Florida Statewide Quality Assurance Program

FY 2021: Year 4 Quarter 3 Report

January – March 2021

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Agency for Health Care Administration and

Agency for Persons with Disabilities

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# List of Acronyms

ABC – Allocation, Budget, and Contract Control System

AHCA – Agency for Health Care Administration

ANE – Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

APD – Agency for Persons with Disabilities

CDC+ - Consumer Directed Care Plus

CDC+ C – CDC+ Consultant

DD – Developmental Disability

FSQAP – Florida Statewide Quality Assurance Program

FY – Fiscal Year (July – June)

HCBS – Home and Community-Based Services

HSRI – Human Services Research Institute

iBudget Handbook – Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook

iBudget Waiver – Individual Budgeting Waiver

IPS – In Person Survey (NCI)

IDD – Intellectual and Developmental Disability

IRR – Inter-rater Reliability

IT – Information Technology

NCI – National Core Indicators

OBS – Observations

P&P –Policy and Procedure

PCR – Person Centered Review

PCR MLI – Person Centered Review My Life Interview

PDR – Provider Discovery Review

PDR MLI – Provider Discovery Review My Life Interview

Q&T – Qualifications and Training

QA – Quality Assurance

QAR – Quality Assurance Reviewer

QC – Quality Council

QI – Quality Improvement

RM – Regional Manager

RTDR – Real Time Data Report

SSRR – Service Specific Record Review

WSC – Waiver Support Coordinator

# Executive Summary

In July 2020, the Agency for Health Care Administration entered into the fourth year of the current contract with Qlarant, the Florida Statewide Quality Assurance Program (FSQAP). Qlarant provides oversight processes of provider systems and Person Centered Review activities for individuals receiving services through the Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting (iBudget) Services waiver, including the Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) program. Qlarant conducts Provider Discovery Reviews (PDR) and Person Centered Reviews (PCR) to provide information about providers, individuals receiving services, and the quality of service delivery systems.

Quarterly meetings were conducted with each APD region.[[1]](#footnote-2) Due to the COVID-19 virus, meetings were conducted via conference calls instead of face-to-face at the regional office. These were facilitated by Qlarant Regional Managers as venues used to review data, explore trends, and discuss other relevant regional issues and best practices. Qlarant facilitates three Quality Council meetings annually, which have been conducted via Webinar since March 2020. The first meeting this contract year was held on October 15 and the second meeting was held this quarter on March 25. Given the Webinar format, as opposed to in-person meetings in Tallahassee or Orlando, there were over 100 attendees from across the state.

Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, on March 16, 2020 ACHA suspended all onsite review activity. During the remainder of March, with direction from AHCA and APD, Qlarant developed modified procedures to address each component of both PDRs and PCRs including how records would be reviewed (desk reviews) and phone interview techniques (remote interviews via phone or video). These new processes, using the same tools, were implemented April 1, 2020, and are in use as of the end of the 3rd quarter this contract year. Because these processes are very different, comparisons to data collected through pre-pandemic onsite processes should be made with caution, and to determine differences that may have occurred due to the pandemic and revised processes.

Data for analysis in this report are based on 1,094 PCRs, 1,627 PDRs and 141 CDC+ Representative reviews. Results are generally good - indicating providers are in compliance with requirements and individuals appear to be satisfied with the services they receive. Findings are preliminary and include the following:

* Average scores on all review components (interviews and record reviews) were approximately 90 percent or higher.
* While the average My Life Interview score for the PCR was relatively high, scores for outcomes ranged from 19 percent to 100 percent. Scores for supports ranged from 25 percent to 100 percent.
* For people receiving services through either the Waiver or through CDC+, they were least likely to have Safety Life Area outcomes present. Supports for Safety were close to 20 points higher than outcomes for the Waiver and 25 point higher for CDC+.
* Small service providers and solo WSCs on average score lower than larger providers or agency WSCs.
* Satisfaction levels with community involvement were lower than for any other area. This and several other areas may be reflecting the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

These and other findings are discussed in this report. Some recommendations are offered to help improve system performance.

# Introduction

In July 2020, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) entered into the fourth year of the current contract with Qlarant to provide quality assurance discovery activities for the Developmental Disabilities Individualized Budgeting Services (iBudget) Waiver and the Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) program. Through this Florida Statewide Quality Assurance Program (FSQAP), administered by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Qlarant, AHCA and APD have designed a Quality Management Strategy based on the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Quality Framework Model developed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Three quality management functions are identified by CMS: discovery, remediation, and improvement.

Qlarant’s purpose is within the discovery framework. The information from the review processes is used by AHCA and APD to help guide policies, programs, or other necessary actions to effectively remediate issues or problems uncovered through the discovery process. Data from the quarterly and annual reports are examined during the Regional Quarterly Meetings and Quality Council meetings to help target local and statewide remediation activity.

Qlarant’s discovery process comprises two major components: Person Centered Reviews (PCR) and Provider Discovery Reviews (PDR). Both ensure the person receiving services has a voice in evaluating performance and outcomes and both utilize comprehensive methods to evaluate the quality of the services received. The primary purpose of the PCR is to determine the quality of the person’s life, and the quality of the person’s service delivery system from the perspective of the person receiving services. The focus of the PDR is to review provider compliance with requirements and standards specified in the Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook (iBudget Handbook), and to determine how well services are supporting individuals served.

The PCR includes an interview with the person, including people receiving services through the Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) program, review of the Support Coordinator’s record for the person, and record reviews completed for the CDC+ Consultant and Representative. The PDR includes an Administrative Record Review of organizational Policies and Procedures (agencies only) and staff Qualifications and Training; Service Specific Record Reviews; and interviews with individuals receiving services. Observations, completed for licensed residential homes (LRH) and day program facilities, have been temporarily ceased due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Person Centered Review

Provider Discovery Review

For the CDC+ program, consultants and representatives are reviewed on the standards set forth by APD and AHCA. Although CDC+ is funded through the iBudget Waiver, the programs are fundamentally different in several aspects and therefore results are analyzed separately. In this report, references are made to Waiver and CDC+ to make the distinction between the two groups.

Beginning in April 2020, review processes were modified to allow for COVID-19 precautions. All interviews are now completed remotely by phone or, if possible, by video. Documentation reviews are completed via a desk review.

This is the 3rd Quarter Report of the FY 2021 contract year. The report is divided into three sections.

* Section I: Significant Contract Activity during the 3rd Quarter (January – March 2021)
* Section II: Data from Review Activities throughout the contract year, including comparative analysis as possible
* Section III: Discussion and Recommendations

Most comparisons to data from years prior to FY 2019 are not possible or appropriate due to changes in tools and indicators/standards. Discussion of results and evidence-based recommendations are offered.

# Section I: Significant Contract Activity

## Quality Assurance Activities (January – March 2021)

### Status Meetings

Status meetings are held to provide an opportunity for Qlarant, AHCA, and APD representatives to discuss contract activities and other relevant issues as necessary. Revisions to processes and tools may be discussed as well as policy updates from AHCA or APD that may impact the FSQAP. A meeting was held January 21, 2021. The status meeting in February was canceled due to scheduling difficulties and the meeting in March was canceled because stakeholders were together for the Quality Council.

### Reliability

Qlarant Quality Assurance Reviewers (QAR) and Regional Managers undergo rigorous reliability testing each year, including formal and informal processes. QARs are periodically shadowed by managers to ensure proper procedures and protocols are followed throughout the review processes.

**File reliability** sessions are administered every other month. These include standards reviewed from Service Specific Record Reviews as well as related questions from the iBudget Handbook and the FSQAP Operational Policies and Procedure Manual. After the QA Manager obtains actual file documents from a provider, the management team identifies the standards to be tested and creates the scoring key. The test is completed by each QAR, in Qlarant’s online learning management system, and scored automatically. One file reliability has been completed so far for the second half of the contract year. We received permission from AHCA to suspend the remaining two file reliabilities due to the workload demands of the remote NCI surveys. All reviewers passed the reliability that was completed.

**Field reliability** has always been conducted onsite with QARs and used to determine if protocols and procedures are followed correctly, prior to and during the review, and if responses on the review processes match responses of the manager conducting the Field Reliability. The manager silently observes all information gathering and compares answers on all standards at the conclusion of the review. However, for the PCR and remote interviews a desk review process was developed so the manager is able to participate in the phone or video process to complete reliability testing. PCR and PDR field reliability was completed with 10 reviewers and all passed.

### Internal Annual Training/Conference

Every year the Florida team comes together for extensive training and brainstorming activities. Discussion is underway to determine if the face-to-face conference will be possible during FY 2022.

## Tool and Process Revisions

No tool changes were made this quarter but there were some updates completed to the CDC+/WSC desk review checklists.

Qlarant has attended weekly meetings with State APD and AHCA representatives to discuss WSC tool changes related to updates due to Senate Bill-82, moving all Support Coordinators to agencies. The revised tool will be implemented July 2021.

All tools are posted here: <https://florida.qlarant.com/Public2/resourceCenter/providers/discoveryReviewTools/index.html>

## Regional Quarterly Meetings

The Qlarant Regional Manager facilitates meetings in each APD Region with available Qlarant QARs in the Region, and other APD Regional personnel, including the Regional Operations Manager (ROM) as possible. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss and interpret data from the Qlarant reviews to help guide APD toward appropriate remediation activities, and to update all entities on current activities in the Region. Representatives from AHCA and APD State office may attend the meetings via phone in each Region. Remote meetings were held in all the regions during the 3rd Quarter, using the webinar format.[[2]](#footnote-3)

## Quality Council (QC)

A Quality Council (QC) meeting for FY 2021 was held on March 25, 2021, via webinar. Using the webinar format has made the meeting accessible to many more stakeholders. There was an average of approximately 100 participants for each session. Agenda items included the following:

* AHCA updates – AndraLica McCorvey, Contract Manager
* APD Updates including
  + Greeting and Staff Introductions – Ed Debardeleben, Chief Program  
    Development, Compliance & Policy
  + APD iConnects - Shelia Mott, Organizational Change Management and Training  
    Manager
  + Senate Bill 82 - Lorena Fulcher, Bureau Chief of Consumer Supports
  + COVID 19 - Karen Hagan, Emergency Coordination Officer
* Qlarant Data Presentation – Kathrine Glasgow PhD, Senior Data Analyst
* Critical Incident Reporting and Management – Meghan Torres, Program Administrator for Quality Improvement and Penny Bos, Management Consultant, APD
* NCI Data Presentation – Stephanie Girodano, Policy Analyst and Val Bradley, President Emerita, HSRI

See the Qlarant website for complete QC details, minutes, and agendas (<https://florida.qlarant.com/Public2/qualityCouncil/index.html>).

