work for an Agency that Provides Opportunities for Growth/Education/Development (n = 52)*



*Note: This question was only displayed to the 60 participants who indicated they are employed by a QSP agency.

The individuals who responded 'Yes' to the question above (n = 39) were asked to describe the professional development resources, programs, and/or opportunities provided by the agency for which they work. Qualitative analysis was conducted on the 17 responses to this question, and a few themes emerged. The most cited type of professional development opportunity was trainings/workshops (n = 6). The next most common response was CPR/First aid (n = 3), followed by ClearCare training (n = 2) and education through universities in North Dakota (n = 2). There were six other responses that did not fit into any particular category.

The individuals who responded 'No' to the question above (n = 13) were asked what would make it easier to provide opportunities for growth/education/development for the employees in the agency for which they work. Seven individuals responded to the question, and the most common response theme was more trainings (n = 3).

QSP Hub Services: Use and Satisfaction

As the QSP Hub strives to provide high quality support and assistance to QSPs, participants were asked a few questions in order to gain feedback on their use of QSP Hub services and the level of satisfaction with the QSP Hub thus far. The results are shown below in figures 13 through 18.

Figure 13. Breakdown of QSPs that Contacted the QSP Hub for Assistance (n = 174)

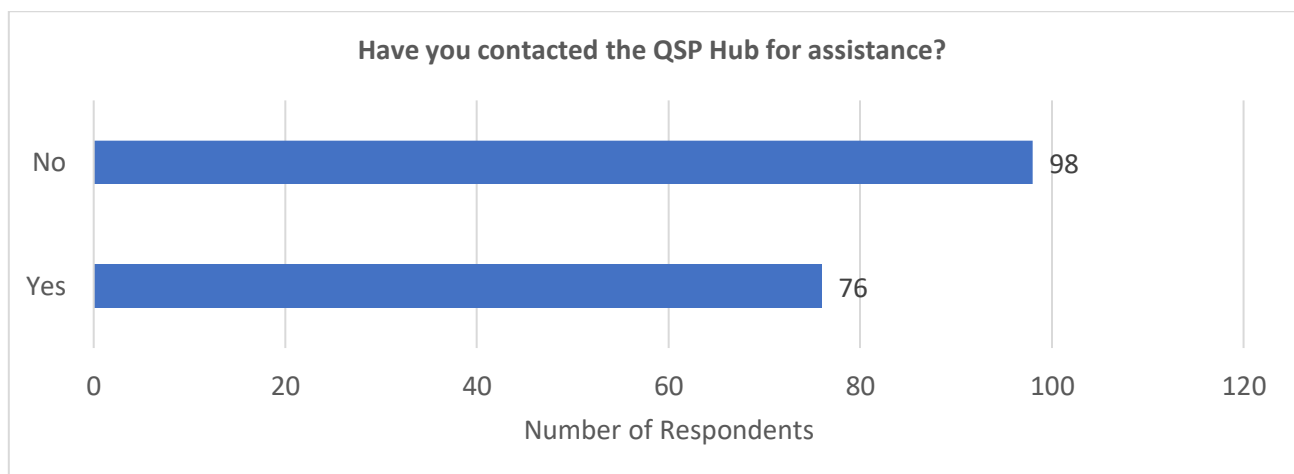
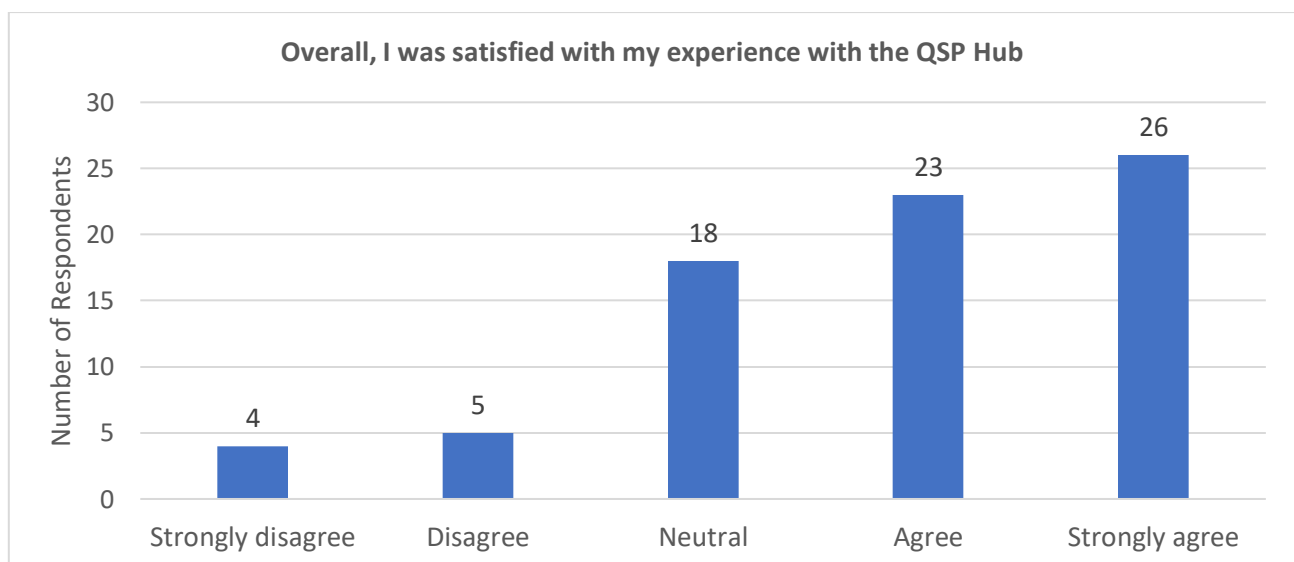
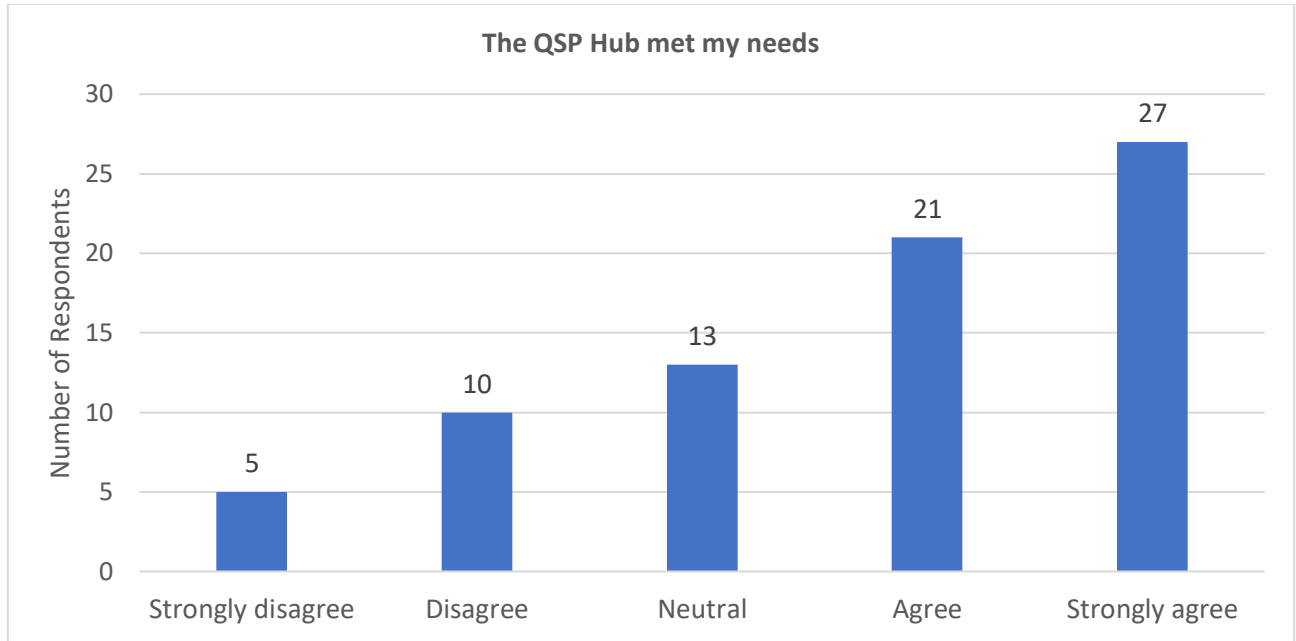


Figure 14. Level of Satisfaction with QSP Hub Experience (n = 76)*



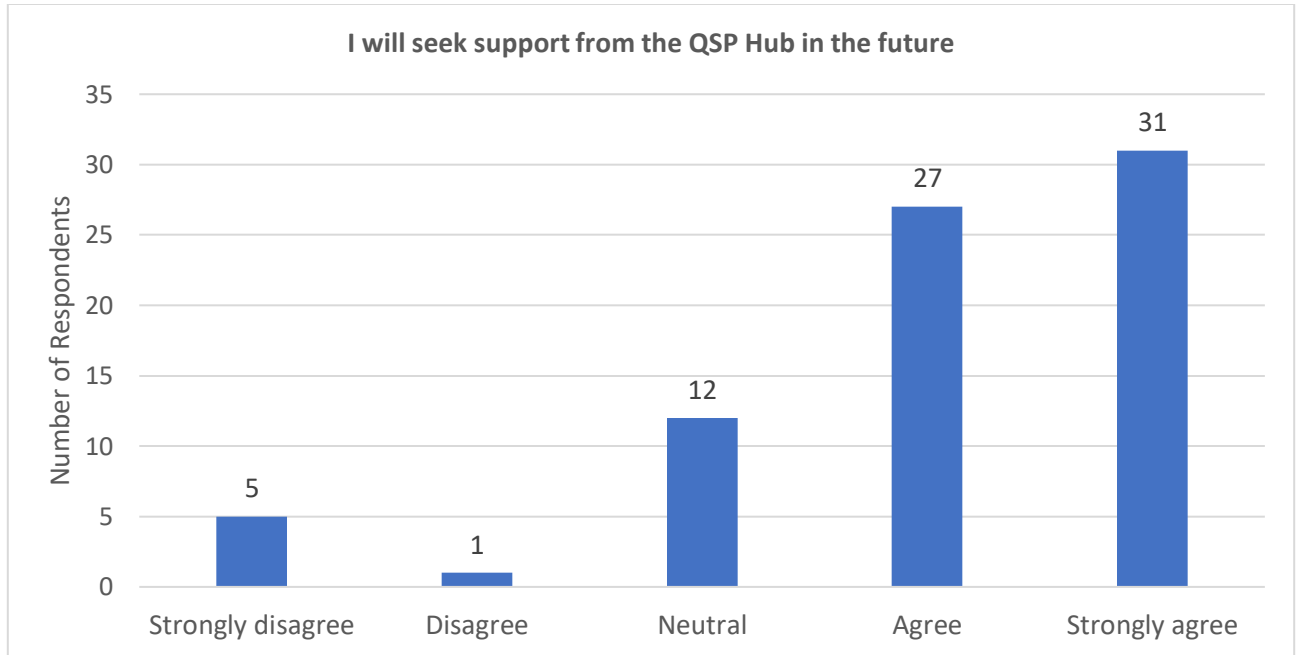
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 76 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 15. Level of Agreement that the QSP Hub met Their Needs (n = 76)*



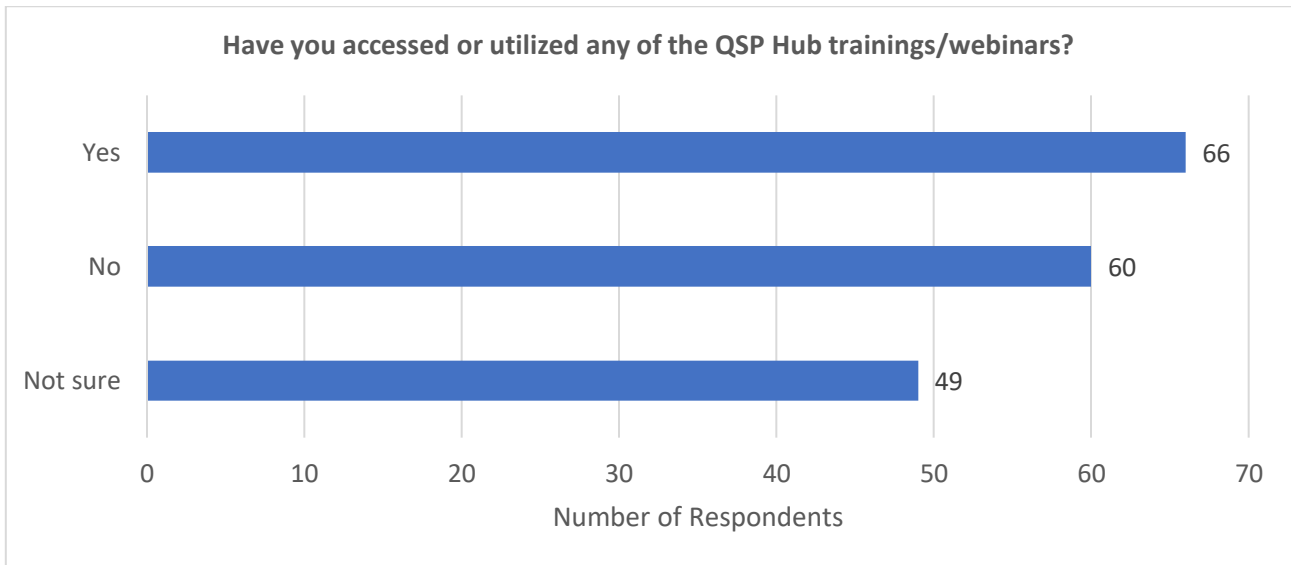
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 76 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 16. Intention to Seek Support from the QSP Hub in the Future (n = 76)*