## Provider Feedback Survey

After each PDR, providers are offered an opportunity to provide feedback on the review process and professionalism of QARs. Surveys can be completed online on the FSQAP website, or downloaded and mailed or faxed to the Qlarant office. Feedback findings for surveys entered into the database between July 2020 and March 2021 are presented in Table 1. A total of 184 surveys were entered into the database. On average, 97.8 percent of responses were positive (2,311/2,362). Any survey which included a request for a manager’s call back was also recorded in the Customer Service Log.

| Table 1. Results from Provider Feedback Surveys | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Surveys Received Between July 2020 – March 2021 (N=184) | | | |
| Question | # Yes | # No | NA/  Blank |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer explain the review process? | 182 | 2 | 0 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer share with you the names of the potential people chosen to participate in the review? | 180 | 3 | 1 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer explain the person's participation in the interview is voluntary? | 168 | 8 | 8 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer refer you to the Qlarant website that includes the tools and procedures? | 179 | 4 | 1 |
| Were the tools accessible on the Qlarant website? | 178 | 1 | 5 |
| Did you find the tools helpful when preparing for the review? | 170 | 6 | 8 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer answer your questions in preparation for the review? | 177 | 2 | 5 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer arrive on time? | 67 | 0 | 117 |
| If not, were you notified the Quality Assurance Reviewer would be late? (n=0) |  |  |  |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer give you enough time to find the information requested? | 176 | 3 | 5 |
| Do you feel the Quality Assurance Reviewer was prepared for the review? | 173 | 5 | 6 |
| Did the review process go as explained by the Quality Assurance Reviewer? | 177 | 5 | 2 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer answer the questions you had during the review? | 169 | 2 | 13 |
| If applicable, did the Quality Assurance Reviewer explain why a standard was Not Met? | 113 | 5 | 66 |
| If an alert was identified, did the Quality Assurance Reviewer inform you of the follow up process? | 57 | 2 | 125 |
| Did the Quality Assurance Reviewer provide you with the preliminary findings of your review before leaving? | 145 | 3 | 36 |
| **Total Responses** | **2,311** | **51** | **398** |

## Summary of Customer Service Calls

During the third quarter of the year, January - March 2021, 235 calls were recorded in the Customer Service Log, with an average response time within one day for each call.[[3]](#footnote-4)

## Data Availability

* Several reports are available at any time: Current Schedule Report, Results by Service and Standard, and Review Activity Report. These are accessed through the private section (required member login) of the FSQAP website, for people approved to view them.
* A report of provider level billing information is sent to ACHA monthly.

## Staff Updates

No changes this quarter.

# Section II: Data from Review Activities

| Table 2: Person Centered Review Activity | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | |
|  | Number  of PCRs | | Number of Declines | |
| Region | Waiver | CDC+ | Waiver | CDC+ |
| **Northwest** | 67 | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| **Northeast** | 165 | 25 | 8 | 4 |
| **Central** | 165 | 27 | 11 | 2 |
| **Suncoast** | 197 | 12 | 5 | 0 |
| **Southeast** | 237 | 23 | 13 | 0 |
| **Southern** | 153 | 14 | 2 | 0 |
| **Total** | **984** | **110** | **41** | **6** |

## Person Centered Reviews (PCR)[[4]](#footnote-5)

The PCR includes an interview with the person and a review of the person’s record maintained by the Support Coordinator. Since April 2020, record reviews have been completed remotely and interviews conducted telephonically (some have included a video component); therefore, results in this report - from the first three quarters of FY 2021 - are comparable to the 4th Quarter of FY 2020. However, comparisons to data before April 2020 should be made with caution and completed to explore differences in results that may be due to the different procedures.

Formal interviews with the Support Coordinator are no longer conducted as part of the PCR; however, informal interviews with the Support Coordinator and CDC + Consultant occur, as possible, to ensure a holistic approach to the process is used. The Support Coordinator and CDC+ Consultant records are reviewed for individuals receiving a PCR. If the person receives services through CDC+, a record review is also completed for the CDC+ Representative.

The CDC+ program provides additional flexibility and opportunities not offered to other people on the iBudget Waiver, such as the ability to directly hire and fire providers, use of non-waiver providers who are often family members, and the ability to negotiate provider rates. A non-paid representative helps with the financial and business aspect of the program and a CDC+ Consultant acts as a service coordinator. CDC+ Consultants must also be certified as a Waiver Support Coordinator (WSC). Due to the differences, results for CDC+ are analyzed separately. Table 2 shows the number of people reviewed who received services through CDC+ (110), the number who received services through the Waiver (984), and the total number of individuals who declined or were otherwise unable to participate (47).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 3. Person Centered Review Decline Reasons | | | |
| July - December 2020 | | | |
| Decline Reason | Waiver | CDC+ | Total |
| Refused | 28 | 3 | 31 |
| Review Next Year | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| No Longer Receiving Services | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Moved Out of State | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Deceased | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| **Total** | **41** | **6** | **47** |

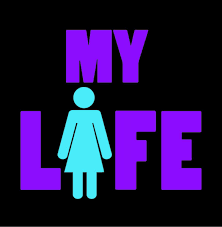
Individuals are free to decline to be interviewed at any time during the process. A person who declines, or may be otherwise unable to participate, is replaced by another person from the oversample to ensure an adequate and representative sample is used for analysis. The period for declines is based upon the projected period for the review. The replacement rate for the Waiver was approximately 4 percent. This decline rate is much lower than in previous years, which averaged around 15 percent, perhaps due to the modified remote processes as opposed to onsite and face-to-face interviews. The rate was slightly higher than the 4th quarter in FY 2020, of 1.7 percent. This may indicate perhaps phone interviews may be less intrusive or easier to schedule than in-person interviews. The CDC+ replacement rate during the first three quarters was 5.2 percent.

Reasons given for the declines are shown in Table 3. When an individual is unable to participate, the QAR calls the person from the sample to verify the decision. This affords the person an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification about the PCR process and the person’s potential role in it. This also gives individuals an opportunity to change their minds about participating. Most of the declines, 31 of 47 (66%), were people who refused to participate.

### Demographics

The following series of figures shows the distribution of the PCR sample across Residential Setting, Age Group and Primary Disability.[[5]](#footnote-6) Residents of a licensed residential home are not eligible for CDC+; therefore, most of the people interviewed lived in a family home compared to about half of people using the Waiver. Other demographic differences between the two groups are relatively small.

### PCR My Life Interview (MLI)

Individuals who participate in a PCR receive an interview that includes the PCR My Life Interview and may include the National Core Indicators (NCI) In-Person Survey (IPS). Since March 2020, interviews have been conducted remotely. The MLI was implemented July 1, 2018. Based on QAR feedback, two standards were revised January 1, 2019. The MLI is organized around six Life Areas important to a person, and each incorporates measures of choice, respect, rights and community integration:

1. My Service Life – expectations for all of the services a person is receiving from providers and the involvement of the person in development and design of the service delivery system
2. My Home Life – expectations for services a person is receiving in the home
3. My Work and Daily Life – expectations for the person pertaining to work and day activities Services in this domain include the Life Skills Development services (Companion, Supported Employment and Day Programs) and Personal Supports depending on how it is utilized
4. My Social Life – expectations for the person regarding interaction with and integration in the community
5. My Health – includes measures of supports related to health access, satisfaction and education
6. My Safety – includes measures of safety in various settings, including education and knowledge about abuse, neglect, and exploitation

Each MLI question is scored twice: once to indicate if the outcome is present in the person’s life and once if the person is supported to meet the outcome. When a question is marked “Not Present” as either an outcome or a support, one or more reasons are selected to explain why. The MLI also includes a series of questions regarding the level of satisfaction people have with various aspects of their lives including services, day activities, residence, health, and involvement in the community. Finally, the MLI is used to assess stability, i.e., how many times over the previous 12 months had the person experienced a change in services, service providers, Support Coordinators, jobs, or place of residence.

#### Data Limitations

Data in this report were collected remotely. Comparisons to data collected previous to April 2020 should be made with caution, due to the change in processes to account for the COVID-19 pandemic. Because this report represents only a portion of the total number of providers to be reviewed and individuals to be interviewed, results are preliminary. In addition, results in some categories, particularly for CDC+, are based on relatively small numbers; therefore, comparisons across categories or between Waiver and CDC+ should also be made with caution.

#### PCR MLI Average Scores

The highest, lowest and average MLI scores are presented in Figure 4 for data collected between July 2020 and March 2021, for outcomes and supports. The first two lines from the left represent scores for the Waiver and the two lines on the right represent scores for CDC+. Results to date indicate the lowest scores were for the Waiver and that while average rates were relatively high, outcomes and supports for some individuals were quite low. CDC+ supports were relatively high across all 110 PCRs completed.

#### PCR My Life Interview Scores by Region

Average scores for outcomes and supports are presented by region in Table 4. The number of reviews completed in each region, particularly for CDC+, is relatively small and comparisons across regions should be made with caution. Outcomes were lower than supports in each region. Differences were smaller in the north (Northeast and Northwest) than in other parts of the state.

| Table 4. My Life Interview Results (PCR) by Region | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | | |
|  | Waiver | | | CDC+ | | |
| Region | # of PCRs | Outcomes | Supports | # of PCRs | Outcomes | Supports |
| **Northwest** | 67 | 92.2% | 97.6% | 9 | 97.0% | 99.5% |
| **Northeast** | 165 | 95.8% | 98.9% | 25 | 97.7% | 99.8% |
| **Central** | 165 | 85.6% | 94.0% | 27 | 87.1% | 97.3% |
| **Suncoast** | 197 | 86.9% | 97.0% | 12 | 86.1% | 98.6% |
| **Southeast** | 237 | 86.8% | 99.4% | 23 | 89.6% | 100.0% |
| **Southern** | 153 | 86.4% | 97.9% | 14 | 90.2% | 100.0% |
| **State** | **984** | **88.4%** | **97.6%** | **110** | **91.0%** | **99.1%** |

#### **PCR My Life Interview by Life Area**

The average MLI score for each Life Area is presented in Figure 5a for the Waiver and Figure 5b for CDC+, by outcomes and supports. Findings to date indicate individuals receiving services were supported across all life areas (each above 96%), and were least likely to meet outcomes related to safety for both the Waiver and CDC+. People receiving services through the Waiver were also much less likely to have outcomes present, when compared to supports, in the areas of Safety and Social Life.

Analysis of the 26 MLI indicators provides some insight into more specific data and reasons for My Life Area results. For each waiver type all 26 indicators measuring support showed a score of approximately 95 percent or higher. However, several outcomes reflected a score of less than 90 percent for individuals receiving services through the Waiver or CDC+, shown in Table 5. People receiving services through the system often indicated they did not understand their medication or what abuse, neglect or exploitation mean.

For Waiver participants, the proportion who feel they are active and contributing members of the community has dropped from 95.6 percent during the first three quarters of FY20 (pre-pandemic restrictions) to 79.9 percent during FY21. The proportion who feel they are part of and participate in their communities decreased from 95.7 percent to 71.5 percent in the same period. While the rates have decreased, it is encouraging these have remained over 70 percent and may indicate the innovative methods used by providers to help maintain community connections during the pandemic.

| Table 5. Lowest Scoring (<90%) Outcomes (July 2020 – March 2021) | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Waiver** | | **CDC+** | |
| Outcome | # Reviewed | % Present | # Reviewed | % Present |
| I understand my medications. | 822 | 59.5% | 85 | 71.8% |
| I understand what abuse, neglect and exploitation (ANE) mean. | 903 | 66.0% | 99 | 63.6% |
| I am part of and participate in my community. | 944 | 71.5% | 108 | 77.8% |
| I know what to do if ANE occurs. | 906 | 74.7% | 98 | 70.4% |
| I am an active and contributing member of my community. | 894 | 79.9% | 103 | 83.5% |
| I have meaningful friendships and relationships. | 948 | 84.8% | 106 | 89.6% |
| My safety needs are addressed. | 958 | 83.8% | 105 | 77.1% |
| I know and exercise my rights | 932 | 86.8% | 104 | 89.4% |

For the people who did not understand the medications they were taking, most did not know:

* The side effects of the medications (77.0%)
* What they were taking (66.1%)
* Why the medications were prescribed (56.6%).

Among the people who did not understand ANE:

* Most did not understand exploitation (77.0%) or neglect (67.1%)
* Over half of the 343 people did not understand the different types of abuse (55.40%), such as differences among physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse

Most people who did not know what to do if ANE occurs indicated they do not know what the Abuse Hotline is (62.4%) or how to find it (58.9%).

#### PCR MLI Results by Residential Status, Disability and Age

PCR MLI results are shown by residential setting, primary disability, and age group in Figures 6 – 8. Results for CDC+ are shown; however, it is important to note the low number of responses within all the categories. All demographic graphics show data collected between July 2020 and March 2021. There is little variation across supports; however, the following disparities are present for outcomes measured to date:

* With the exception of the 20 people living in “other” settings, residents of independent or supported living settings were most likely to have outcomes present; however, only nine individuals receiving services through CDC+ lived outside a family home.
* Residents of licensed residential homes were least likely to have outcomes present.
* Individuals who have Autism Spectrum Disorder were somewhat less likely to have outcomes present than individuals with other types of disabilities. This difference was more pronounced for the 20 people with Autism receiving services through CDC+.
* Outcomes for people receiving Waiver services appear to trend up with age.