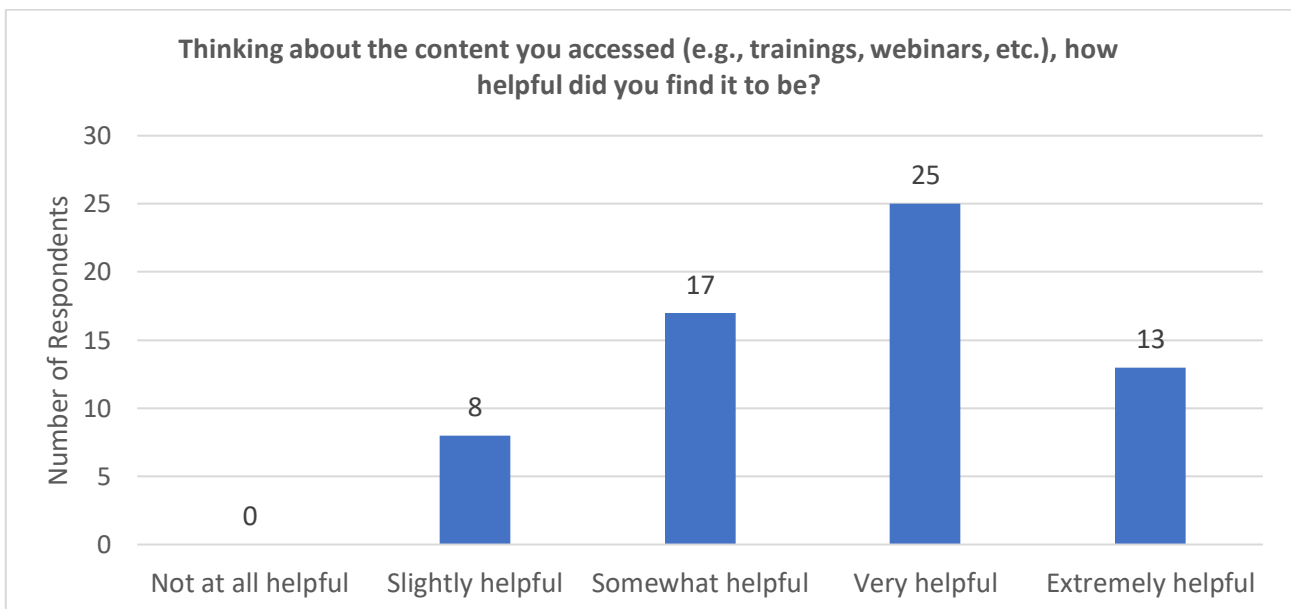
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 76 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 17. Breakdown of QSPs who Have Accessed or Utilized QSP Hub Trainings/Webinars (n = 175)



To gain an understanding of which QSP Hub webinars and trainings were most frequently being accessed by QSPs, the 66 participants who responded 'Yes' in Figure 17 were asked to indicate specifically which trainings and webinars they had accessed. Qualitative analysis was conducted on the 34 responses and the following response themes emerged: billing (n = 11), critical incident reporting (n = 5), do not remember (n = 4), Dementia/Alzheimer's (n = 2), Therap (n = 2), and other responses (n = 10).

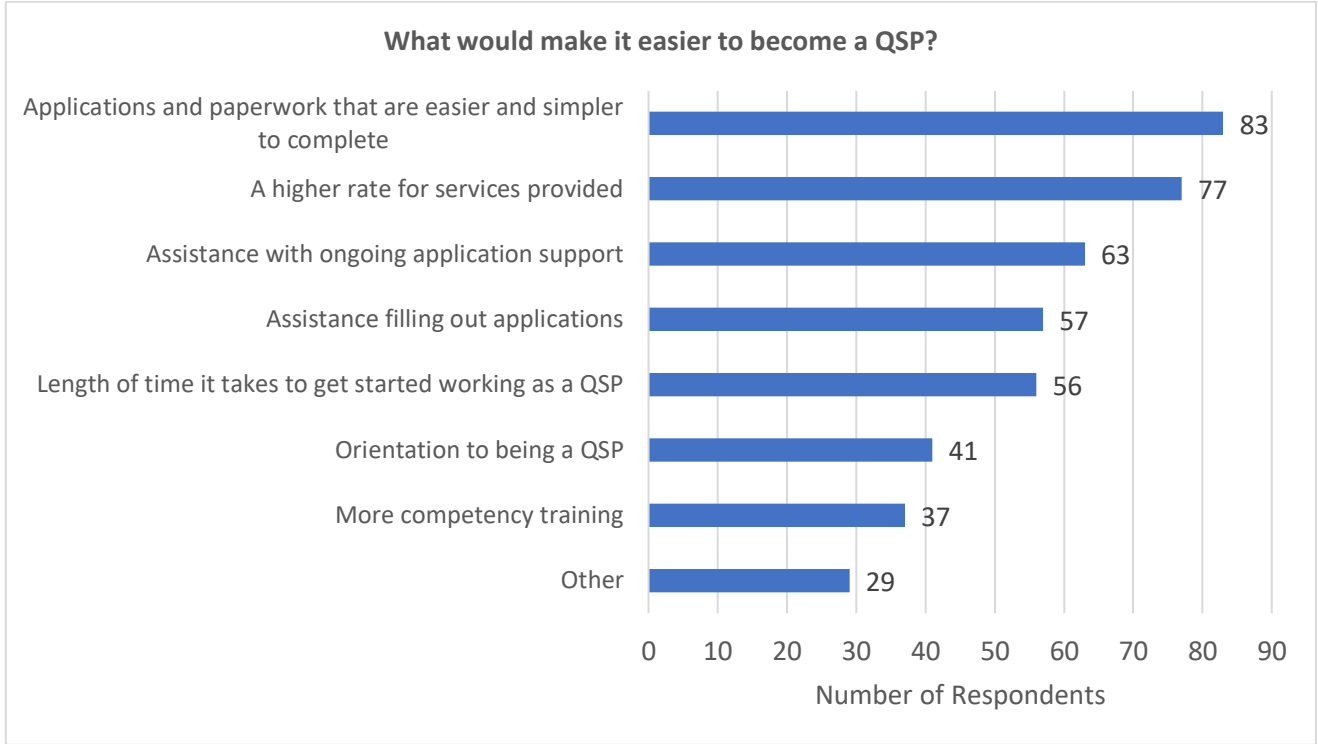
Figure 18. Degree of Helpfulness of QSP Hub Content (n = 63)*



**Note: This question was only displayed to the 66 participants who indicated they had accessed or utilized QSP Hub trainings or webinars.

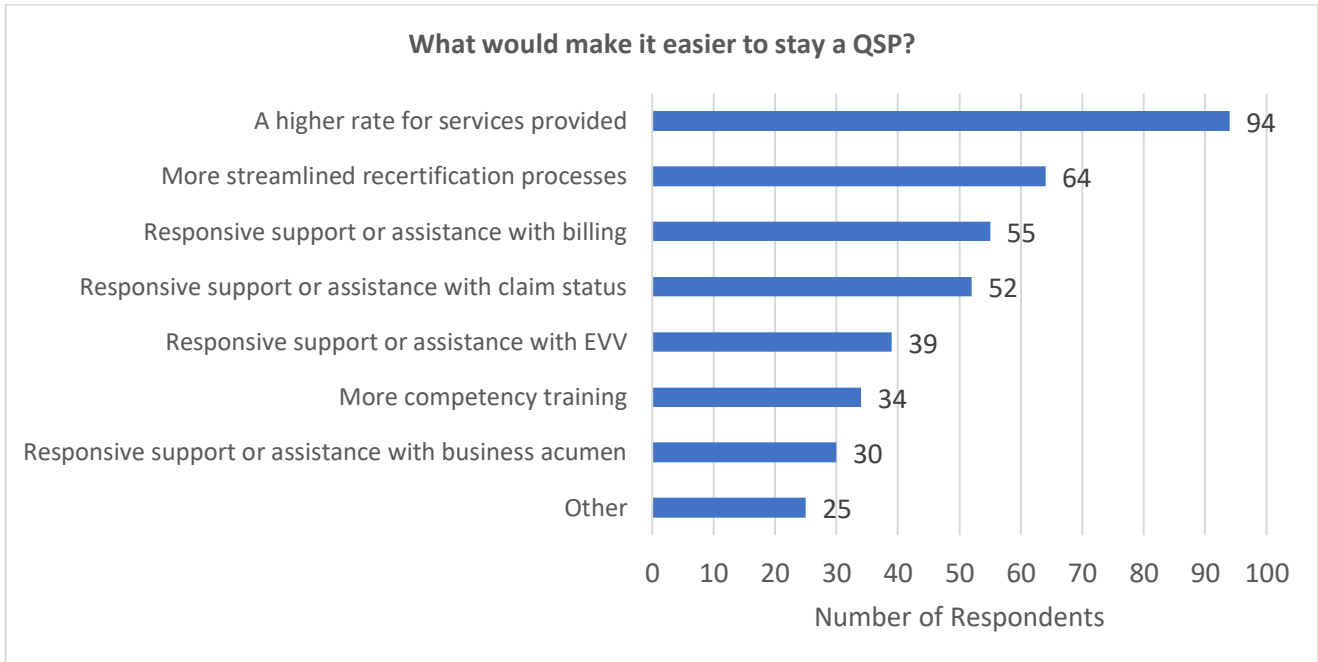
General

Figure 19. Factors Making it Easier to Become a QSP (n = 166)*



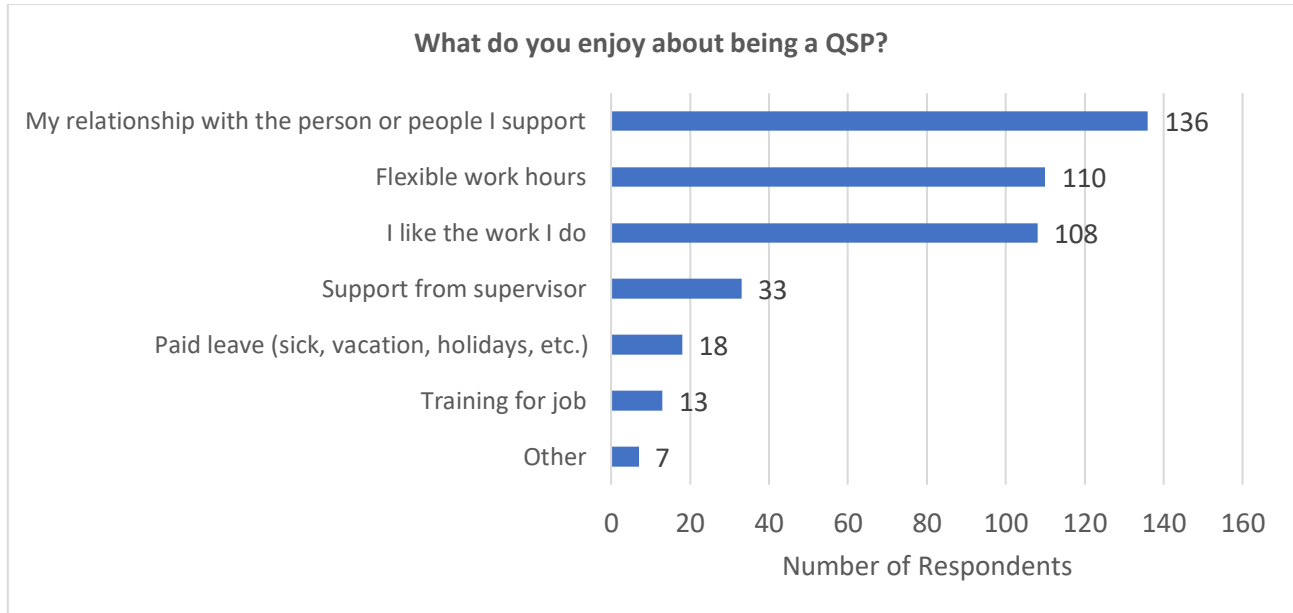
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 20. Factors Making it Easier to Stay a QSP (n = 158)*



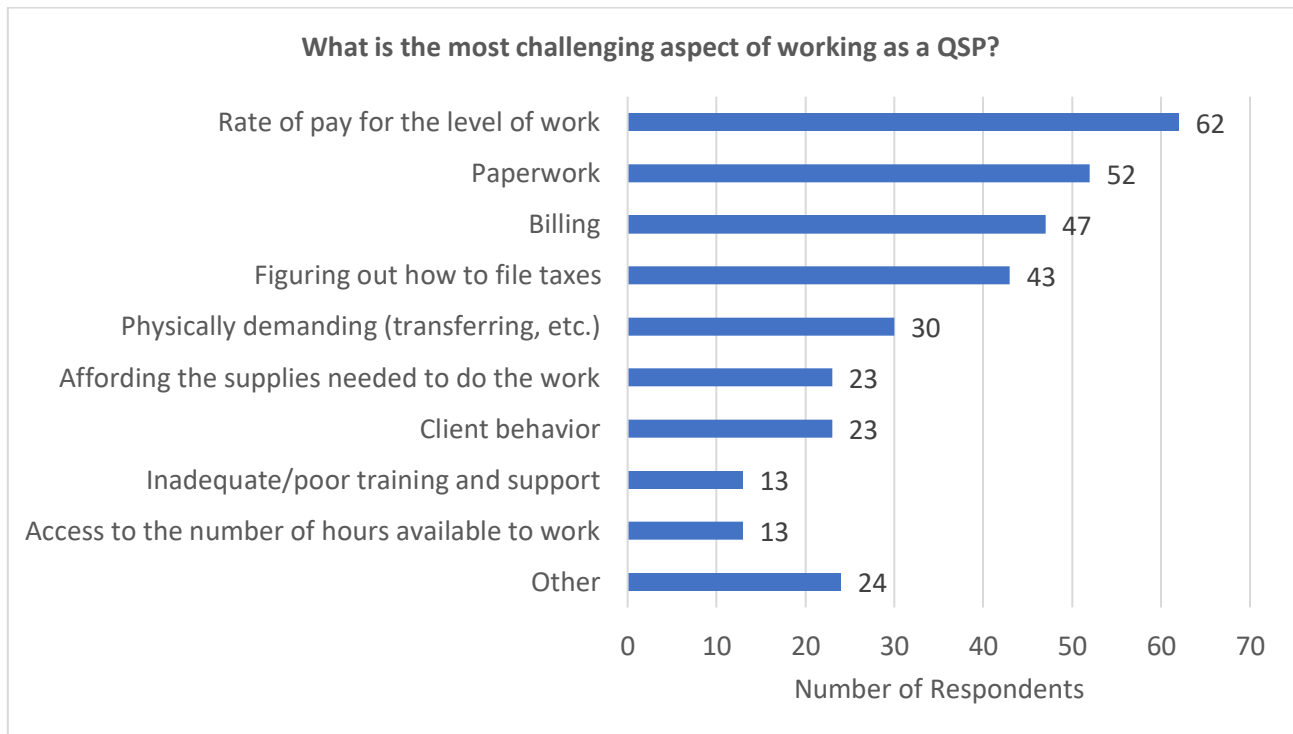
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 21. Enjoyable Aspects of Working as a QSP (n = 175)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 22. Most Challenging Aspect of Working as a QSP (n = 158)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Qualitative analysis was conducted in order to determine the most prevalent themes among the open-ended survey questions. Participants were asked what motivated them to

enroll as QSPs and 150 individuals responded. Several common themes emerged, including someone important to them needed care (n = 64), love working with/helping people (n = 44), keeping individuals in their homes (n = 19), self-employment and the resulting flexibility (n = 11), needed a job or additional income (n = 9), one on one care (n = 6), saw a gap in services that QSP could fill (i.e., client need) (n = 5), and knowing someone else who worked as a QSP (n = 4). Some responses included more than one theme, and 15 responses did not fit into any of the aforementioned themes.

When asked if they had any additional comments at the end of the survey, 59 individuals provided a response. The most common topics mentioned after no comment (n = 25) were issues with billing/payment/taxes (n = 7), love the job and the work they do (n = 6), insufficient compensation/benefits (n = 5), want more clients (n = 2), difficulty with record keeping/reporting (n = 2), and need more advertising/more QSPs (n = 2). Eleven responses did not fit into any of the categories.

QSP Agency Survey

Response Rate

Out of the 120 invitations sent to QSP agencies, there were 51 records received. All 51 records were electronic records in Qualtrics. Ten records were excluded from analyses, five for being completely blank, and five for only responding to the first question of the survey. Thus, 41 records (34.2%) were included in the analyses. Missing data were excluded using the pairwise method, and the number of valid responses is indicated for each question. Some of the questions allowed participants to select more than one response option. Therefore, some of the questions may have response totals greater than the number of respondents or percentage totals greater than 100.0%.

Respondents' Demographics

Participants were asked to identify their role within the QSP agency. Of the 41 responses provided, 29.3% (n = 12) of the participants identified as owners, 17.1% (n = 7) identified as directors, 14.6% (n = 6) identified as supervisors, 12.2% (n = 5) identified as managers, 7.3% (n = 3) identified as administrators, 4.9% (n = 2) identified as coordinators, 2.4% (n = 1) identified as a CEO, 2.4% (n = 1) identified as a nurse, and 9.8% (n = 4) identified as a different role that did not fit into any of the above categories.

Demographics Summary of QSPs Employed by Agencies

When asked how many QSPs they employ in an average month, over half (61.0%, n = 25) of the 41 responding agencies reported employing 0-9 QSPs, followed by 9.8% (n = 4) of agencies reporting they employ 10-19 QSPs and 9.8% (n = 4) reporting they employ 30-39 QSPs. Moreover, 7.3% (n = 3) of agencies reported employing 20-29 QSPs, 4.9% (n = 2) of agencies reported employing 50-59 QSPs, 4.9% (n = 2) of agencies reported employing 60 or more QSPs, and 2.4% (n = 1) of agencies reported employing 40-49 QSPs in an average month.

Some basic demographic information was collected about QSPs employed by the agencies, such as their age and gender. When asked to indicate the ages of QSPs that they employ, agencies were able to select more than one response option. Of the 41 responses, 63.4% (n = 26) of agencies reported employing QSPs between 18 and 25 years old, 90.2% (n = 37) reported employing QSPs between 26 and 44 years old, 70.7% (n = 29) reported employing QSPs between 45 and 64 years old, and 43.9% (n = 18) reported employing QSPs 65 years and older.

When asked to indicate the genders of QSPs that they employ, agencies were able to select more than one response option. Of the 38 responses, most agencies (89.5%, n = 34) reported employing female QSPs, 55.3% (n = 21) reported employing male QSPs, 15.8% (n = 6) indicated they do not have that information, and 5.3% (n = 2) preferred not to say. Additionally, 5.3% (n = 2) of agencies reported employing transgender men, 2.6% (n = 1) reported employing non-binary/gender queer QSPs, 2.6% (n = 1) reported employing transgender women, and 2.6% (n = 1) reported they employed individuals of a gender identity that was not listed.

When asked if English was the second language of any of their QSP clients, 38 agencies provided responses. 71.1% (n = 27) of agencies indicated English was not the second language of any of their clients, whereas 28.9% (n = 11) of agencies indicated that it was.

The average length of time QSPs have worked at the agencies was also assessed. Of the 31 responses, 29.0% of agencies (n = 9) reported the average length of time QSPs worked at their agency was less than one year, 32.3% (n = 10) reported the average time was 1-2 years, 16.1% (n = 5) reported the average time was 3-4 years, 3.2% (n = 1) reported the average time was 5-6 years, 3.2% (n = 1) reported the average time was 7-8 years, 6.5% (n = 2) reported the average time was 9-10 years, and 9.7% (n = 3) reported the average length of time was longer than 10 years.

Clients Served

Figure 23. Average Number of Public Pay (n = 37) and Private Pay/Other Third-Party Insurance (n = 37) Clients Served per Month by Agencies

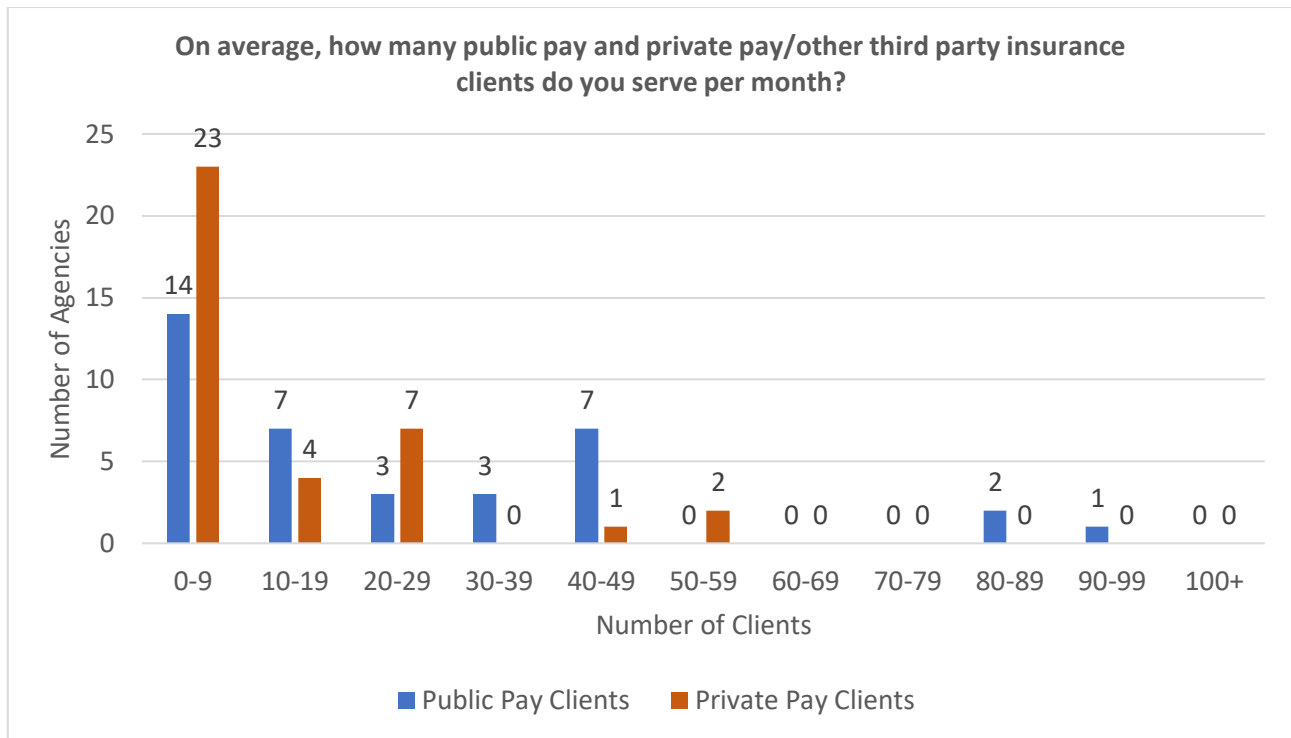
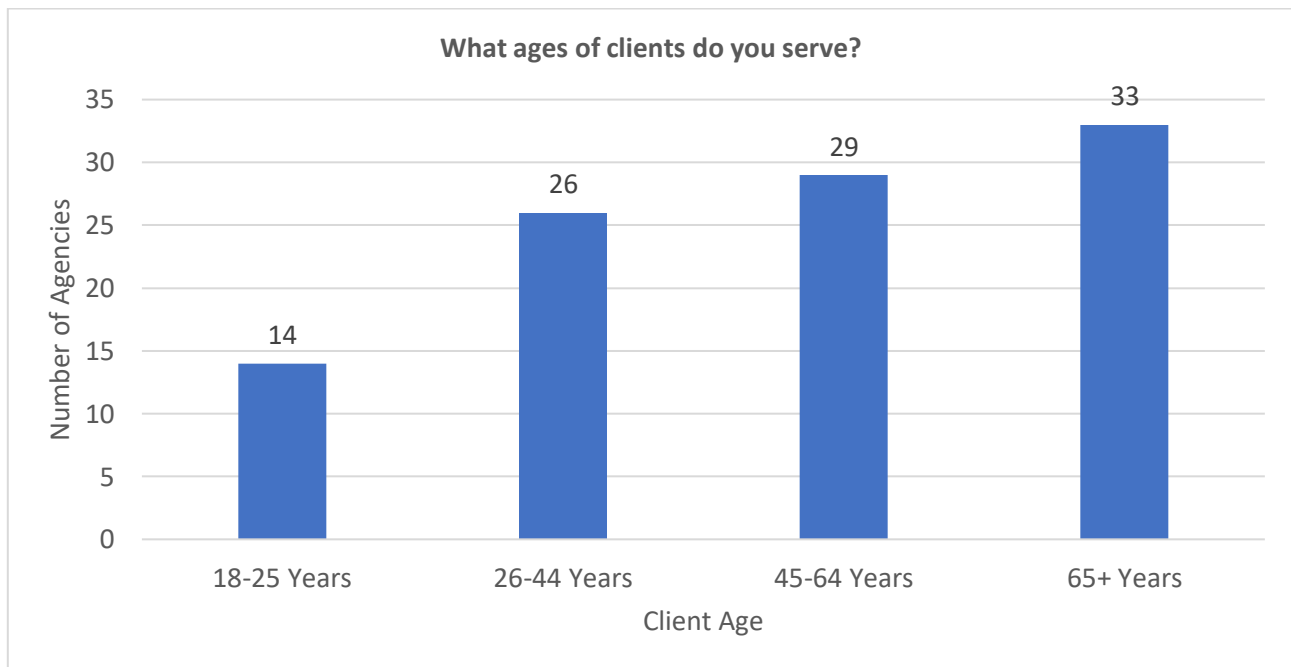


Figure 24. Ages of Clients Served by Agencies (n = 36)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Services Provided

Figure 25. Length of Time Agencies Have Provided QSP Services (n = 36)