#### PCR My Life Interview: Satisfaction

During the PCR, individuals are asked if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with a series of statements expressing satisfaction with various aspects of their lives, including services, service providers, Support Coordinators, residence, and involvement in the community. Interviews completed between July 2020 and March 2021 (Figure 9) show the majority of individuals receiving services reported agreement (strongly agree or agree) in each area. The lowest scoring area was satisfaction with how much involvement there is in the community. Scores of 84.8 percent (Waiver) and 89.4 percent (CDC+) are down from 98.9 percent (Waiver) and 100 percent (CDC+) shown during the pre-pandemic period (July 2019 – March 2020).

The following table shows each satisfaction indicator, the number reviewed and the percent scored as ‘Very Satisfied’. The comparison is provided between the pre-pandemic (July 2019 – March 2020 (Y3Q1-3)) and mid-pandemic data (July 2020 – March 2021 (Y4Q1-3)). With two minor exceptions for CDC+, each satisfaction indicator showed a decrease in the proportion of people receiving services who indicated they were very satisfied. In other words, the degree of satisfaction has declined during the pandemic. It is important to remember the procedures for collecting the data also changed; therefore, it is not possible to determine exactly what may be causing the reduced satisfaction.

The greatest differences, for both Waiver and CDC+, were satisfaction with involvement in the community, a decrease of 17.2 and 15.5 points respectively. This is a reasonable finding given the COVID pandemic, but may also indicate a need to continue to find innovative and satisfactory alternatives for people to access communities and friends. In addition, during both periods community participation showed the lowest proportions of Very Satisfied. Other areas people were least likely to be very satisfied were regarding health, having a meaningful day activity and with service providers who support them in their day activities.

| Table 6. Indicators of Satisfaction: Number and Percent Present  Difference Between Pre and Mid-Pandemic Responses of Strongly Agree | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Satisfaction Indicator | Waiver | | | | | CDC+ | | | | |
| Y3Q1-3 | | Y4Q1-3 | | Difference | Y3Q1-3 | | Y4Q1-3 | | Difference |
| # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| I am satisfied with approved services. | 930 | 42.4% | 941 | 38.3% | -4.1% | 108 | 52.8% | 104 | 53.8% | 1.1% |
| I am satisfied with my service providers. | 915 | 44.0% | 920 | 39.9%` | -4.2% | 104 | 57.7% | 99 | 54.5% | -3.1% |
| I am satisfied with Waiver Support Coordinator (WSC). | 946 | 48.8% | 959 | 43.0% | -5.9% | 108 | 56.5% | 106 | 53.8% | -2.7% |
| I am satisfied with services received in my home. | 811 | 41.7% | 830 | 39.3% | -2.4% | 102 | 49.0% | 103 | 49.5% | 0.5% |
| I am happy with where I live. | 941 | 44.7% | 927 | 40.1% | -4.6% | 104 | 53.8% | 107 | 50.5% | -3.4% |
| I am satisfied with service providers who support me in my desired day activity. | 835 | 39.8% | 826 | 35.7% | -4.0% | 91 | 47.3% | 99 | 44.4% | -2.8% |
| My day activity is meaningful to me. | 850 | 39.8% | 842 | 34.8% | -5.0% | 91 | 45.1% | 98 | 41.8% | -3.2% |
| I am happy with how much involvement I have in my community. | 923 | 33.2% | 929 | 15.9% | -17.2% | 106 | 43.4% | 104 | 27.9% | -15.5% |
| I am in good health. | 956 | 30.4% | 964 | 26.1% | -4.3% | 108 | 33.3% | 108 | 35.2% | 1.9% |

#### PCR My Life Interview: Stability

During the PCR, MLI questions are used to measure stability in the person’s life. Individuals are asked how often, over the course of a year, they experienced changes in their WSC or WSC agency, place of employment, work/day activity, residence, services, or service providers in their home. Table 7 shows the percent of individuals who experienced one or more of these changes during the first three quarters of the current year (July 2020 – March 2021 (Y4Q1-3)). The same data are shown for the first three quarters in the previous year, pre-pandemic (July 2019 – March 2020 (Y3Q1-3)).

For the Waiver, people were most likely to experience a change in work/day activity or home service providers. Compared to the pre-pandemic data, they were less likely to have experienced a change in service providers in the home, but more likely to have experienced a change in employment. The change in employment increase appears to be related to being dismissed from the job. The proportion of people who indicated dismissal increased from 15.8 percent to 36.1 percent.

For CDC+, people were most likely to experience a change in their CDC+ Consultant, showing an increase of about three percentage points over the pre-pandemic period. They were also much more likely to have moved during the pandemic period. This could be because people have lost the support or employment needed to live independently and therefore need to move back to the family home. The proportion of people using CDC+ who lived independently decreased from 11.0 percent to 8.2 percent from the pre to mid-pandemic period and the transition was always initiated by the person or the person’s natural supports.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 7. PCR My Life Interview: Stability (Percent with 1 or more changes) | | | | | | | | |
|  | Waiver | | | | CDC+ | | | |
|  | **Y3Q1-3 (969)** | | **Y4Q1-3 (984)** | | **Y3Q1-3 (110)** | | **Y4Q1-3 (110)** | |
| Within the past 12 months, | **Applicable Responses** | **% w/ 1+ change** | **Applicable Responses** | **% w/ 1+ change** | **Applicable Responses** | **% w/ 1+ change** | **Applicable Responses** | **% w/ 1+ change** |
| I experienced changes in my WSC agency. | 758 | 2.5% | 725 | 2.6% | 96 | 1.0% | 89 | 3.4% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I experienced changes in my WSC. | 975 | 10.4% | 923 | 9.7% | 110 | 8.2% | 109 | 11.9% |
| I have changed employment. | 390 | 4.9% | 414 | 8.7% | 50 | 2.0% | 39 | 0.0% |
| I have experienced changes to my work/day activity service providers. | 834 | 16.3% | 801 | 16.2% | 82 | 6.1% | 81 | 4.9% |
| I have moved. | 969 | 11.1% | 944 | 9.4% | 108 | 3.7% | 103 | 8.7% |
| Service providers in my home have changed. | 866 | 19.1% | 876 | 15.1% | 107 | 15.9% | 106 | 1.9% |
| The services I receive have changed. | 964 | 10.5% | 953 | 10.5% | 110 | 10.0% | 108 | 1.9% |

There are multiple reasons why a change in any of the above situations might occur, including a move by the person from where the provider offers the service or the provider/WSC may no longer be providing services. However, for individuals who had experienced at least one change in any of the areas in Table 7, almost one quarter of them (23%) indicated paid supports and not the person or the person’s natural supports initiated the change.

### PCR Waiver Support Coordinator and CDC+ Consultant Record Reviews[[6]](#footnote-7)

Records maintained by the WSC and CDC+ Consultant are reviewed specific to the person who was interviewed during the PCR. Results by region are in Table 8, by standard for WSCs in Table 9 and for CDC+ Consultants in Table 10. Results by standard are shown for Y4Q1-3 (July 2020 – March 2021) and for the pre-pandemic period (July 2019 – March 2020). Findings indicate the following:

* Both WSCs and Consultants scored relatively high on the record reviews to date, with little variation across regions.
* Current results of the record reviews are similar to the pre-pandemic period (July 2019 – March 2020), with little variation statewide or regionally.
* Support Coordinators scored approximately 83 percent or higher on each indicator.
* The two lowest scoring areas for WSCs indicate:
  + The Support Plan is often missing a Safety Plan (84.6%)
  + Progress Notes do not always demonstrate if the Pre-Support Plan planning activities occurred (83.2%).
* Comparing the different periods, the following two indicators showed a decrease of over five percentage points (highlighted in the table):
  + The level of care is completed using the correct instrument/form (down 5.4 points)
  + The Support Plan includes a Safety Plan (down 15.4 points; however, sample sizes relatively low)
* One indicator, documenting ongoing efforts to assist the person to define abuse, neglect, and exploitation including how the person would report any incidents, has shown improvement since Year 3 (up 5.3 points).
* To date, all CDC+ indicator scores were relatively high and similar to the pre-pandemic period. The lowest scoring standard indicates Progress Notes do not always demonstrate if the Pre-Support Plan planning activities occurred (87.3%).

| Table 8. WSC and CDC+ Consultant Record Review Results by APD Region | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | | | |
|  | WSC | | | CDC+ C | | | |
| Region | #  Records | # Indicators | %  Met | | #  Records | #  Indicators | %  Met |
| Northwest | 68 | 1,769 | 96.6% | | 9 | 288 | 98.3% |
| Northeast | 164 | 4,243 | 95.8% | | 25 | 799 | 99.1% |
| Central | 165 | 4,237 | 93.6% | | 27 | 862 | 98.0% |
| Suncoast | 197 | 5,181 | 92.3% | | 12 | 374 | 95.7% |
| Southeast | 237 | 6,120 | 96.6% | | 23 | 724 | 96.4% |
| Southern | 153 | 3,837 | 97.8% | | 14 | 434 | 99.1% |
| State | **984** | **25,387** | **95.2%** | | **110** | **3,481** | **97.8%** |

| Table 9. WSC Record Review Results by Standard | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pre-pandemic  (Y3Q1-3) | | Mid-pandemic  (Y4Q1-3) | |
| Indicator | Number | % Met | Number | % Met |
| For individuals in supported living arrangements Progress Notes demonstrate required activities are covered during each quarterly home visit. | 166 | 92.2% | 125 | 88.0% |
| For persons living in Supported Living Arrangements the Support Plan clearly delineates the goals, roles, and responsibilities of each service provider. | 156 | 97.4% | 123 | 100% |
| Level of care is completed accurately using the correct instrument/form. | 962 | 92.3% | 952 | 86.9% |
| Level of care is reevaluated at least every 365 days and contains all required components for billing. | 962 | 96.2% | 984 | 96.2% |
| Level of care is reevaluated at least every 365 days and contains all required components for compliance. | 961 | 95.5% | 980 | 96.7% |
| Person receiving services is given a choice of waiver services or institutional care at least annually. | 964 | 96.4% | 984 | 96.5% |
| Support Plan includes a current Safety Plan. | 27 | 100.0% | 26 | 84.6% |
| Support Plan includes supports and services consistent with assessed needs. | 964 | 99.7% | 983 | 98.9% |
| Support Plan reflects support and services necessary to address assessed risks. | 940 | 99.7% | 933 | 98.5% |
| Support Plan reflects the personal goals/outcomes of the person. | 964 | 99.5% | 984 | 99.5% |
| The current Annual Report is in the record. | 956 | 91.8% | 973 | 88.2% |
| The current Support Plan includes natural, generic, community and paid supports for the person. | 964 | 98.1% | 984 | 99.3% |
| The Support Coordination Progress Notes demonstrate pre-Support Plan planning activities were conducted. | 959 | 82.4% | 977 | 83.2% |
| The Support Coordination Progress Notes demonstrate required monthly contact/activities were completed and are in the record. | 963 | 95.3% | 977 | 94.8% |
| The Support Coordinator bills for services after services are rendered. | 960 | 96.5% | 979 | 96.6% |
| The Support Coordinator documents efforts to ensure services are delivered in accordance with the service plan, including type, scope, amount, duration, and frequency specified in the Cost Plan. | 937 | 90.1% | 935 | 89.6% |
| The Support Coordinator documents efforts to support the person to make informed decisions when choosing among waiver service providers on an ongoing basis. | 962 | 98.2% | 980 | 97.1% |
| The Support Coordinator documents efforts to support the person to make informed decisions when choosing waiver services & supports on an ongoing basis. | 960 | 98.5% | 976 | 97.2% |
| The Support Coordinator documents information about the person’s history regarding abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation on an ongoing basis to address identified needs. | 695 | 92.2% | 631 | 94.3% |
| The Support Coordinator documents ongoing efforts to assist the person to define abuse, neglect, and exploitation including how the person would report any incidents. | 964 | 81.8% | 980 | 87.1% |
| The Support Coordinator documents ongoing efforts to assist the person/legal representative to know about rights. | 963 | 92.7% | 980 | 94.6% |
| The Support Coordinator documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s behavioral/emotional health needs are addressed. | 686 | 97.1% | 719 | 97.5% |
| The Support Coordinator documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s health and health care needs are addressed. | 964 | 96.4% | 981 | 98.5% |
| The Support Coordinator documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s safety needs are addressed. | 963 | 97.8% | 982 | 98.5% |
| The Support Coordinator is in compliance with billing procedures and the Medicaid Waiver Services Agreement. | 962 | 99.9% | 980 | 99.7% |
| The Support Plan is updated within 12 months of the person’s last Support Plan. | 952 | 99.5% | 967 | 98.8% |
| The Support Plan is updated/revised when warranted by changes in the needs of the person. | 397 | 97.7% | 451 | 93.8% |
| WSC documentation demonstrates a copy of the Support Plan is provided to all service providers within 30 calendar days of the Support Plan effective date. | 937 | 93.8% | 925 | 94.7% |
| WSC documentation demonstrates current, accurate, and approved Service Authorizations are issued to service provider(s). | 953 | 98.0% | 954 | 97.2% |
| WSC documents a copy of the Support Plan is provided to the person or legal representative within 10 days of the Support Plan effective date. | 964 | 97.7% | 982 | 97.1% |
| **Average WSC Record Review Score** | **25,127** | **95.3%** | **25,387** | **95.2%** |