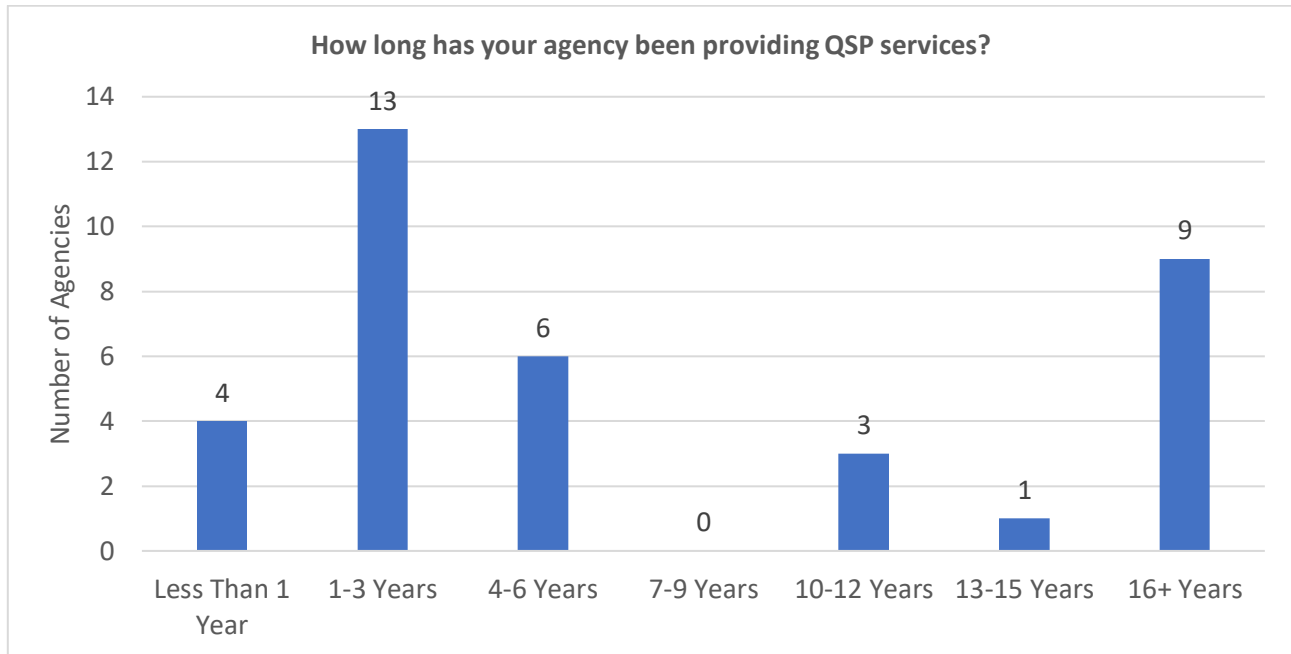
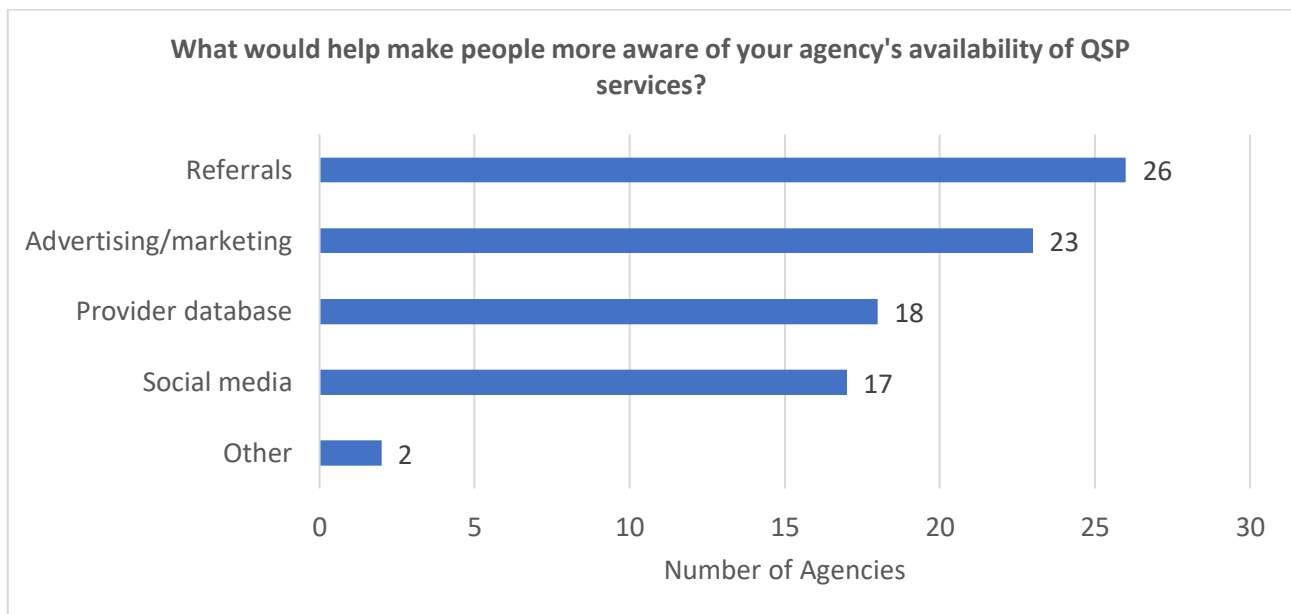


Figure 26. Factors to Make People More Aware of Agencies' Services (n = 31)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Table 3. Services Provided to Clients by QSP Agencies (n = 33)*

Service	Number of Agencies Providing Service
Personal care service – SPED (15 min)	31
Homemaker service	30
Companionship services	24
Non-medical transportation – Escort	23
Non-medical transportation – Local & out of town	22
Respite care	20
Supervision	19
Extended personal care	17
Chore – Labor (includes snow removal)	16
Extended personal care – Nurse	12
Nurse education care	11
Community supports service	7
Residential habilitation	6
Non-medical transportation – Carrier bus, taxi	3
Supported employment	2
Transitional living	2
Adult residential care	1
Case management – Assessment	1
Home delivered meals	1
Personal care – Assisted living – SPED	1
Other	1

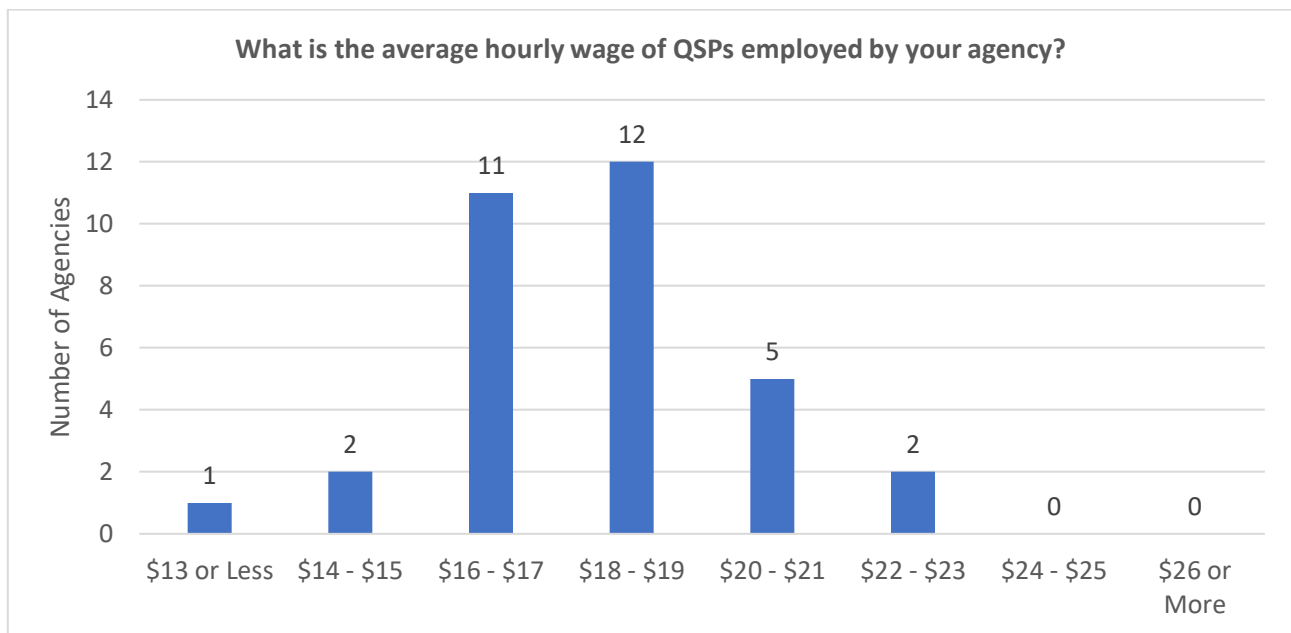
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Compensation/Benefits

Table 4. Benefits Offered by QSP Agencies

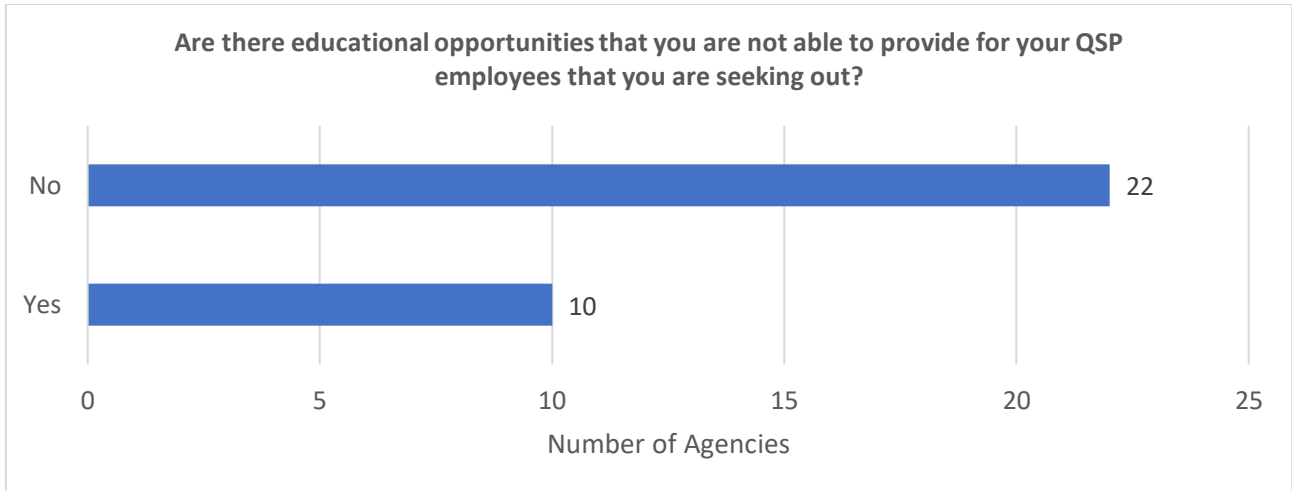
Benefits	Yes (n)	Yes (%)	No (n)	No (%)	Missing (n)
Paid time off (PTO), not differentiating between sick and vacation time	10	34.5%	19	65.5%	12
Paid sick leave	12	42.9%	16	57.1%	13
Paid vacation	14	48.3%	15	51.7%	12
Your organization's health insurance	16	53.3%	14	46.7%	11
Your organization's dental insurance	17	58.6%	12	41.4%	12
Your organization's vision insurance	17	58.6%	12	41.4%	12
Your organization's life insurance	16	55.2%	13	44.8%	12
Your organization's retirement plan	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	10
Short term disability	14	51.9%	13	48.1%	14
Long term disability	13	50.0%	13	50.0%	15

Figure 27. Average Hourly Wage of QSPs Employed by Agencies (n = 33)



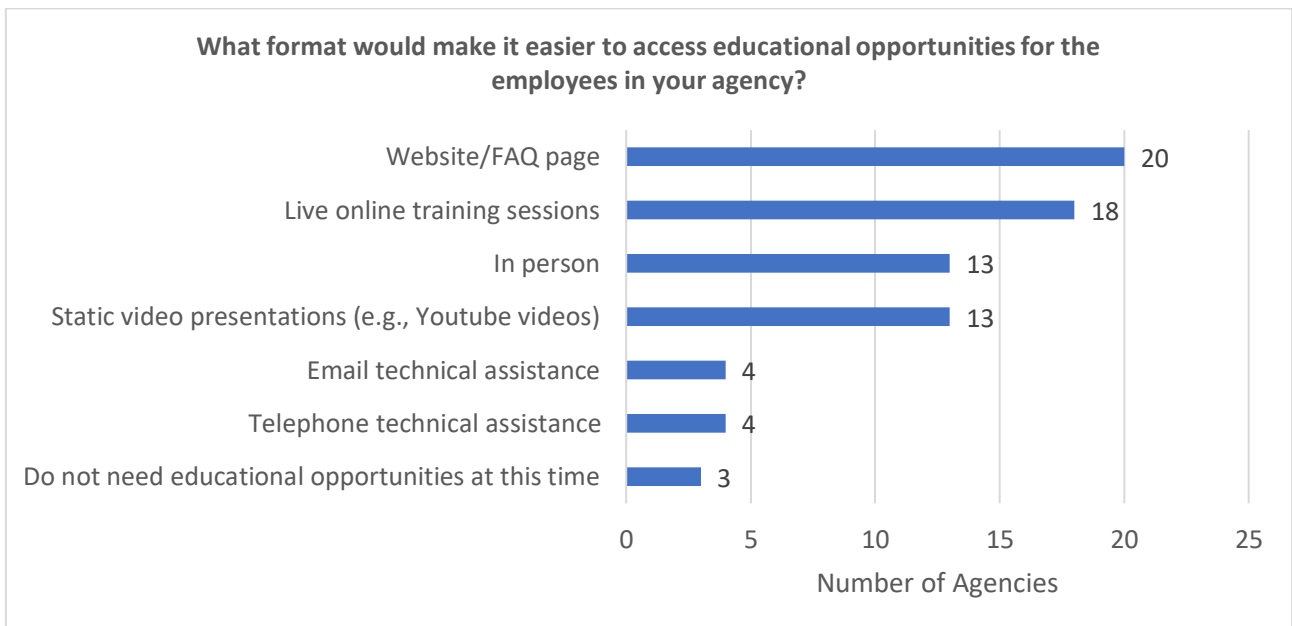
Trainings

Figure 28. Breakdown of Agencies who are Seeking Out Educational Opportunities for Their QSP Employees (n = 32)