| Table 10. CDC+ Consultant Record Review Results by Standard | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pre-pandemic  (Y3Q1-3) | | Mid-pandemic (Y4Q1-3) | |
| Indicator | Number | % Met | Number | % Met |
| All applicable completed/signed Purchasing Plans are in the record. | 109 | 97.2% | 110 | 99.1% |
| All applicable completed/signed Quick Updates are in the Record. | 51 | 100% | 36 | 100% |
| Completed/signed CDC+ Consent Form is in the record. | 109 | 99.1% | 109 | 99.1% |
| Completed/signed Corrective Action Plan is in the record. | 2 | 50.0% | 5 | 100% |
| Completed/signed Participant-Consultant Agreement is in the record. | 109 | 99.1% | 110 | 98.2% |
| Completed/signed Participant-Representative Agreement is in the record. | 109 | 99.1% | 110 | 99.1% |
| Consultant documentation demonstrates a copy of the Support Plan is provided to the CDC+ Representative within 30 calendar days of the Support Plan effective date. | 106 | 96.2% | 109 | 97.2% |
| Consultant documents a copy of the Support Plan is provided to the person or the legal representative, within 10 days of the Support Plan effective date. | 109 | 98.2% | 110 | 96.4% |
| Consultant has taken action to correct any overspending by the Participant. | 7 | 100% | 6 | 100% |
| Consultant provides technical assistance to Participant as necessary to meet Participant's and Representative's needs. | 99 | 100% | 100 | 100% |
| If applicable, an approved Corrective Action Plan is being followed. | 2 | 100% | 6 | 100% |
| If applicable, Consultant initiates Corrective Action. | 3 | 100% | 4 | 100% |
| Level of care is completed accurately using the correct instrument/form. | 109 | 99.1% | 104 | 95.2% |
| Level of care is reevaluated at least every 365 days and contains all required components for billing. | 108 | 100% | 110 | 98.2% |
| Level of care is reevaluated at least every 365 days and contains all required components for compliance. | 108 | 100% | 110 | 97.3% |
| Participant's Information Update form is completed and submitted to Regional/Area CDC+ liaison as needed. | 57 | 96.5% | 51 | 98.0% |
| Person receiving services is given a choice of waiver services or institutional care at least annually. | 108 | 100% | 110 | 97.3% |
| Progress Notes reflecting required monthly contact/activities are filed in the Participant's record prior to billing each month. | 109 | 99.1% | 110 | 100.0% |
| Services are delivered in accordance with the Cost Plan. | 109 | 100% | 110 | 99.1% |
| Support Plan includes a current Safety Plan. | 2 | 100% | 1 | 100% |
| Support Plan includes supports and services consistent with assessed needs. | 109 | 100% | 110 | 100% |
| Support Plan reflects supports and services necessary to address assessed risks. | 108 | 99.1% | 108 | 100% |
| Support Plan reflects the personal goals of the person. | 109 | 100% | 110 | 100% |
| The Consultant bills for services after services are rendered. | 109 | 99.1% | 110 | 99.1% |
| The Consultant documents information about the person's history regarding abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation on an ongoing basis to address identified needs. | 85 | 97.6% | 79 | 100% |
| The Consultant documents ongoing efforts to assist the person to define abuse, neglect, and exploitation including how the person would report any incidents. | 108 | 88.9% | 109 | 94.5% |
| The Consultant documents ongoing efforts to assist the person/legal representative to know about rights. | 108 | 97.2% | 110 | 98.2% |
| The Consultant documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s behavioral/emotional health needs are addressed. | 81 | 98.8% | 89 | 96.6% |
| The Consultant documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s health and health care needs are addressed. | 108 | 99.1% | 110 | 97.3% |
| The Consultant documents ongoing efforts to ensure the person’s safety needs are addressed. | 107 | 98.1% | 110 | 98.2% |
| The Consultant is in compliance with billing procedures and the Medicaid Waiver Services Agreement. | 109 | 100% | 110 | 100% |
| The Consultant Progress Notes demonstrate pre-Support Plan planning activities were conducted. | 106 | 90.6% | 110 | 87.3% |
| The current Annual Report is in the record. | 107 | 97.2% | 110 | 92.7% |
| The current Support Plan includes natural, generic, community and paid supports for the person. | 109 | 100% | 110 | 100% |
| The Emergency Backup Plan is in the record and reviewed annually.` | 108 | 96.3% | 110 | 95.5% |
| The Purchasing Plan reflects the goals/needs outlined in Participant's Support Plan. | 107 | 100% | 110 | 99.1% |
| The Support Plan is updated within 12 months of the person's last Support Plan. | 108 | 99.1% | 109 | 99.1% |
| The Support Plan is updated/revised when warranted by changes in the needs. | 50 | 98.0% | 47 | 95.7% |
| When correctly completed/submitted by the Participant/CDC+ Representative, Consultant submits Purchasing Plans by the 10th of the month. | 102 | 100% | 99 | 100% |
| **Average CDC+ Record Review Score** | **3,463** | **98.3%** | **3,481** | **97.8%** |

### CDC+ Representative (Representative)

People who elect to receive services through CDC+ have a Representative who helps with the “business” aspect of the program, such as hiring providers, completing and submitting timesheets, and paying providers. This is a non-paid position and is most often filled by a family member; however, the participant is sometimes also the Representative. Qlarant QARs review records to help determine if the Representative is complying with CDC+ standards and other requirements. The person receiving services through CDC+ may decline to participate in the CDC+ PCR; however, the Representative for the person still receives a review.

Between July 2020 and March 2021, 141 Representatives were reviewed. Results are displayed by region in Table 11 and by standard in Table 12 and include data from the pre-pandemic period in Year 3 (July 2019 – March 2020). The number of Representatives reviewed in each region, for each period, was relatively small so trends across time or regions are tentative. On average, record reviews showed a small increase over the two periods; however, the Southern Region improved by over 10 percentage points, but with small sample sizes.

There are also some differences noted across the periods for individual standards. To date the areas highlighted in Table 12 showed an improvement of five or more percentage points in the mid-pandemic period. This may indicate the remote method is beneficial in documentation retrieval for some areas of the review. The lowest scoring area continues to be for maintaining documentation of background screening for directly hired employees with a score of 82.9 percent, similar to Year 3 findings.

| Table 11. CDC+ Representative Record Review Results | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pre-pandemic (Y3Q1-3) | | | Mid-pandemic (Y4Q1-3) | | |
| Region | PCRs | Indicators | Met | PCRs | Indicators | Met |
| Northwest | 17 | 268 | 92.5% | 11 | 167 | 94.0% |
| Northeast | 41 | 671 | 93.1% | 31 | 497 | 91.8% |
| Central | 23 | 360 | 93.6% | 31 | 487 | 98.2% |
| Suncoast | 24 | 373 | 92.5% | 20 | 308 | 90.6% |
| Southeast | 28 | 454 | 90.1% | 31 | 493 | 89.7% |
| Southern | 15 | 238 | 84.0% | 17 | 269 | 94.4% |
| **State** | **148** | **2,364** | **91.5%** | **141** | **2,221** | **93.0%** |

| Table 12. CDC+ Representative Results by Standard | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Pre-Pandemic  (Y3Q1-3) | | Mid-Pandemic  (Y4Q1-3) | |
| Standard | Number | % Met | Number | % Met |
| Accurate signed and approved Timesheets for all Directly Hired Employees (DHE) are available for review. | 138 | 79.7% | 124 | 87.9% |
| All applicable signed and approved Purchasing Plans are available for review. | 146 | 96.6% | 138 | 95.7% |
| All applicable signed and approved Quick Updates are available for review. | 69 | 98.6% | 45 | 97.8% |
| Background screening results for all Directly Hired Employees (DHE’s) who render direct care are available for review. | 138 | 83.3% | 123 | 82.9% |
| Background screening results for all Independent Contractors who render direct care are available for review.[[7]](#footnote-8) | 70 | 88.6% | 53 | 92.5% |
| Complete and signed Participant/Representative Agreement is available for review. | 148 | 94.6% | 141 | 94.3% |
| Complete Employee Packets for all Directly Hired Employees are available for review. | 137 | 94.9% | 124 | 95.2% |
| Complete Vendor Packets for all vendors and independent contractors are available for review. | 97 | 91.8% | 105 | 97.1% |
| Completed and signed Job Descriptions for each Directly Hired Employee are available for review. | 140 | 87.9% | 127 | 94.5% |
| Copies of approved Cost Plan(s) are available for entire period of review. | 148 | 96.6% | 141 | 96.5% |
| Copies of Support Plan(s) are available for entire period of review. | 148 | 95.3% | 140 | 98.6% |
| Corrective Action Plan (if applicable) is available for review. | 4 | 100.0% | 6 | 83.3% |
| Documentation is available to support the reconciliation of Monthly Statements. | 145 | 86.2% | 140 | 85.7% |
| Emergency Backup Plan is complete and available for review. | 148 | 91.9% | 141 | 95.0% |
| Monthly Statements are available for review. | 145 | 97.9% | 139 | 97.1% |
| Signed and approved Invoices for Vendor Payments are available for review. | 83 | 90.4% | 88 | 89.8% |
| Signed and approved receipts/statement of “Goods and Services” for reimbursement items are available for review. | 31 | 100.0% | 32 | 96.9% |
| The CDC+ Representative maintains an Employee/Contractor Roster within the Department of Children and Families/Agency for Persons with Disabilities Background Screening Clearinghouse. | 134 | 76.1% | 132 | 82.6% |
| The Participant makes purchases consistent with the Purchasing Plan. | 147 | 95.2% | 141 | 95.7% |
| The Participant obtains services consistent with stated/documented needs and goals. | 148 | 99.3% | 141 | 95.7% |
| **Average CDC+ Representative Record Review Score** | **2,364** | **91.5%** | **2,221** | **93.0%** |

### **PCR Summary Results**

A summary of scores from the PCR components is presented in the following figure. Average scores were relatively high across all the areas. Consistent with previous reports, My Life Interview outcomes were lower compared to all other areas, and the CDC+ Representative Record Review was the lowest scoring record review area.

Figure 10. PCR Summary

### Health Summary

 During the PCR, Qlarant QARs utilize an extensive Health Summary tool to help capture facets of the person’s health status, such as a need for adaptive equipment; if visits have been made to the doctor or dentist; if the person has been hospitalized or been to the emergency room; and type and number of medications the person is taking.

Figure 11 shows the percent of people receiving services by waiver type and the number of medications taken.[[8]](#footnote-9) The pattern to date is similar to previous years; however, the proportion of people taking five or more medications shows a consistent increased from 36 percent in FY 2018 to 40 percent in FY 2019, to 43 percent during the first three quarters of FY 2021. The rate for CDC+ is approximately the same over the years.

Additional analysis is presented by region in Table 13. Data to date indicate the use of multiple medications for Waiver recipients has increased, since Year 3 (pre-pandemic), in the Northeast (up 8.2 points) and Central (up 6.6 points) regions. Current rates of multiple medication use, in both periods, have been considerably lower in the Northwest and Southeast regions. CDC+ rates showed large increases and decreases for some regions, but rates may to be unstable due to the relative small sample sizes. The statewide average is similar in both periods.

| Table 13. Taking 5+ Medications by Region | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Waiver | | | | CDC+ | | | |
|  | Pre-pandemic  (Y3Q1-3) | | Mid-pandemic  (Y4Q1-3) | | Pre-pandemic  (Y3Q1-3) | | Mid-pandemic (Y4Q1-3) | |
| Region | #  PCRs | % Taking 5+ | #  PCRs | % Taking 5+ | # PCRs | % Taking 5+ | # PCRs | % Taking 5+ |
| Northwest | 77 | 32.5% | 67 | 31.3% | 6 | 0.0% | 9 | 33.3% |
| Northeast | 144 | 40.3% | 165 | 48.5% | 28 | 25.0% | 25 | 40.0% |
| Central | 185 | 39.5% | 165 | 46.1% | 20 | 50.0% | 27 | 29.6% |
| Suncoast | 219 | 47.9% | 197 | 46.7% | 20 | 20.0% | 12 | 25.0% |
| Southeast | 225 | 35.6% | 237 | 34.6% | 21 | 23.8% | 23 | 13.0% |
| Southern | 114 | 44.7% | 153 | 47.7% | 14 | 35.7% | 14 | 35.7% |
| Total | **964** | **40.7%** | **984** | **43.1%** | **109** | **28.4%** | **110** | **29.1%** |

Information for individuals taking multiple medications by residence, primary disability and age group is shown in Figures 12 – 14, for July 2020 – March 2021.[[9]](#footnote-10) Results are similar to previous analyses that have indicated people in licensed residential home (LRH) settings or with an intellectual disability were more likely than their counterparts to be taking five or more medications, and multiple medication use tends to increase with age. People living in a family home or independently were equally likely to be taking multiple medications, regardless of waiver type. Therefore, it is apparently living in licensed residential home settings that drives the multiple medication use rate up. for Waiver participants.

Table 14 displays the percentage of individuals who, within the past 12 months, had experienced a significant health event. The greatest proportion of events for people receiving services through the Waiver or CDC+ involved visits to the emergency room (ER) or the hospital. The proportion of people receiving servcies through the Waiver who had visited the ER has declinded somewhat.

| Table 14. Percent of Individuals with a Significant Health Event by Waiver Type (% Yes) | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| In the previous 12 months: | Waiver | | CDC+ | |
| Pre-pandemic  Y3Q1-3 (964) | Mid-pandemic  Y4Q1-3 (984) | Pre-pandemic  Y3Q1-3 (109) | Mid-pandemic  Y4Q1-3 (110) |
| Has the Abuse Hotline been contacted by you or others to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation? | 5.4% | 1.6% | 4.6% | 0.0% |
| Have Reactive Strategies under 65G-8 been used due to behavioral concerns? | 3.3% | 3.2% | 0.9% | .09% |
| Have you been Baker Acted? | 2.8% | 2.5% | 3.7% | 0.0% |
| Have you been admitted to the hospital? | 10.9% | 11.1% | 11.9% | 10.9% |
| Have you been to an Emergency Room? | 18.6% | 14.8% | 21.1% | 9.1% |
| Have you been to an Urgent Care Center? | 5.4% | 4.6% | 4.6% | 0.9% |

## Provider Discovery Reviews (PDR)[[10]](#footnote-11)

During the course of the contract year, a PDR is completed for most providers who rendered at least one of the following services through the iBudget Waiver, for six months or more:[[11]](#footnote-12)

* Behavior Analysis
* Behavior Assistant
* Life Skills Development 1 (Companion)
* Life Skills Development 2 (SEC)
* Life Skills Development 3 (ADT)
* Personal Supports
* Residential Habilitation Behavior Focus
* Residential Habilitation Intensive Behavioral
* Residential Habilitation Standard
* Residential Habilitation Enhanced Intensive Behavior
* Respite
* Special Medical Home Care
* Support Coordination/CDC+ Consultant
* Supported Living Coaching

The PDR consists of up to five different review components: My Life Interview with individuals receiving services (MLI), review of agency Policies and Procedure (P&P), Qualification and Training (Q&T), and Service Specific Record Reviews (SSRR). Observations (OBS) at waiver funded licensed residential homes (LRH) and day program facilities were temporarily stopped in March 2020. Interviews with individuals receiving services are not included in the overall scores calculated for the PDR. Results are provided separately for WSCs and service providers.

Between July 2020 and March 2021, 1,627 PDRs were completed and approved by Qlarant Regional Managers; 1,166 service providers and 461 WSCs.[[12]](#footnote-13) Table 15 shows the number completed per region for the first three quarters of the contract year (FY 2021). Desk reviews and phone interviews were used.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 15. PDRs by APD Region | | | | |
|  | Service Providers | | WSCs | |
|  | (N = 1,166) | | (N = 461) | |
| Region | N | % | N | % |
| Northwest | 63 | 5.4% | 36 | 7.8% |
| Northeast | 187 | 16.0% | 67 | 14.5% |
| Central | 238 | 20.4% | 98 | 21.3% |
| Suncoast | 313 | 26.8% | 80 | 17.4% |
| Southeast | 182 | 15.6% | 121 | 26.2% |
| Southern | 183 | 15.7% | 59 | 12.8% |

### PDR My Life Interview

The PDR for service providers uses an interview with individuals receiving services from the provider to determine, from the person’s perspective, how well services are provided and if outcomes are present. Not all PDRs include this component of the review process because people are free to decline to participate. If there is no one else receiving services from the provider there is no one else to interview. Standards for the PDR MLI are the same as for the PCR MLI.[[13]](#footnote-14) [[14]](#footnote-15) Figures 15a and 15b display findings from the PDR MLI for each Life Area, by Outcomes and Supports, for the June 2019 – March 2020 (n=880) and July 2020 – March 2021 (n=1,640) periods respectively. Figures 16a and 16b provide results by region. Preliminary results indicate:

* Similar to PCR MLI results, PDR findings show Outcomes lower than Supports across all My Life Areas, the greatest difference in My Safety with less than 80 percent of Outcomes present during both periods.
* With the exception of a small decrease for My Social Life, results are similar across the Life Areas and regions when comparing the pre and mid-pandemic periods.
* Outcomes for individuals living in the Southeast were lower than in other region.

### Observations

Temporarily discontinued due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Administrative Policies and Procedures

Each provider is reviewed on up to 19 standards to determine compliance with Policies and Procedures (P&P) as dictated in the Florida Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook. Results for all P&P standards reviewed are in Table 16 for service providers and Table 17 for WSCs. WSC services are different from other provider services, therefore findings are presented separately.[[15]](#footnote-16) Most of the P&P tool applies only to agency providers; however, some questions may also be asked of solo providers. Information in the tables show results for the pre-pandemic (July 2019 – March 2020 (Y3Q1-3)) and mid-pandemic (July 2020 – March 2021 (Y4Q1-3)) periods. Findings are summarized as follows:

* There were only small differences in results for the two different periods.
* For service providers, only four of the 19 standards showed compliance rates of less than 90 percent.
* WSCs scored 93 percent or greater on all 14 standards for which they were reviewed.
* The lowest scoring area for service providers was in reference to confidentiality and secure storage of people’s records. This was also the area that showed the greatest decrease since Y3Q1-3 (down 4.6 points).

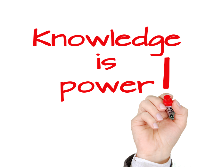
| Table 16. PDR Policies and Procedures Results by Standard (Service Providers) | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Y3Q1-3 (1,006) | | Y4Q1-3 (1,166) | | |
| P&P Standard | Standards Reviewed | %  Met | | Standards Reviewed | %  Met |
| Agency vehicles used for transportation are properly insured. | 362 | 98.6% | | 390 | 96.4% |
| Agency vehicles used for transportation are properly registered. | 366 | 97.0% | | 392 | 96.9% |
| All instances of abuse, neglect, and exploitation are reported. | 175 | 96.6% | | 94 | 97.9% |
| If provider operates Enhanced Intensive Behavior group homes the Program or Clinical Services Director meets the qualifications of a Level 1 Behavior Analyst. | 3 | 100.0% | | 4 | 100.0% |
| If provider operates Intensive Behavior group homes the Program or Clinical Services Director meets the qualifications of a Level 1 Behavior Analyst. | 26 | 100.0% | | 25 | 100.0% |
| The provider addresses all incident reports. | 569 | 96.1% | | 417 | 97.6% |
| The provider identifies addresses and reports all medication errors. | 145 | 97.2% | | 57 | 100.0% |
| The provider identifies and addresses concerns related to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. | 180 | 96.7% | | 101 | 98.0% |
| The provider maintains an Employee/Contractor Roster within the Department of Children and Families/Agency for Persons with Disabilities Background Screening Clearinghouse. | 1000 | 94.0% | | 1,166 | 92.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing hours and days of operation and the notification process to be used if the provider is unable to provide services for a specific time and day scheduled. | 855 | 89.5% | | 1,023 | 88.5% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure a smooth transition to and from another provider. | 855 | 91.7% | | 1,023 | 89.6% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure compliance with background screening and five-year rescreening. | 856 | 90.2% | | 1,023 | 88.9% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure the individuals' medications are administered and handled safely. | 596 | 96.1% | | 677 | 95.1% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing the process for addressing individual complaints and grievances regarding possible service delivery issues. | 856 | 98.4% | | 1,022 | 97.7% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures in compliance with 65G-8.003 (Reactive Strategy Policy and Procedures). | 202 | 98.0% | | 254 | 98.4% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures with a detailed description of how the provider uses a person-centered approach to identify individually determined goals and promote choice. | 854 | 97.7% | | 1,019 | 96.6% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures with a detailed description of how the provider will protect health, safety, and wellbeing of the individuals served. | 856 | 97.7% | | 1,023 | 95.6% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures, which detail methods for ensuring the person's confidentiality and maintaining and storing records in a secure manner. | 856 | 78.6% | | 1,023 | 74.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures, which detail the methods for management and accounting of any personal funds, of all individuals in the care of, or receiving services from, the provider. | 632 | 93.4% | | 766 | 94.9% |
| Average Policies and Procedures | **10,244** | **93.5%** | | **11,499** | **92.0%** |