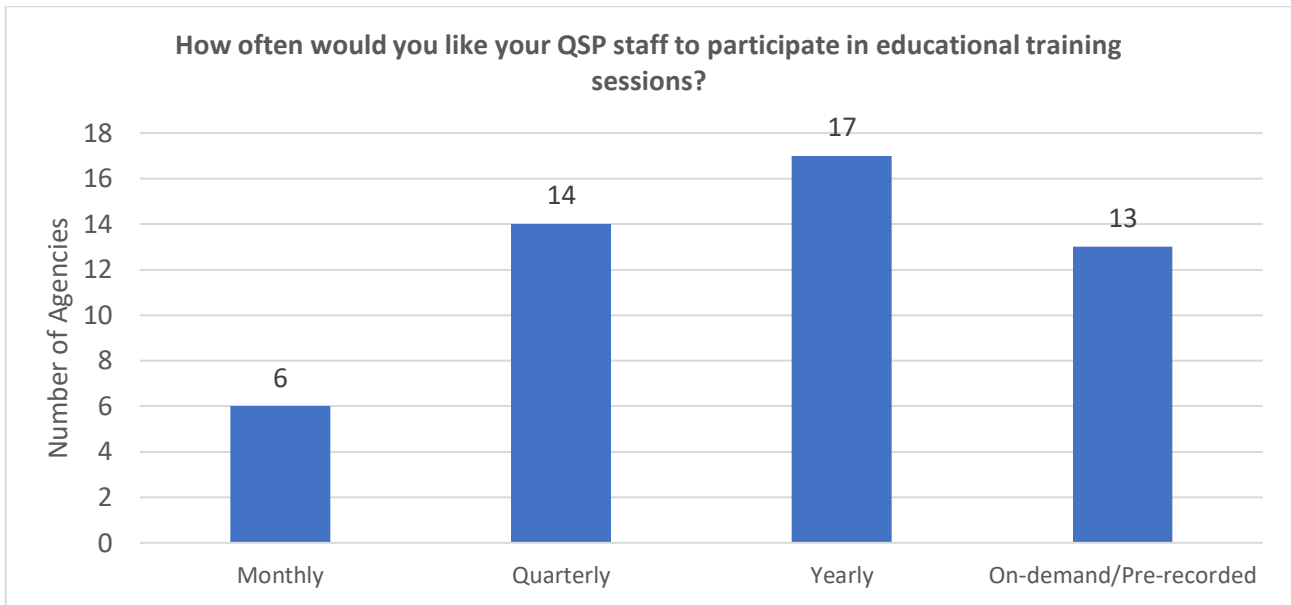
To better understand the educational opportunities in which agencies would be most interested, the 10 participants who responded 'Yes' in Figure 28 were asked to indicate specifically what educational topics they would be interested in having access to. The educational topics mentioned by agencies included the following: mental health, Alzheimer's/Dementia, traumatic brain injury, CNA topics, end of life care, new tools/adaptive equipment, ergonomics, Parkinson's, human services education, and healthy boundaries.

Figure 29. Preferred Method of Accessing Educational Opportunities (n = 32)*



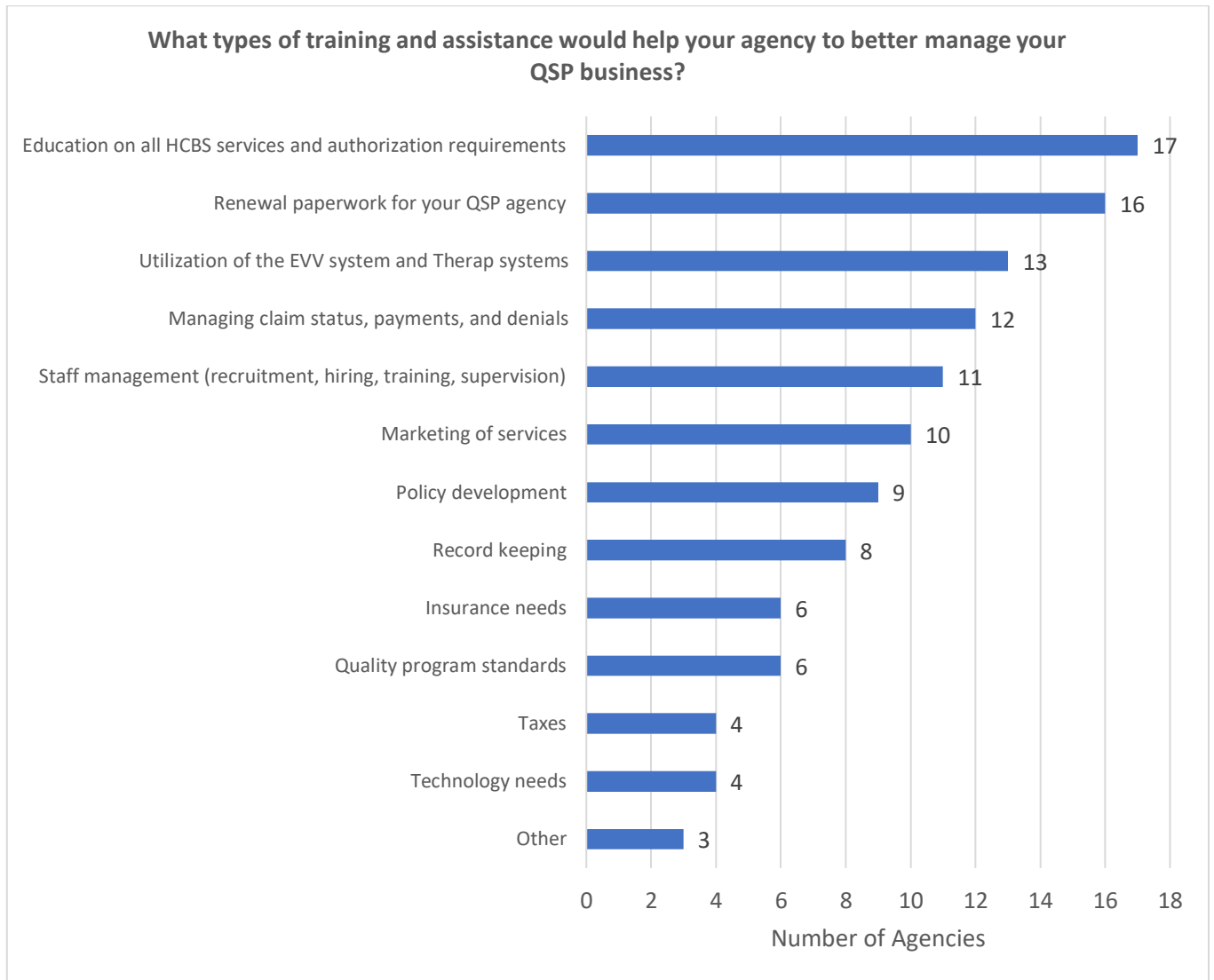
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 30. Desired Frequency for Staff to Attend Educational Training Sessions (n = 33)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 31. Types of Training and Assistance That Would Help Agencies Better Manage Their QSP Business (n = 27)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 32. Preferred Method of Accessing Information/Training on Managing a Business (n = 31)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 33. Desired Frequency for Staff to Attend Training Sessions on Business Acumen (n = 31)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

QSP Hub Services: Use and Satisfaction

As the QSP Hub strives to provide high quality support and assistance to QSPs, participants were asked a few questions in order to gain feedback on their use of QSP Hub services and the level of satisfaction with the QSP Hub thus far. The results are shown below in figures 34 through 39.

Figure 34. Breakdown of QSP Agencies who have Contacted the QSP Hub for Assistance (n = 31)

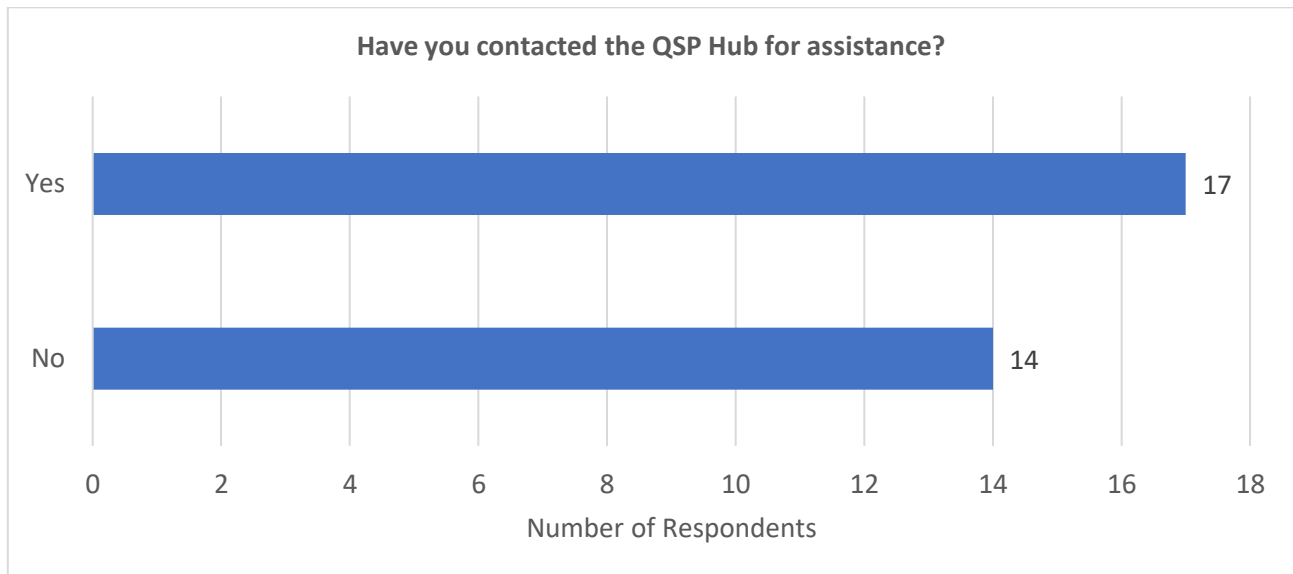
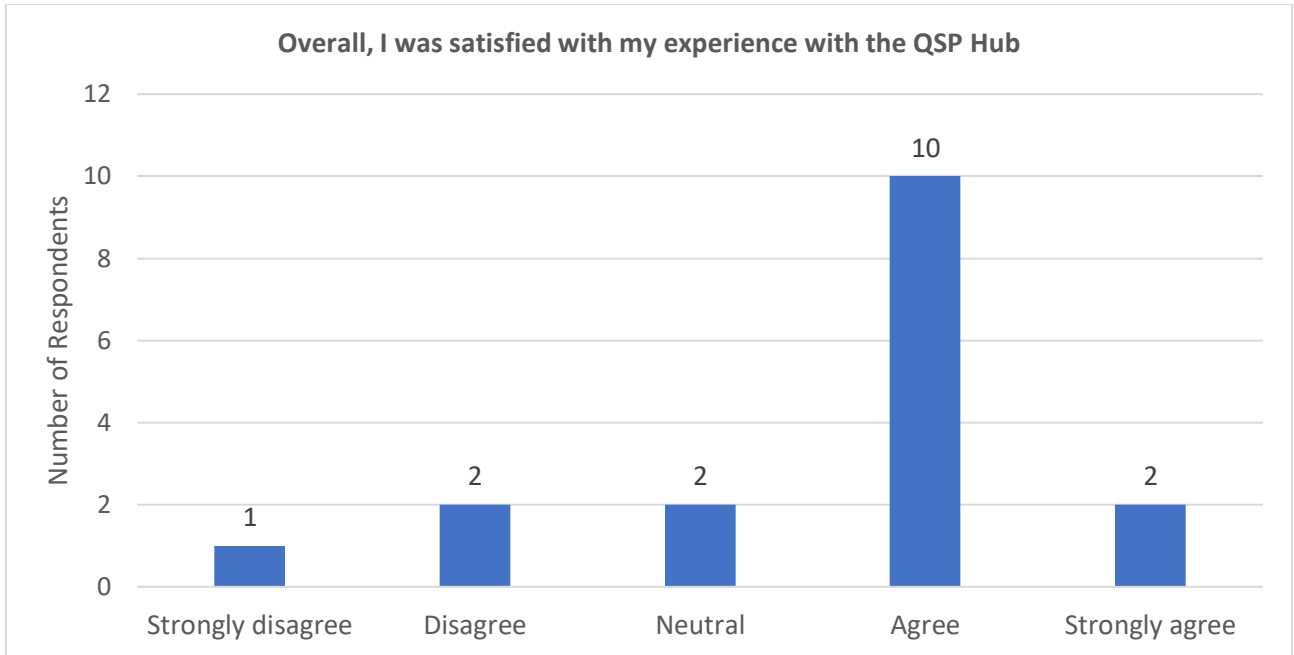
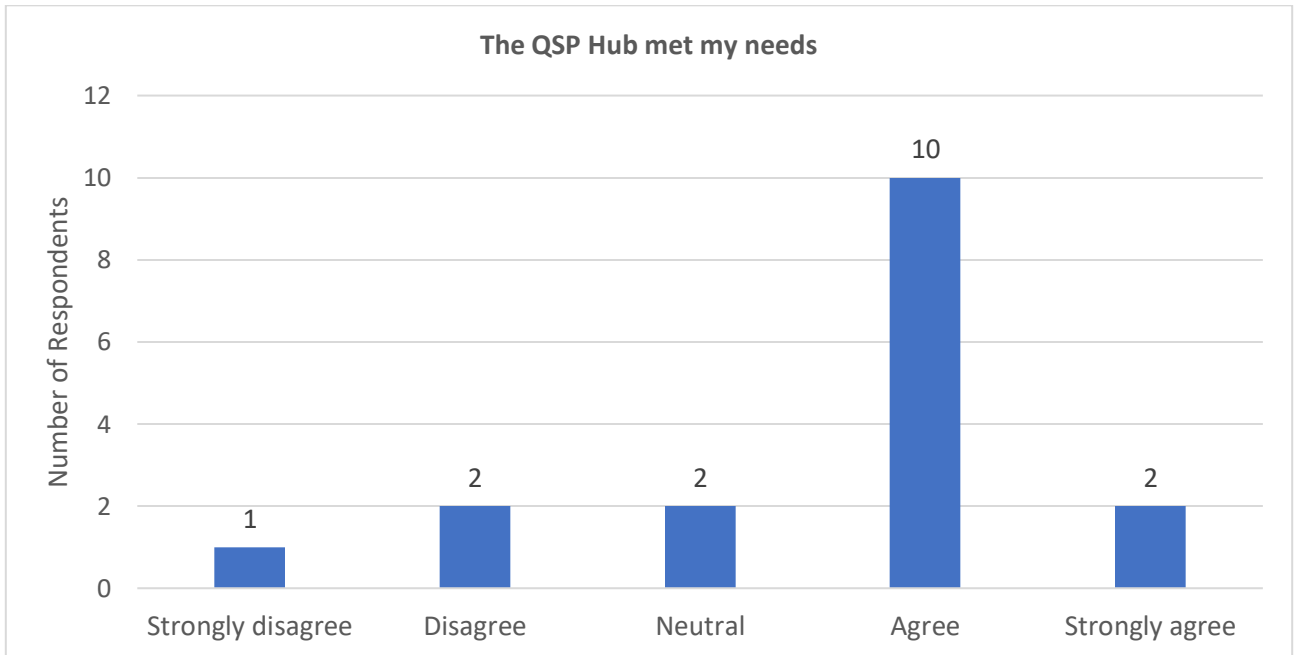