| Table 17. PDR Policies and Procedures Results by Standard (WSCs) | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Y3Q1-3 (404) | | Y4Q1-3 (461) | | |
| P&P Standard | Standards Reviewed | %  Met | | Standards Reviewed | %  Met |
| Agency vehicles used for transportation are properly insured. | NA | NA | | NA | NA |
| Agency vehicles used for transportation are properly registered. | NA | NA | | NA | NA |
| All instances of abuse, neglect, and exploitation are reported. | 114 | 99.1% | | 50 | 98.0% |
| If provider operates Enhanced Intensive Behavior group homes the Program or Clinical Services Director meets the qualifications of a Level 1 Behavior Analyst. | NA | NA | | NA | NA. |
| If provider operates Intensive Behavior group homes the Program or Clinical Services Director meets the qualifications of a Level 1 Behavior Analyst. | NA | NA | | NA | NA. |
| The provider addresses all incident reports. | 312 | 99.0% | | 239 | 97.1% |
| The provider identifies addresses and reports all medication errors. | 21 | 100% | | 4 | 100.0% |
| The provider identifies and addresses concerns related to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. | 117 | 99.1% | | 61 | 98.4% |
| The provider maintains an Employee/Contractor Roster within the Department of Children and Families/Agency for Persons with Disabilities Background Screening Clearinghouse. | 395 | 94.7% | | 461 | 93.3% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing hours and days of operation and the notification process to be used if the provider is unable to provide services for a specific time and day scheduled. | 85 | 97.6% | | 101 | 96.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure a smooth transition to and from another provider. | 85 | 96.5% | | 101 | 93.1% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure compliance with background screening and five-year rescreening. | 85 | 97.6% | | 101 | 93.1% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing how the provider will ensure the individuals’ medications are administered and handled safely. | 15 | 100% | | 5 | 100.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures detailing the process for addressing individual complaints and grievances regarding possible service delivery issues. | 85 | 98.8% | | 101 | 100.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures in compliance with 65G-8.003 (Reactive Strategy Policy and Procedures). | 2 | 100% | | 0 | . |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures with a detailed description of how the provider uses a person-centered approach to identify individually determined goals and promote choice. | 85 | 98.8% | | 100 | 100.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures with a detailed description of how the provider will protect health, safety, and wellbeing of the individuals served. | 85 | 98.8% | | 101 | 100.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures, which detail methods for ensuring the person’s confidentiality and maintaining and storing records in a secure manner. | 85 | 94.1% | | 101 | 96.0% |
| The provider maintains written policies and procedures, which detail the methods for management and accounting of any personal funds, of all individuals in the care of, or receiving services from, the provider. | 7 | 100% | | 6 | 100.0% |
| Average Policies and Procedures (WSC) | **1,578** | **97.4%** | | **1,532** | **96.0%** |

Findings by region are presented for agencies and solo service providers and WSCs in Table 18. WSCs were much more likely to operate as a solo entity; however, all solo WSCs will be incorporated into an agency of four or more WSCs beginning July 1, 2021. Many standards in the Policies and Procedures review are not applicable to solo providers; therefore, findings are presented separately by region for solo vs agency providers and comparisons should be made with caution. On average, agencies scored higher than did solo providers and WSCs scored higher than did service providers.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 18. Policy and Procedure Results by Region Agency v. Solo  July 2020 - March 2021** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Service Provider Agencies** | | | **Service Provider Solos** | | | **SP State Average** | | |
| Region | N | Standards Scored | %  Met | N | Standards Scored | %  Met | N | Standards Scored | %  Met |
| Northwest | 41 | 452 | 96.2% | 22 | 22 | 77.3% | 63 | 474 | 95.4% |
| Northeast | 147 | 1827 | 94.9% | 40 | 75 | 90.7% | 187 | 1,902 | 94.7% |
| Central | 208 | 2298 | 93.2% | 30 | 49 | 83.7% | 238 | 2,347 | 93.0% |
| Suncoast | 281 | 3191 | 89.2% | 32 | 37 | 86.5% | 313 | 3,228 | 89.2% |
| Southeast | 166 | 1713 | 91.4% | 16 | 19 | 94.7% | 182 | 1,732 | 91.4% |
| Southern | 178 | 1811 | 92.7% | 5 | 5 | 100% | 183 | 1,816 | 92.7% |
| **State** | **1,021** | **11,292** | **92.1%** | **145** | **146** | **87.4%** | **1,006** | 11,499 | **92.0%** |
|  | **WSC Agencies** | | | **WSC Solo** | | | **WSC State Average** | | |
| Region | N | Standards Scored | %  Met | N | Standards Scored | %  Met | N | Standards Scored | %  Met |
| Northwest | 5 | 45 | 100% | 31 | 39 | 97.4% | 36 | 84 | 98.8% |
| Northeast | 15 | 135 | 99.3% | 52 | 111 | 96.4% | 67 | 246 | 98.0% |
| Central | 15 | 128 | 100% | 83 | 153 | 94.8% | 98 | 281 | 97.2% |
| Suncoast | 13 | 126 | 96.0% | 67 | 131 | 90.1% | 80 | 257 | 93.0% |
| Southeast | 34 | 293 | 95.2% | 87 | 133 | 93.2% | 121 | 426 | 94.6% |
| Southern | 21 | 181 | 97.8% | 38 | 57 | 94.7% | 59 | 238 | 97.1% |
| **State** | 103 | **908** | **97.4%** | **358** | **624** | **93.9%** | **461** | **1,532** | 96.0% |

### Qualifications and Training Requirements

WSCs and all Direct Service Providers are required to have certain training and education completed in order to render specific services. For each service provider and WSC, several employee records are reviewed. The total number of employee records sampled varies, depending on the number of people receiving services. Of the 1,166 service providers and 461 WSCs who participated in a PDR between July 2020 and March 2021, Qlarant reviewed 3,068 and 610 employee records respectively.

A description of each standard scored within the Administrative Qualifications and Training component of the PDR is shown in Tables 19 (service providers) and 20 (WSCs). Each table shows the number of employee records reviewed, the number of providers reviewed (for which the standard was applicable) and the percent of providers (not employees) with the standard met for all staff records reviewed. For the provider to score the standard met, all employee records reviewed must show compliance with the standard. If one record is out of compliance, the standard is Not Met for the provider.

Qualification and Training scores to date are relatively high and similar to previous years. For Support Coordination, only two indicator showed a score of less than 90 percent: To date, fewer than 80 percent of service providers were compliant on eight indicators for training requirements. These indicators are highlighted in Table 19.

| Table 19. PDR Qualifications and Training Service Provider Results by Standard | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | |
| Standard | # Records Reviewed | #  Providers | % Providers w/ Standard Met |
| Drivers of transportation vehicles are licensed to drive vehicles used. | 2,153 | 1017 | 98.7% |
| Personal vehicles used for transportation are properly insured. | 1,493 | 761 | 90.9% |
| Personal vehicles used for transportation are properly registered. | 1,494 | 762 | 89.5% |
| The Behavior Assistant provider has completed at least 20 contact hours of instruction in a curriculum meeting the requirements specified by the APD state office and approved by the APD designated behavior analyst. | 23 | 19 | 100% |
| The employment status of the provider/employee is maintained on the Employee/Contractor Roster within the Department of Children and Families/Agency for Persons with Disabilities Background Screening Clearinghouse. | 3,066 | 1164 | 91.5% |
| The Life Skills Development 1 provider completes 4 hours of annual in-service training related to the specific needs of at least one person currently receiving services. | 831 | 548 | 77.7% |
| The Life Skills Development 2 provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training related to employment. | 137 | 115 | 74.8% |
| The Life Skills Development 3 provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training related to the individually tailored services. | 152 | 100 | 77.0% |
| The Personal Supports provider completes four hours of annual in-service training related to the specific needs of at least one person currently served. | 1,304 | 723 | 73.9% |
| The provider completed Annual Update Training in Basic Medication Administration prior to expiration of current validation. | 824 | 423 | 84.6% |
| The provider completed required Supported Living Pre-Service training. | 349 | 262 | 91.6% |
| The provider completed the Prescribed Enteral Formula Administration Annual Update training prior to the expiration of their current validation. | 40 | 25 | 100% |
| The provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training on instruction in applied behavior analysis and related topics for Behavior Assistant. | 22 | 19 | 78.9% |
| The provider has completed all aspects of required Level II Background Screening. | 3,067 | 1164 | 84.3% |
| The provider has completed standardized, pre-service training for Life Skills Development 2. | 148 | 121 | 94.2% |
| The provider has completed the Prescribed Enteral Formula Administration training. | 103 | 54 | 88.9% |
| The provider maintains current Basic Medication Administration Validation. | 1,133 | 530 | 71.9% |
| The provider maintains current CPR certification. | 2,898 | 1132 | 88.4% |
| The provider maintains current Prescribed Enteral Formula Administration Validation. | 100 | 50 | 82.0% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Behavior Analysis. | 101 | 66 | 100% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Behavior Assistant. | 26 | 22 | 100% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Life Skills Development 1. | 927 | 573 | 97.0% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Life Skills Development 2. | 148 | 121 | 99.2% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Life Skills Development 3. | 174 | 108 | 97.2% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Personal Supports. | 1,469 | 746 | 95.7% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Residential Habilitation- Enhanced Intensive Behavior. | 1 | 1 | 100% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Residential Habilitation-Behavior Focus. | 247 | 106 | 98.1% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Residential Habilitation-Intensive Behavior. | 40 | 22 | 95.5% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Residential Habilitation-Standard. | 982 | 394 | 96.4% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Respite. | 319 | 225 | 94.7% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Special Medical Home Care. | 1 | 1 | 100% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Supported Living Coaching. | 347 | 261 | 96.9% |
| The provider obtains Temporary Validation when indicated. | 5 | 3 | 100% |
| The provider received Basic Medication Administration Training prior to administering or supervising the self-administration of medication. | 1,192 | 552 | 91.1% |
| The provider received training in an Agency approved curriculum for behavioral emergency procedures consistent with the requirements of the Reactive Strategies rule (65G-8, FAC). | 353 | 152 | 92.1% |
| The provider received training in Basic Person Centered Planning. | 590 | 365 | 91.2% |
| The provider received training in Direct Care Core Competencies. | 2,482 | 1044 | 92.1% |
| The provider received training in Direct Care Core Competency. (Old) | 581 | 361 | 96.1% |
| The provider received training in First Aid. | 2,894 | 1132 | 82.9% |
| The provider received training in HIPAA. | 3,067 | 1164 | 84.5% |
| The provider received training in HIV/AIDS/Infection Control. | 2,949 | 1140 | 73.4% |
| The provider received training in Requirements for all Waiver Providers | 3,048 | 1164 | 90.6% |
| The provider received training in Zero Tolerance. | 3,068 | 1164 | 89.7% |
| The provider received training on Individual Choices, Rights and Responsibilities | 588 | 364 | 92.6% |
| The Residential Habilitation – Enhanced Intensive Behavior provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training through participation in recipient case-review or in combination with training related to behavior analysis. | 1 | 1 | 100% |
| The Residential Habilitation – Intensive Behavior provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training related to behavior analysis and related topics. | 37 | 22 | 90.9% |
| The Residential Habilitation – Intensive Behavior provider has completed at least 20 contact hours of instruction in a curriculum meeting the requirements specified by the APD state office and approved by the APD designated behavior analyst. | 41 | 23 | 100% |
| The Residential Habilitation - Standard provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training related to the implementation of individually tailored services. | 880 | 385 | 77.1% |
| The Residential Habilitation-Behavior Focus provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training related to behavior analysis and related topics. | 220 | 102 | 94.1% |
| The Residential Habilitation-Behavior Focus provider has completed at least 20 contact hours of instruction in a curriculum meeting the requirements specified by the APD state office and approved by the APD designated behavior analyst. | 242 | 105 | 93.3% |
| The Supported Living Coach completed Introduction to Social Security Work Incentives. | 344 | 260 | 90.8% |
| The Supported Living Coaching provider completes eight hours of annual in-service training. | 330 | 251 | 81.3% |

| Table 20. PDR Qualifications and Training WSC Results by Standard | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | |
| Standard | # Records Reviewed | # WSCs | % WSCs w/ Standard Met |
| Drivers of transportation vehicles are licensed to drive vehicles used. | 29 | 23 | 100% |
| Personal vehicles used for transportation are properly insured. | 15 | 13 | 100% |
| Personal vehicles used for transportation are properly registered. | 14 | 12 | 100% |
| The employment status of the provider/employee is maintained on the Employee/Contractor Roster within the Department of Children and Families/Agency for Persons with Disabilities Background Screening Clearinghouse. | 610 | 461 | 92.8% |
| The provider has completed all aspects of required Level II Background Screening. | 610 | 461 | 92.8% |
| The provider maintains current CPR certification. | 600 | 453 | 96.5% |
| The provider meets all minimum educational requirements and levels of experience for Support Coordination. | 609 | 460 | 99.6% |
| The provider received a Certificate of Consultant Training from a designated APD trainer (CDC+). | 204 | 168 | 99.4% |
| The provider received training in Basic Person Centered Planning. | 547 | 419 | 96.4% |
| The provider received training in Direct Care Core Competencies. | 342 | 261 | 95.8% |
| The provider received training in Direct Care Core Competency. (Old) | 269 | 233 | 98.3% |
| The provider received training in First Aid. | 600 | 454 | 95.6% |
| The provider received training in HIPAA. | 610 | 461 | 92.2% |
| The provider received training in HIV/AIDS/Infection Control. | 609 | 461 | 89.2% |
| The provider received training in Requirements for all Waiver Providers | 604 | 456 | 96.1% |
| The provider received training in Zero Tolerance. | 610 | 461 | 93.7% |
| The Support Coordinator completed Introduction to Social Security Work Incentives. | 601 | 461 | 95.4% |
| The Support Coordinator completed required Region Specific training. | 600 | 461 | 96.3% |
| The Support Coordinator completed required Statewide pre-service training. | 610 | 461 | 97.2% |
| The Support Coordinator completes 24 hours of job related annual in-service training. | 591 | 458 | 82.1% |

### Service Specific Record Review Results (SSRR)

During the PDR, a sample of individuals is used to review records for each service offered by the provider. The number of records reviewed depends upon the size of the organization and the number of services provided, with at least one record per service included. The SSRR tool includes a review of standards specific to each service. There were 4,132 SSRRs completed during the 1st three quarters of the contract year as part of the 1,166 PDRs for service providers, scoring 68,035 standards; and 1,612 SSRRs completed as part of the 461 WSC PDRs, scoring 41,719 standards.

#### SSRR by Region and by Service

SSRR results are presented by region in Table 21 and by service in Figure 17. Because many of the standards have a weight of more than one, both the weighted score and the percent of standards scored as met (Percent Met) are presented by region. Comparisons by service shown in Figure 17 present the Percent Met with the number of reviews completed in parentheses. The number of standards scored, on which the percent met is based, varies from 12 for Special Medical Home Care to 17,702 for Personal Supports. There is some variation to date across regions and services.

* Providers of Supported Employment and Supported Living Coaching were least likely to have the standards met, 87.6 percent and 89.0 percent respectively. These results are similar to previous years indicating providers of these services have consistently scored relatively low on the record reviews compared to providers of other services.
* Both service providers and WSCs in Suncoast scored relatively lower than providers in other regions.

| Table 21. PDR Service Specific Record Review Results by APD Region | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | | | | |
|  | Service Providers | | | | WSCs | | | |
| Region | # Records Reviewed | # Standards Scored | Weighted Score | Percent  Met | # Records Reviewed | # Standards Scored | Weighted Score | Percent  Met |
| Northwest | 216 | 3,768 | 91.4% | 90.7% | 112 | 2,990 | 97.5% | 97.3% |
| Northeast | 603 | 9,987 | 93.7% | 93.3% | 258 | 6,711 | 97.3% | 96.0% |
| Central | 879 | 14,534 | 92.2% | 92.0% | 273 | 7,034 | 95.6% | 93.9% |
| Suncoast | 1,137 | 19,126 | 88.7% | 88.2% | 319 | 8,380 | 92.8% | 92.4% |
| Southeast | 610 | 9,765 | 94.8% | 94.5% | 406 | 10,462 | 97.7% | 97.1% |
| Southern | 687 | 10,855 | 95.1% | 94.4% | 244 | 6,142 | 98.4% | 97.9% |
| **State** | **4,132** | **68,035** | **92.2%** | **91.8%** | **1,612** | **41,719** | **96.4%** | **95.6%** |

#### Lowest SSRR Indicators by Service

Of approximately 400 standards scored for all the different services, among the standards that were reviewed for at least 50 records six reflected compliance of less than 75 percent; five related to billing and one regarding efforts to help people understand how to define abuse, neglect and exploitation:

* The current Employment Stability Plan covering services provided and billed during the period under review contains all required components (LSD 2 – Supported Employment: 54.2%).
* A Quarterly Summary covering services provided and billed during the period under review is in the record (Supported Living Coaching: 70.0%).
* The Annual Report covering services provided and billed during the period under review contains all required components (Supported Employment: 73.6; and Supported Living Coaching: 71.2%).
* The current Implementation Plan covering services provided and billed during the period under review contains all required components (Supported Living Coaching: 70.9%).
* Provider documents ongoing efforts to assist the person to define abuse, neglect, and exploitation including how the person would report any incidents (Residential Habilitation Standard: 73.6%).

### Alerts

At any time during a review if a situation is noted that could cause harm to an individual receiving services, the QAR immediately informs the local APD Regional office. The Qlarant QAR calls the abuse hotline, if appropriate, records an alert, and notifies the Qlarant Regional Manager. The manager then notifies the local APD Regional and State offices and AHCA in writing. Alerts can be related to health, safety, abuse, neglect, exploitation or rights. In addition, when any provider or employee who has direct contact with individuals does not have all the appropriate background screening documentation on file, an alert is recorded, unless the only reason cited is noncompliance with the Affidavit of Good Moral Character/Attestation of Good Moral Character.

Between July 2020 and March 2021, 447 alerts were recorded, 376 for service providers with an additional 36 reported for WSCs and 35 reported for CDC+ Representatives (CDC+ Rep). These are listed by type of alert in Table 22. For Support Coordinators and Representatives, alerts were all related to background screening. In total, background screening, the clearinghouse roster and medication administration or training were responsible for the majority of alerts (93.5%). Note that due to the pandemic, observations are not currently being conducted. This likely reduces the total number of alerts, particularly for rights, health and safety, and medication storage. There was also a hiatus on some background screening requirements between April and September 2020, due to the pandemic.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 22. Alert Type by Review Type: July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | |
| Alert Type | Service Provider | WSC | CDC+ Rep | Total | % of Total |
| Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.2% |
| Background Screening | 106 | 13 | 16 | 135 | 30.2% |
| Clearinghouse Roster | 99 | 23 | 19 | 141 | 31.5% |
| Driver’s License/Insurance | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 4.9% |
| Health & Safety | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Medication Admin/Training | 142 | 0 | 0 | 142 | 31.8% |
| Medication Storage | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Rights | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.2% |
| Vehicle Insurance | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1.1% |
| **Total Alerts** | **376** | **36** | **35** | **447** | **100%** |

### Background Screening

When examining background screening results, a varying number of employee records are reviewed to determine compliance with all the components of the requirement. For Background Screening, if any one staff record indicates a lack of required documentation, the provider is reported as having the standard Not Met. The following information shows the percent of service providers and WSCs compliant with all background screening documentation requirements, by region, for the pre-pandemic period (Figure 18a) and the current contract year (Figure 18b). Results were similar in both periods. Service providers were, on average, less likely to have all required background documentation in place than were WSCs, however, that difference was greater in the pre-pandemic period.

### Potential Billing Discrepancy

For each service, several applicable standards related to billing requirements are scored by QARs. If any of the standards are scored Not Present, it is noted on the PDR Report as a potential billing discrepancy. The percentage of providers with one or more potential billing discrepancy is presented by region in Figure 19. Approximately 60.1 percent of service providers had all billing discrepancy standards scored Met, compared to 83.7 percent of WSCs, a 23.6 percentage point difference. Providers in the Suncoast Region were least likely to have all their billing standards met, for both service providers and WSCs, 47 percent and 62.5 percent respectively. The greatest discrepancies between the two types of providers were in the Southern and Northwest regions.

Table 23 shows the number of records reviewed, by service, including the percent of billing discrepancy standards scored Met, showing data for the pre and mid-pandemic timeframes Results are shown for all services reviewed during the first three quarters of the year, indicating on average approximately 81.2 percent of billing standards were scored Met. Data to date suggest there may be some advantage to the remote processes for several services that showed improvement documenting billing requirements in the mid-pandemic period. The lowest compliance rates in the current contract year were shown for Personal Supports (68.1%) and Supported Living Coaching (68.6%), with the greatest differences compared to last year’s pre-pandemic data indicating:

* Two of the lower scoring services in Year 3 showed an increase in billing compliance. Supported Employment and Supported Living Coaching increased 11.3 and 10.6 points respectively.
* Other lower scoring service in Year 3 that showed an improvement in billing documentation compliance were Respite and Companion, up 8.9 and 7.1 points respectively.

| Table 23. Billing Discrepancy Standard Scored Met by Service | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Y3Q1-3 | | Y4Q1-3 | |
| Service | Records Reviewed | % Met | Records Reviewed | % Met |
| Behavior Analysis | 119 | 90.8% | 162 | 88.9% |
| Behavior Assistant | 25 | 76.0% | 27 | 81.5% |
| CDC+ Consultant | 70 | 97.1% | 112 | 97.3% |
| CDC+ Consultant UA | 49 | 89.8% | 49 | 87.8% |
| Life Skills Development 1 (Companion) | 649 | 64.1% | 747 | 71.2% |
| Life Skills Development 2 (SEC) | 140 | 62.9% | 155 | 74.2% |
| Life Skills Development 3 (ADT) | 292 | 80.5% | 317 | 83.0% |
| Personal Supports | 1,103 | 65.0% | 1,199 | 68.1% |
| Residential Habilitation Behavior Focus | 134 | 89.6% | 153 | 92.8% |
| Residential Habilitation EIB | 1 | 100.0% | 2 | 100.0% |
| Residential Habilitation Intensive Behavioral | 29 | 89.7% | 32 | 93.8% |
| Residential Habilitation Standard | 634 | 91.3% | 700 | 91.9% |
| Respite | 269 | 63.9% | 290 | 72.8% |
| Special Medical Home Care | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Support Coordination | 701 | 92.6% | 983 | 91.4% |
| Support Coordination UA | 607 | 91.4% | 629 | 92.8% |
| Supported Living Coaching | 307 | 58.0% | 347 | 68.6% |
| **Total** | **5,130** | **77.5%** | **5,905** | **81.2%** |

### PDR Summary Results

#### PDR Scores by Review Component

A summary of PDR results by region is presented for Service Providers in Table 24 and for WSCs in Table 25. Average statewide scores for service providers were 90 percent or greater on all the PDR review components; however, scores in Suncoast were lower than in all other regions, with the exception of supports measured through the My Life Interview. WSC scores continue to be high, showing compliance rates of 95 percent or higher across all the review components.

| Region | Table 24. PDR Component Scores for Service Providers by APD Region  July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # of PDRs | Policy & Procedure (1,166) | Q&T (3,098) | | SSRR  (4,132) | MLI  (1,640) | | OBS |
| Outcomes | Supports |
| Northwest | 63 | 95.4% | | 90.1% | 90.7% | 95.4% | 99.4% | NA |
| Northeast | 187 | 94.7% | | 93.8% | 93.3% | 96.7% | 99.3% | NA |
| Central | 238 | 93.0% | | 92.3% | 92.0% | 90.2% | 97.9% | NA |
| Suncoast | 313 | 89.2% | | 88.5% | 88.2% | 89.3% | 98.2% | NA |
| Southeast | 182 | 91.4% | | 93.9% | 94.5% | 86.8% | 99.5% | NA |
| Southern | 183 | 92.7% | | 93.5% | 94.4% | 91.7% | 99.4% | NA |
| State | **1,166** | **92.0%** | | **91.8%** | **91.8%** | **90.7%** | **98.8%** | **NA** |

| Table 25. PDR Component Scores for WSCs by APD Region  July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Region | # of PDRs | Policy & Procedure (461) | Qualifications & Training (610) | WSC RR  Announced  (983) | WSC RR Unannounced  (629) |
| Northwest | 36 | 98.8% | 97.5% | 97.1% | 97.9% |
| Northeast | 67 | 98.0% | 96.6% | 95.4% | 97.0% |
| Central | 98 | 97.2% | 96.2% | 93.0% | 95.5% |
| Suncoast | 80 | 93.0% | 94.0% | 92.3% | 92.5% |
| Southeast | 121 | 94.6% | 94.6% | 96.4% | 97.9% |
| Southern | 59 | 97.1% | 94.3% | 97.6% | 98.3% |
| State | 461 | 96.0% | 95.3% | 95.0% | 96.4% |