Figure 35. Level of Satisfaction with QSP Hub Experience (n = 17)*



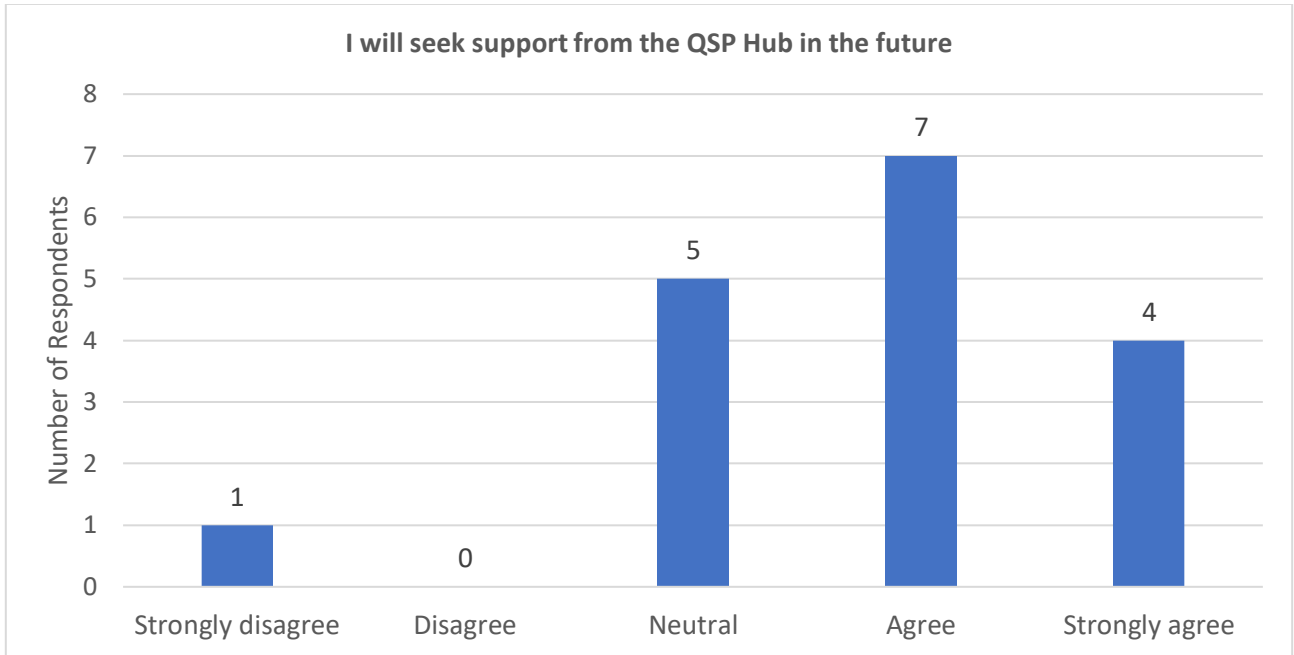
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 17 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 36. Level of Agreement that the QSP Hub met Their Needs (n = 17)*



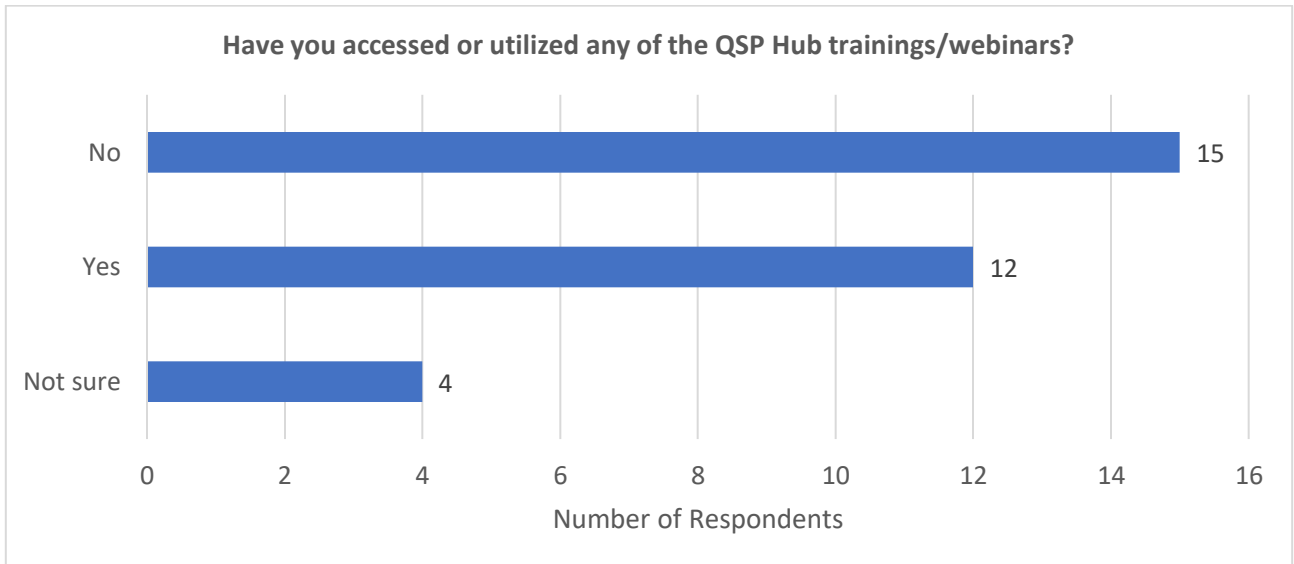
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 17 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 37. Intention to Seek Support from the QSP Hub in the Future (n = 17)*



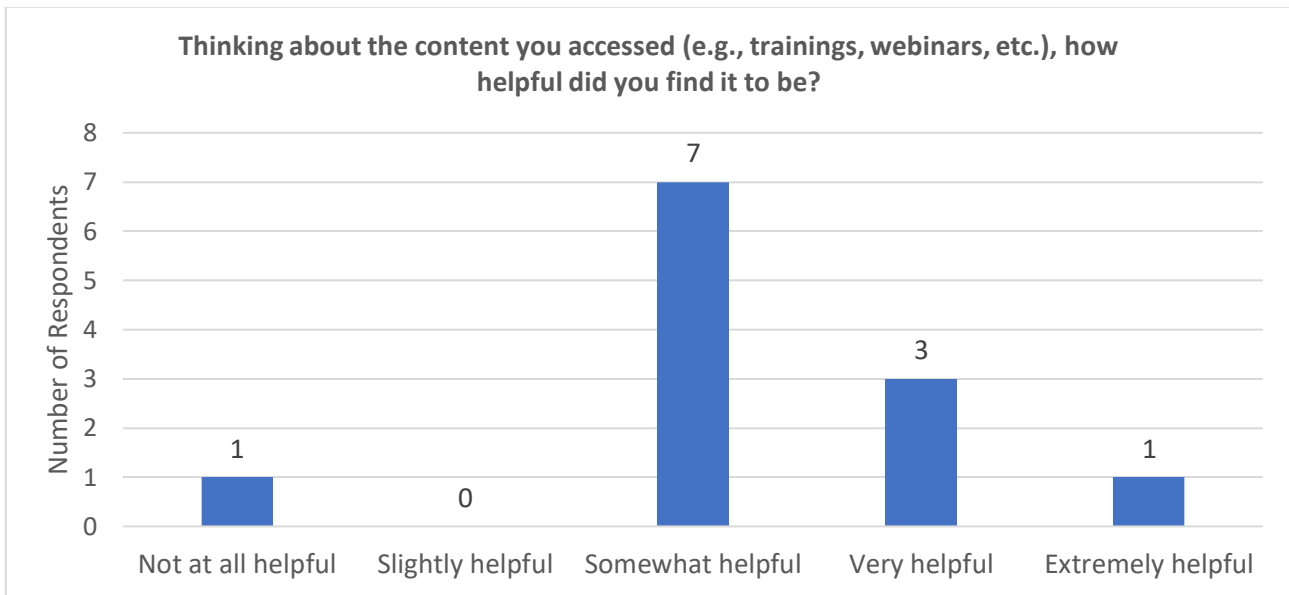
*Note: This question was only displayed to the 17 participants who indicated they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance.

Figure 38. Breakdown of QSP Agencies who Have Accessed or Utilized QSP Hub Trainings/Webinars (n = 31)



To gain an understanding of which QSP Hub webinars and trainings were most frequently being accessed by QSP agencies, the 12 participants who responded 'Yes' in Figure 38 were asked to indicate specifically which trainings and webinars they had accessed. The 6 responses were as follows: all monthly agency QSP meetings and 2 monthly QSP meetings, critical incident reporting and online TBI education, critical reporting, QSP agency public input, TBI and fraud and waste, and various videos.

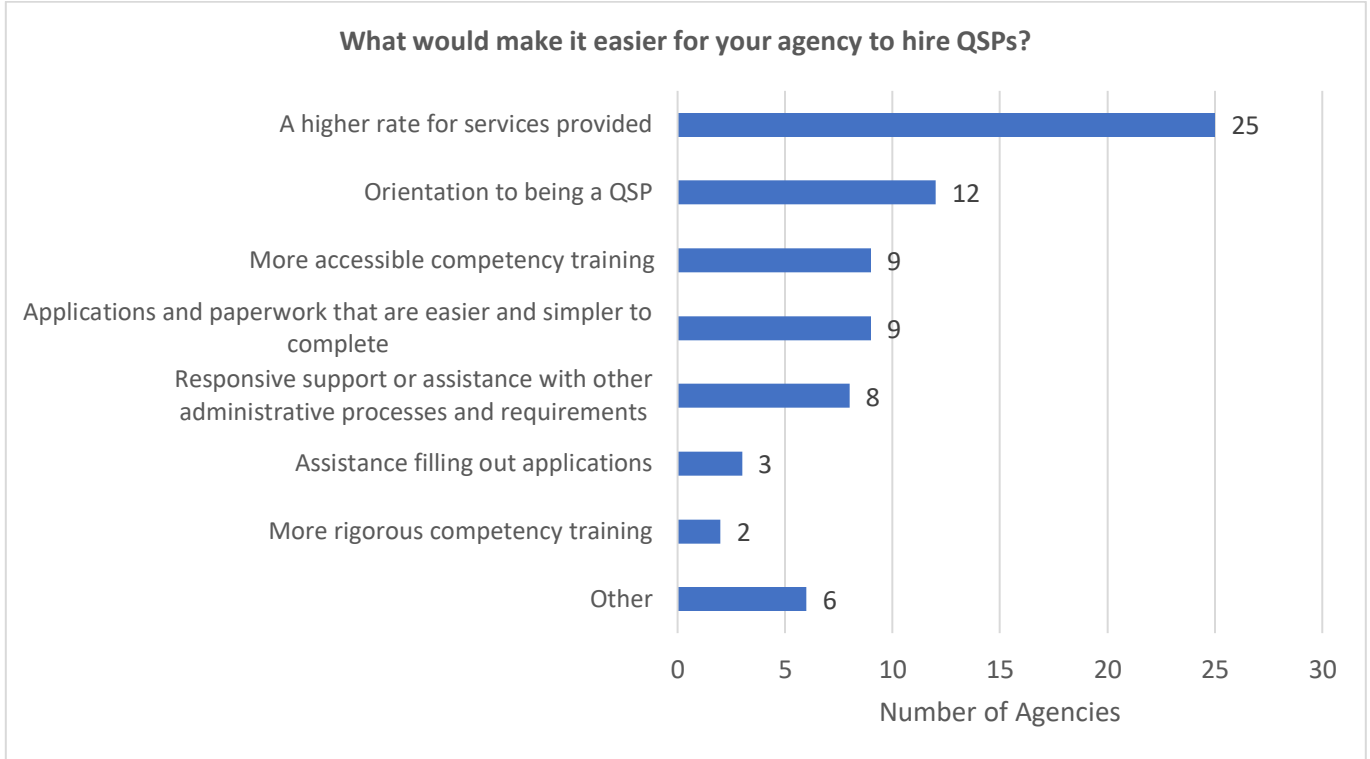
Figure 39. Degree of Helpfulness of QSP Hub Content (n = 12)*



*Note: This question was only displayed to the 12 participants who indicated they had accessed or utilized QSP Hub trainings or webinars.

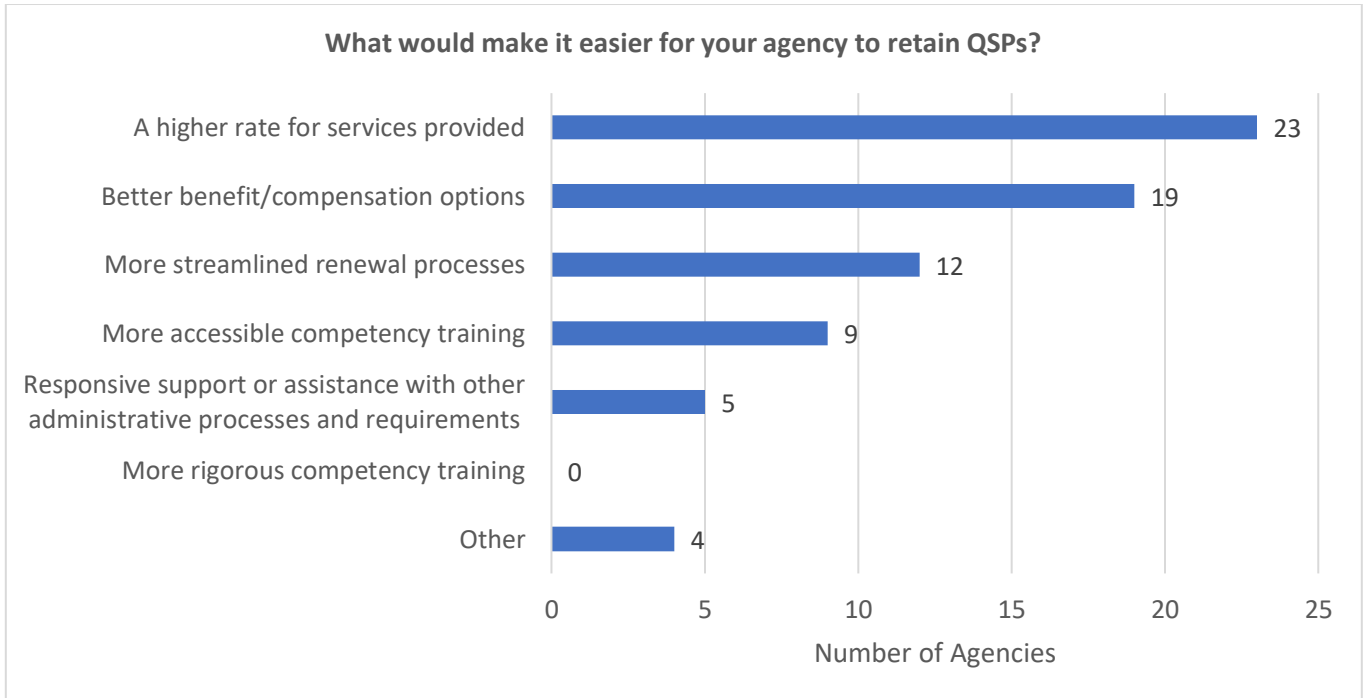
General

Figure 40. Factors That Would Make Hiring QSPs Easier (n = 31)*



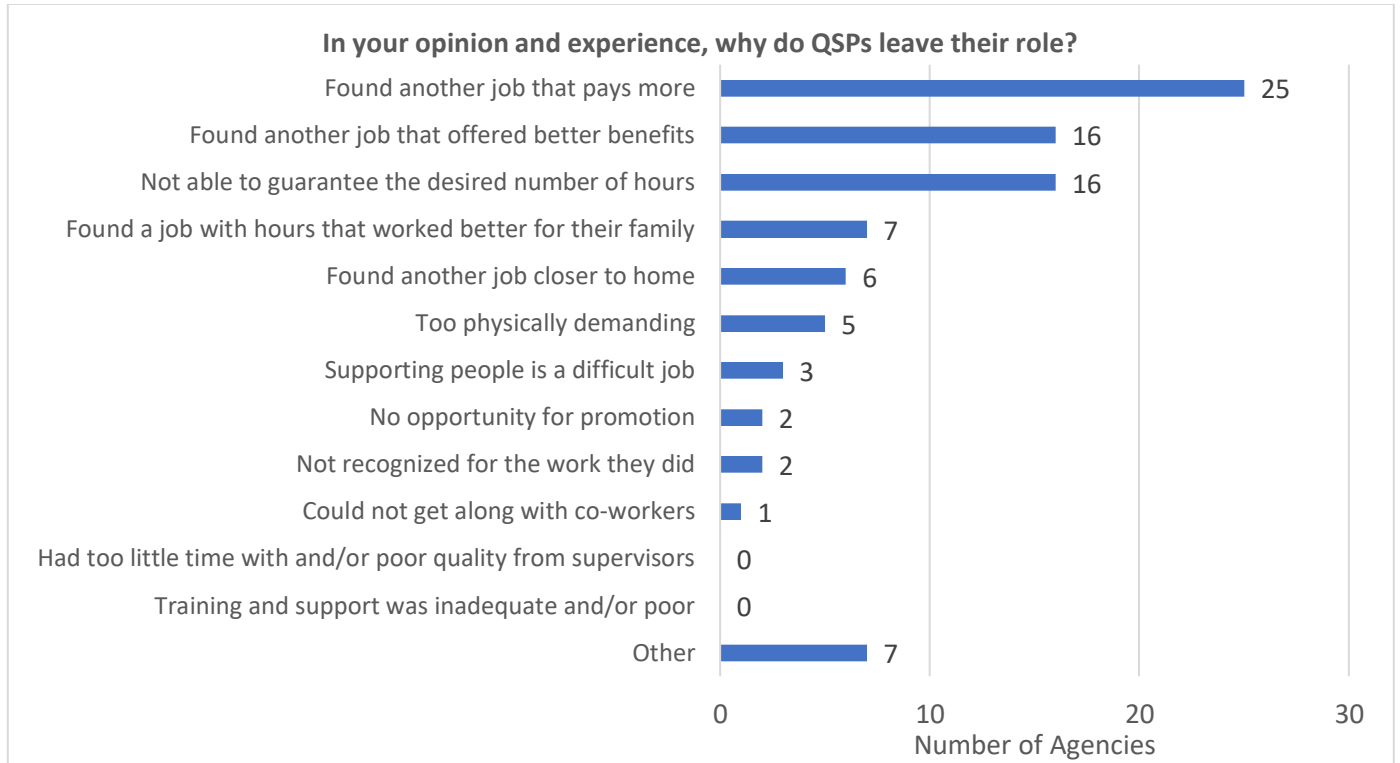
*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 41. Factors That Would Make Retaining QSPs Easier (n = 31)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

Figure 42. Reasons Why QSPs Leave Their Role (n = 30)*



*Note: Participants were able to select more than one response option for this question.

At the end of the survey, agencies were asked if they had any additional comments. Qualitative analysis of the 10 responses revealed that the most common topics mentioned were compensation/rate of reimbursement too low (n = 4), needing assistance with billing (n = 2), and no comment (n = 2). One agency noted cumbersome requirements for TBI residential habilitation, and one agency suggested streamlining the authorizations.

Discussion

Clients Served

Although a common perception may be that QSP clients are primarily elderly, the survey results showed that a larger number of both individual QSPs and QSP agencies reported serving clients under age 65 compared to those who reported serving clients 65 years of age and older. The majority of individual QSPs and QSP agencies reported that English was not the second language of any of their clients.

Services Provided

The majority of both QSP agencies and individual QSPs reported providing services for 1-3 years. The service most frequently reported as being provided by individual QSPs was homemaker service, whereas the service most frequently provided by QSP agencies was personal care service – SPED (15 min). To make people more aware of their services,

both QSP agencies and individual QSPs most frequently reported that referrals would be helpful.

Compensation/Benefits

When asked to indicate whether or not they offered particular benefits, over half of responding QSP agencies reported offering the following to their employees: the organization's health insurance, the organization's dental insurance, the organization's vision insurance, the organization's life insurance, the organization's retirement plan, and short-term disability. The most common average hourly wage for employees reported by QSP agencies was \$18.00 - \$19.00. One agency reported providing an average hourly wage of \$13.00 or less. The highest average wage reported by one agency was \$22.00 - \$23.00 per hour.

Client Relationships

The majority of individual QSPs reported they did not live with any of the clients that they serve, nor did they have a close personal relationship with any of their clients prior to becoming their QSP. However, just over half of individual QSPs reported being related to clients they serve.

Trainings

Less than half of individual QSPs indicated there are skills trainings that could help to improve or expand their services. Among those who indicated skills training would be helpful, the most commonly desired training topic was specific types of diseases and medical conditions.

The majority of QSPs who worked for an agency indicated that their agency was able to provide opportunities for growth/education/development. Along the same lines, less than half of QSP agencies indicated there are educational opportunities that they are currently not able to provide for their employees that they are seeking out. The agencies seeking out educational opportunities were asked to indicate what topics would be of interest. Various topics were mentioned, including mental health, Alzheimer's/Dementia, traumatic brain injury, and CNA topics, among others. Agencies most commonly preferred to access educational opportunities via website/FAQ page and most commonly preferred for staff to attend educational trainings on a yearly basis.

When asked what types of training and assistance would help to better manage their QSP business, the most common response among QSP agencies was education on all HCBS services and authorization requirements. The most common response among individual QSPs, on the other hand, was utilization of the Electronic Visit Verification system and Therap systems. Both individual QSPs and QSP agencies indicated that live online training sessions was their preferred method of accessing information and training on managing their business.

The desired frequency of attending training sessions on business acumen differed among individual QSPs and agencies. Individual QSPs most frequently indicated they would like to attend on-demand or pre-recorded training sessions, followed by attending trainings on a yearly basis. On the contrary, QSP agencies indicated they wanted staff to participate in trainings on a yearly basis, followed by participating in quarterly training sessions or on-demand/pre-recorded training sessions.

QSP Hub Services: Use and Satisfaction

Over half of responding QSP agencies indicated that they had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance, whereas less than half of individual QSPs had contacted the QSP Hub for assistance. The majority of responding QSP agencies and individual QSPs agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their experience with the QSP Hub and that the QSP Hub met their needs. Moreover, the majority of both QSP agencies and individual QSPs agreed or strongly agreed that they would seek support from the QSP Hub in the future.

When asked if they had accessed or utilized any of the QSP Hub's trainings or webinars, the most common response among individual QSPs was 'Yes,' while the most common response among QSP agencies was 'No.' The webinars or trainings most commonly accessed by individual QSPs were billing and critical incident reporting. When asked how helpful they found the training or webinar content to be, individual QSPs most commonly responded that it was very helpful, whereas QSP agencies most commonly responded that the content was somewhat helpful.

General

When asked what would make it easier to become a QSP, the most common response among individual QSPs was applications and paperwork that are easier and simpler to complete. Individual QSPs most commonly indicated that a higher rate for services provided would make it easier to stay a QSP. When asked to indicate the most challenging aspect of working as a QSP, rate of pay for the level of work was the response option most commonly chosen by individual QSPs. The most common response to what individual QSPs enjoy about their work was the relationships with the people they support.

When agencies were asked what would make it easier to hire and retain QSPs, the most common response to both questions was a higher rate for services provided. Relatedly, agencies most commonly indicated finding another job that pays more as the reason why QSPs leave their role.

Conclusion

Qualified service providers (QSPs) fill an important role in healthcare workforce. They allow clients to remain in their homes and communities while receiving vital services. The results of both the individual QSP survey and the agency QSP survey provide

valuable insight into the needs of the current QSP workforce in North Dakota and demonstrate satisfaction with the services provided by the QSP Hub. These survey results will be used to continue to guide and enhance the services provided by the North Dakota QSP Hub.

References

North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services. (2022). Adults and Aging Qualified Service Providers (QSP). Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/human-services/providers/adults-and-aging/qualified-service>.

Appendix A

Individual QSP Needs Survey 2023

1. How do you provide services as a Qualified Service Provider?

- As an individual QSP (self-employed)
- Employed by a QSP agency
- Both

2. What is your age?

- 18-25 years
- 26-44 years
- 45-64 years
- 65 years or older

3. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Transgender man
- Transgender woman
- Non-binary/gender queer
- Two-spirited
- Prefer not to say
- Gender identity not listed (please specify): _____

4. What is your highest level of education?

- Some high school
- High school diploma or GED
- Associate's degree or 2-year degree
- Some college
- Bachelor's or 4-year degree
- Post-graduate degree
- Prefer not to answer

5. What is your annual household income?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer

6. Is English your second language?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you have any other jobs aside from working as a QSP?

- Yes
- No

8. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 7**, on average, how many hours per week do you work at your additional job(s)?

- 0-9 hours
- 10-19 hours
- 20-29 hours
- 30-39 hours
- 40-49 hours

- 50-59 hours
- 60 or more hours

9. Is English the second language of any of your QSP clients?

- Yes
- No

10. On average, how many public pay clients do you serve per month (i.e., Medicaid, SPED, etc.)?

- 0 clients
- 1-3 clients
- 4-6 clients
- 7-9 clients
- 10-12 clients
- 13-15 clients
- 16 or more clients
- Unknown

11. On average, how many private pay or other third party insurance clients do you serve per month (i.e., not funded by the state or Medicaid)?

- 0 clients
- 1-3 clients
- 4-6 clients
- 7-9 clients
- 10-12 clients
- 13-15 clients
- 16 or more clients
- Unknown

12. What ages of clients do you serve? (Check all that apply)

- 18-25 years
- 26-44 years

- 45-64 years
- 65 years or older

13. How long have you been providing QSP services?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-9 years
- 10-12 years
- 13-15 years
- 16 or more years

14. Typically, how many hours do you work per week as an individual QSP? Check 'Not applicable' if the category does not apply to you.

- 0-9 hours
- 10-19 hours
- 20-29 hours
- 30-39 hours
- 40-49 hours
- 50-59 hours
- 60 or more hours
- 24/7 care
- Not applicable

15. Typically, how many hours do you work per week for a QSP agency? Check 'Not applicable' if the category does not apply to you.

- 0-9 hours
- 10-19 hours
- 20-29 hours
- 30-39 hours
- 40-49 hours

- 50-59 hours
- 60 or more hours
- 24/7 care
- Not applicable

16. What services do you provide to clients? (Check all that apply)

- Adult Day Care (S5101)
- Adult Foster Care (S5140)
- Case Management - Assessment (T2023 - TG)
- Case Management - Other (T2023)
- Chore - Labor (includes snow removal) (S5120)
- Companionship Services (S5135- TF)
- Environmental Modification (S5165)
- Extended Personal Care (S5115)
- Extended Personal Care - Nurse (S5115 - TD)
- Family Home Care (00001)
- Family Personal Care (S5136)
- Higher Level Case Management - Assessment (T2024)
- Higher Level Case Management - Other (T2022)
- Home Delivered Meals (S5170)
- Homemaker Service (S5130)
- Installation ERS (S5160)
- Non-Medical Transportation - Local and out of town (T2001)
- Non-Medical Transportation - Escort (T2001-UC)
- Nurse Education Care (S5108)
- Personal Care Service - SPED (Daily) (T1020)
- Personal Care Service - SPED (15 min) (T1019)
- Respite Care (S5150)
- Specialized Equipment (T2028)
- Supervision (S5135)
- Other _____

17. Do you live with any of the clients that you serve?

- Yes
- No

18. Are you related to any of the clients that you serve?

- Yes
- No

19. Did you have a close personal relationship (e.g., as a friend or a neighbor) with any of the individuals you serve that started before you became their QSP?

- Yes
- No

20. Is the agency you work for able to provide opportunities for growth/education/development for their employees? Please respond only if you are employed by a QSP agency. If you are not employed by a QSP agency, skip to Question 23.

- Yes
- No

21. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 20**, please describe the professional development resources, programs, and/or opportunities provided by the agency you work for:

22. If you answered 'No' to Question 20, what would make it easier to provide opportunities for growth/education/development for the employees in the agency you work for? (e.g., reimbursement for trainings, easier training format, etc.)

23. What would make it easier to become a QSP? (Check all that apply)

- Assistance filling out applications
- Applications and paperwork that are easier and simpler to complete
- Assistance with ongoing application support (making error corrections and submitting missing documents)

- Length of time it takes to get started working as a QSP
- A higher rate for services provided
- More competency training
- Orientation to being a QSP
- Other (please specify): _____

24. What would make it easier to stay a QSP? (Check all that apply)

- More streamlined recertification processes
- Responsive support or assistance with EVV
- Responsive support or assistance with billing
- Responsive support or assistance with claim status
- Responsive support or assistance with business acumen (e.g., finding clients, taxes, tracking expenses)
- A higher rate for services provided
- More competency training
- Other (please specify): _____

25. Are there skills trainings that could help you improve or expand the services that you provide?

- Yes
- No

26. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 25**, what skill training would be helpful to you and improve or expand your ability to meet the needs of the people you provide services to at this time? (Check all that apply)

- Learn how to best provide the care
- Client relationships
- Training on specific types of diseases and medical conditions
- Other (please specify): _____

27. What types of training and assistance would help you to better manage your QSP business? Examples: Assist with marketing, hiring, training, policy development, record keeping, etc. (Check all that apply)

- Utilization of the Electronic Visit Verification System and Therap Systems
- Education on all HCBS services and authorization requirements

- Record keeping
- Taxes
- Marketing of services
- Insurance needs
- Technology needs
- Other (please specify): _____

28. If additional information or training opportunities were provided, how would you prefer to access the information/training? (Check all that apply)

- In person
- Website/FAQ page
- Email technical assistance
- Telephone technical assistance
- Live online training sessions
- Static video presentations (e.g., Youtube videos)
- Do not need trainings at this time

29. How often would you like to attend training sessions? (Check all that apply)

- Yearly
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- On-demand/Pre-recorded

30. What would help make people more aware of your availability of QSP services? (Check all that apply)

- Advertising/Marketing
- Provider database
- Social media
- Referrals
- Other (please specify): _____
- I am not interested in advertising my QSP services

31. What motivated you to enroll as a QSP?

32. What do you enjoy about being a QSP? (Check all that apply)

- Flexible work hours
- Support from supervisor
- Paid leave (sick, vacation, holidays, etc.)
- Training for job
- I like the work I do
- My relationship with the person or people I support
- Other (please specify): _____

33. What is the most challenging aspect of working as a QSP? (Check all that apply)

- Billing
- Paperwork
- Physically demanding (i.e., transferring, etc.)
- Figuring out how to file taxes
- Inadequate/poor training and support
- Affording the supplies needed to do the work
- Access to the number of hours available to work as a QSP
- Rate of pay for the level of work
- Client behavior
- Other (please specify): _____

34. Have you contacted the QSP Hub for assistance?

- Yes
- No

If you answered 'Yes' to Question 34, please respond to Questions 35 through 37 based on your feelings toward each statement as it relates to your experience with the QSP Hub.

If you answered 'No' to Question 34, skip to Question 38.

35. Overall, I was satisfied with my experience with the QSP Hub.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

36. The QSP Hub met my needs.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

37. I will seek support from the QSP Hub in the future.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

38. Have you accessed or utilized any of the QSP Hub trainings/webinars?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

39. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 38**, please list the trainings and/or webinars that you accessed:

40. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 38**, thinking about the content you accessed (e.g., trainings, webinars, etc.), how helpful did you find it to be?

- Extremely helpful
- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

41. Do you have any additional comments?

Appendix B

Agency QSP Needs Survey 2023

1. What is your role within the QSP agency?

2. In an average month, how many QSPs/direct care employees do you employ?

- 0-9
- 10-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 or more

3. What ages of QSPs/direct care employees do you employ? (Check all that apply)

- 18-25 years
- 26-44 years
- 45-64 years
- 65 years or older

4. What gender(s) of QSPs/direct care employees do you employ? (Check all that apply)

- Male
- Female
- Transgender man
- Transgender woman
- Non-binary/gender queer
- Two-spirited
- Prefer not to say
- Gender identity not listed (please specify): _____
- Do not have this information

5. Is English the second language of any of your QSP clients?

- Yes
- No

6. On average, how many public pay clients do you serve per month (i.e., Medicaid, SPED, etc.)?

- 0-9 clients
- 10-19 clients
- 20-29 clients
- 30-39 clients
- 40-49 clients
- 50-59 clients
- 60-69 clients
- 70-79 clients
- 80-89 clients
- 90-99 clients
- 100 or more clients

7. On average, how many private pay or other third party insurance clients do you serve per month (i.e., not funded by the state or Medicaid)?

- 0-9 clients
- 10-19 clients
- 20-29 clients
- 30-39 clients
- 40-49 clients
- 50-59 clients
- 60-69 clients
- 70-79 clients
- 80-89 clients
- 90-99 clients
- 100 or more clients

8. What ages of clients do you serve? (Check all that apply)

- 18-25 years
- 26-44 years
- 45-64 years
- 65 years or older

9. How long has your agency been providing QSP services?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-9 years
- 10-12 years
- 13-15 years
- 16 or more years

10. What services do you provide to clients? (Check all that apply)

- Adult Day Care (S5101)
- Adult Residential Care (D9410)
- Case Management - Assessment (T2023 - TG)
- Case Management - Other (T2023)
- Chore - Labor (includes snow removal) (S5120)
- CHR Assessment (T1023)
- Community Supports Service (S5126)
- Companionship Services (S5135- TF)
- Emergency Response System (ERS) (S5161)
- Environmental Modification (S5165)
- Extended Personal Care (S5115)
- Extended Personal Care - Nurse (S5115- TD)
- Higher Level Case Management - Assessment (T2024)
- Higher Level Case Management - Other (T2022)
- Home Delivered Meals (S5170)

- Homemaker Service (S5130)
- Installation ERS (S5160)
- Non-Medical Transportation - Carrier bus, taxi (T2004)
- Non-Medical Transportation - Local and out of town (T2001)
- Non-Medical Transportation - Escort (T2001-UC)
- Nurse Education Care (S5108)
- One Time Transition Costs (T5999)
- Personal Care Service - SPED (15 min) (T1019)
- Personal Care - Assisted Living - SPED (T2031)
- Residential Habilitation (T2016)
- Respite Care (S5150)
- Respite Care - Institutional (S5151)
- Specialized Equipment (T2028)
- Supervision (S5135)
- Supported Employment (T2019)
- Transition Coordination (T2038)
- Transitional Living (T2021)
- Other _____
- Other _____

11. Does your agency offer any of the following benefits? Please respond to each item in the matrix below.

Benefits	Yes	No
Paid Time Off (PTO), not differentiating between sick and vacation time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid sick leave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your organization's health insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your organization's dental insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your organization's vision insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your organization's life insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your organization's retirement plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Short term disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long term disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What is the average hourly wage of QSPs/direct care employees employed by your agency?

- \$13 per hour or less
- \$14 - \$15 per hour
- \$16 - \$17 per hour
- \$18 - \$19 per hour
- \$20 - \$21 per hour
- \$22 - \$23 per hour
- \$24 - \$25 per hour
- \$26 per hour or more

13. Are there educational opportunities that you are not able to provide for your QSPs/direct care employees that you are seeking out?

- Yes
- No

14. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 13**, please list the educational topics that you would be interested in having access to:

15. What format would make it easier to access educational opportunities for the employees in your agency? (Check all that apply)

- In person
- Website/FAQ page
- Email technical assistance
- Telephone technical assistance
- Live online training sessions
- Static video presentations (e.g., Youtube videos)
- Do not need educational opportunities at this time

16. How often would you like your QSP/direct care staff to participate in educational training sessions? (Check all that apply)

- Yearly
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- On-demand/Pre-recorded

17. What would make it easier for your agency to hire QSPs/direct care employees? (Check all that apply)

- Assistance filling out applications
- Applications and paperwork that are easier and simpler to complete
- Responsive support or assistance with other administrative processes and requirements
- A higher rate for services provided
- More accessible competency training
- More rigorous competency training
- Orientation to being a QSP
- Other (please specify): _____

18. What would make it easier for your agency to retain QSPs/direct care employees? (Check all that apply)

- More streamlined renewal processes
- Responsive support or assistance with other administrative processes and requirements
- A higher rate for services provided
- More accessible competency training
- More rigorous competency training
- Better benefit/compensation options
- Other (please specify): _____

19. What types of training and assistance would help your agency to better manage your QSP business? Examples: Assist with marketing, hiring, training, policy development, record keeping, etc. (Check all that apply)

- Utilization of the Electronic Visit Verification System and Therap Systems
- Education on all HCBS services and authorization requirements
- Staff management including recruitment, hiring, training, and supervision

- Record Keeping
- Taxes
- Marketing of services
- Policy Development
- Quality Program Standards
- Insurance needs
- Technology needs
- Renewal paperwork for your QSP agency
- Managing claim status, payments, and denials
- Other (please specify): _____

20. If additional information or training opportunities on managing your business were provided, how would your agency prefer to access the information/training? (Check all that apply)

- In person
- Website/FAQ page
- Email technical assistance
- Telephone technical assistance
- Live online training sessions
- Static video presentations (e.g., Youtube videos)
- Do not need trainings at this time

21. How often would you like your QSP/direct care staff to participate in training sessions on business acumen? (Check all that apply)

- Yearly
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- On-demand/Pre-recorded

22. What would help make people more aware of your agency's availability of QSP services? (Check all that apply)

- Advertising/Marketing
- Provider database
- Social media

- Referrals
- Other (please specify): _____

23. What is the average length of time QSPs/direct care employees have worked at your agency?

- Less than one year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- 5-6 years
- 7-8 years
- 9-10 years
- More than 10 years

24. In your opinion and experience, why do QSPs/direct care employees leave their role? (Check all that apply)

- Found another job closer to home
- Found another job that pays more
- Found another job that offered better benefits
- Found a job with hours that worked better for their family
- Not recognized for the work they did
- No opportunity for promotion
- Could not get along with co-workers
- Had too little time with and/or poor quality from supervisors
- Training and support was inadequate and/or poor
- Supporting people is a difficult job
- Too physically demanding
- Not able to guarantee the desired number of hours the QSP is seeking
- Other (please specify): _____

25. Have you contacted the QSP Hub for assistance?

- Yes
- No

If you answered 'Yes' to Question 25, please respond to Questions 26 through 28 based on your feelings toward each statement as it relates to your experience with the QSP Hub.

If you answered 'No' to Question 25, skip to Question 29.

26. Overall, I was satisfied with my experience with the QSP Hub.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

27. The QSP Hub met my needs.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

28. I will seek support from the QSP Hub in the future.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

29. Have you accessed or utilized any of the QSP Hub trainings/webinars?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

30. **If you answered 'Yes' to Question 29,** please list the trainings and/or webinars that you accessed:

31. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 29, thinking about the content you accessed (e.g., trainings, webinars, etc.), how helpful did you find it to be?

- Extremely helpful
- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

32. Do you have any additional comments?