#### PDR Score Range by Region

While the average scores across all the review components were relatively high, and the highest score in each region was 100 percent, the minimum PDR score in each region varies substantially for both service providers and WSCs, as shown in Table 26. The lowest service provider score was 2.8 percent (Northwest) and the lowest WSC score was only 11.3 percent (Northeast).

| Table 26. Lowest PDR Score by Region | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| July 2020 – March 2021 | | |
| Region | Service Providers | WSCs |
| Northwest | 2.8% | 82.2% |
| Northeast | 34.1% | 11.3% |
| Central | 32.3% | 27.9% |
| Suncoast | 9.8% | 45.2% |
| Southeast | 17.3% | 60.9% |
| Southern | 29.2% | 64.6% |

#### PDR by Provider Size

Florida’s providers of HCBS services, through the iBudget Waiver, vary greatly in the number of employees they have and the number of people served. As per APDs definition, WSCs provide services as a solo provider or as part of an agency. For this report, service providers have been categorized by size, with the number of people served, as follows:

* Small – 1 to 29
* Medium – 30 to 99
* Large – 100+

Information in Table 27 provides a summary of PDR results by provider size for service providers and by agency vs solo for WSCs, including for Compliance and Person Centered Practices. Compliance standards address required documents – Are they complete? Do they have all the necessary components? Person Centered Practices standards address best practices and the extent to which individuals have key outcomes in their lives, such as informed choice, desired levels of community integration and person centered service delivery. Alerts and the number of billing standards scored not met are presented as a rate per 10 reviews for each size category.

On average, scores for small service providers were somewhat lower than for medium or large providers; however, small providers were also somewhat less likely to have potential billing discrepancies. Service providers showed a greater alert rate and billing discrepancy rate than WSCs. Support Coordinators operating as solo providers scored lower than agencies across all the areas (Overall, Compliance, and Person Centered Scores), had a higher alert rate but a similar billing discrepancy rate.

| Table 27. Results by Provider Size and Agency vs Solo  July 2020 – March 2021 | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |  | Rate per 10 Reviews | |
| Service Providers | # Reviews | | Overall | Compliance | Person Centered  Practices | #  Alerts | #  BD | Alerts | Billing Discrepancy Standards |
| Small | 1,032 | 91.3% | | 91.3% | 91.3% | 342 | 1,001 | 3.31 | 9.70 |
| Medium | 104 | 94.9% | | 94.9% | 94.9% | 26 | 115 | 2.50 | 11.06 |
| Large | 30 | 96.1% | | 95.7% | 97.1% | 8 | 30 | 2.67 | 10.00 |
| **Total** | **1,166** | **92.1%** | | **92.1%** | **92.1%** | **376** | **1,146** | **3.22** | **9.83** |
| WSCs | | | | | | | | | |
| Agency | 103 | 97.5% | | 97.8% | 97.2% | 3 | 29 | 0.29 | 2.82 |
| Solo | 358 | 94.0% | | 94.6% | 93.3% | 49 | 106 | 1.37 | 2.96 |
| **Total** | **461** | **95.8%** | | **96.2%** | **95.3%** | **52** | **135** | **1.13** | **2.93** |

# Section III: Discussion and Recommendations

Findings in this report reflect data from PCR and PDR reviews completed between July 2020 and March 2021, with comparisons to Year 3 data collected prior to the pandemic and the shift from onsite to remote review processes (July 2019 – March 2020). A total of 1,094 PCRs, 1,627 PDRs and 141 CDC+ Representative reviews were completed, approved and available for analysis.

Provider feedback remains very positive with an average score on the feedback survey of 97.8 percent positive. During this quarter, Qlarant Regional Managers reviewed all reports before final approval and facilitated a quarterly meeting in each region to review data, explore trends, and discuss other relevant regional issues or best practices. Managers work continuously to revise and update processes to ensure the best quality assurance reviews possible.

The director and managers meet bi-weekly via conference call. When the pandemic has subsided, one face-to-face meeting will begin again to further enhance communication and ensure consistency in processes. Regional Managers and QARs continue to participate in rigorous field and file review reliability testing, and use bi-weekly conference calls to enhance training and reliability efforts through discussion of real situations and review questions.

## Overall Review Findings

Results from reviews completed this year indicate the majority of providers reviewed were in compliance with most requirements and individuals were generally satisfied with their services. Of note is the decreased satisfaction people have with their involvement in the community. This is likely directly related to the isolation and social distancing enforced due to the pandemic.

On average, scores from the MLI were higher for supports than for outcomes. Interview scores for people receiving services through CDC+ were higher than for people receiving services through the Waiver and WSCs scored higher on all components of the PDR than service providers.

The PCR consists of an interview with the person, an informal discussion with the person’s Support Coordinator, and a review of the record maintained by the Support Coordinator/CDC+ Consultant for that person. Results for the PCR components were similar to previous years and relatively high, most over 90 percent. Outcome scores for people receiving services through the Waiver were lowest, approximately 89 percent present to date this year.

Results from the PDRs conducted with service providers and WSCs indicate providers were in compliance with most all aspects of the review, as shown in the following graphic. Each component of the PDR process reflects an average score of approximately 91 percent or higher. There were no Observation scores.

## Recommendations

### Safety

Results from the MLI are similar to previous years, indicating Safety is the lowest scoring outcome area for people receiving services. While most service providers and WSCs offered supports to address safety and had policies in place to identify, address and report instances of abuse, neglect and exploitation (ANE), individuals did not always understand what neglect or exploitation mean, what to do if experiencing ANE, or what the different types of abuse are, such as physical or sexual. Individuals continue to indicate they do not know how to use the Abuse Hotline or how to find the number. Several recommendations from previous reports are still relevant.

Recommendation 1: Qlarant should ensure issues surrounding the Abuse Hotline are discussed during the next Quality Council meeting. Perhaps members could brainstorm ways to help ensure information about the abuse hotline and how to use it is provided to all people receiving services, in a way people with all communication styles can understand. In addition, there may be some information that could be developed and disseminated to families to help reach people receiving services who live in a family home.

Recommendation 2: A panel of people receiving services, and their families, could be invited to QC to discuss issues surrounding ANE. This may be more effective when the council is able to meet face-to-face again. Discussion should include how to enhance people’s understanding of ANE and what action to take when faced with any type of ANE, focusing on exploitation and neglect.

Recommendation 3: Ensure education about ANE, specifically for neglect and exploitation, is on the agenda for APD Regional provider meetings. Share best practices on how to ensure material is individualized so the person understands, i.e., proper communication and individualized methods are used for the educational session. Place a focus on exploitation and neglect because most people do seem to understand what abuse means.

### Possible Impact from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Several findings in the 1st three quarters may reflect the changes in our lives due to the pandemic. To date, areas of possible impact include the following:

* Outcomes for My Social Life was the second lowest scoring area in FY20 and the pandemic appears to have created even more barriers to life in the community as outcomes in this area decreased from 87.8 percent in FY20 to 83.4 percent in FY21. Clearly, as with the general population, people receiving services through the iBudget Waiver are not accessing the community or participating in community events (or events have been canceled) as desired, and the data reflect this. While supports seem to be excellent (97.2%) and providers may be offering clever and safe alternative activities, people are likely expressing dissatisfaction because they are not participating as they used to or as they want to.
* The greatest differences between pre and mid-pandemic, for both Waiver and CDC+, were satisfaction with involvement in the community, a decrease of 17.2 and 15.5 points respectively. This is a reasonable finding given the COVID pandemic, but may also indicate a need to increase alternative ways for people to access communities and friends through technologies such as Zoom and FaceTime or by ensuring individuals receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine so they can begin socializing with others in person again.
* Other areas people were least likely to be very satisfied were regarding health, having a meaningful day activity and with service providers who support them in their day activities.

Recommendation 4: With vaccines available to Floridians over 16 years of age, Qlarant Quality Assurance Reviewers (QARs) should work with service providers and Support Coordinators to ensure they are supporting fully vaccinated individuals to resume pre-pandemic activities within their communities.

Recommendation 5: Further, the Quality Council could develop work groups within their regions to ensure individuals who have not received the COVID-19 vaccine have access to educational resources on the various types of vaccines and know where to receive them. They can also work with service providers and Support Coordinators to come up with innovative and creative ways for these individuals to continue to engage in socially distanced activities in either outdoor or virtual settings – both of which have become increasingly common over the course of the pandemic.

### Medication Use

The rate of individuals receiving services who take five or more medications has consistently increased, from 36.3 percent in FY 2018 to 41 percent in FY 2019, to 43.1 percent during the first three quarters of FY 2021.[[16]](#footnote-17) Both pre and mid-pandemic data show that people living in licensed residential homes were much more likely to take multiple medications than were people living with the family or independently. Among individuals receiving waiver services, the current rate of 63.3 percent for residents of licensed residential homes (LRH) is more than double that for residents of a family home (27.3%) and about 20 points higher than for people living independently (43.4%). However, comparing the pre and mid pandemic data to date, the rate of multiple medication usage was similar for residents of LHRs but had increased by six points for people living independently and four points for people living with a family member.

Recommendation 6: The rate of multiple medication use for people receiving services through the iBudget waiver has increased every year for three years. Even though the medication list includes over-the-counter medications provided as a prescription for the person, the increase is something APD should further explore. Certain combinations of medication, even including over-the-counter types, could put people at higher risk for health issues and should be identified. This information could be provided to the Quality Council to discuss initiatives that might help reduce the rate of multiple medication use.

Recommendation 7: People living in LHRs were more often prescribed multiple medications more than people living in other residential settings. This finding has been consistent over the years. As we near the end of the review year, Qlarant should further explore which types of medications are administered in licensed residential homes, compared to other residential settings, and what other factors may be at play when driving increased medication rates for licensed residential home residents (e.g., primary disability type, age, outcomes for community integration).

Recommendation 8: The increase in multiple medication usage among individuals living in the family home or independently, comparing pre and mid pandemic data, should be closely monitored to determine if the increases are directly related to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic or some other reason. Qlarant could report these findings to the Quality Council when data from the entire year are available.

In addition, results have also consistently indicated many people receiving services do not understand their medications and most people who did not meet this critical standard were not aware of what they took, why, or what the potential side effects are of the medications they take. It is essential for individuals receiving services to understand their medications in order to more effectively control their own health care.

Recommendation 9: The ability to understand complex medications and diagnoses is difficult for many people, with or without a disability. The Quality Council could consider brainstorming ways to present information about providing education on medications and research resources and different ways to help disseminate the information.

Recommendation 10: Qlarant should further explore this historically low scoring outcome to determine which individuals are most at risk for not understanding the type of medication they are taking and their side effects. This information can help guide the Quality Council in efforts to provide education on medications by creating a target demographic for which education materials may be most beneficial.

### CDC+ Representatives

CDC+ Representatives are required to maintain certain documentation about the providers they hire and receipts for money they spend on behalf of the person receiving services through the CDC+ program. Since Qlarant started reviewing this documentation in 2010, results have improved significantly. For example, scores for background screening have increased from approximately 36 percent to the current rate of 83 percent. However, this indicator has typically been one of the lowest scoring areas for Representatives and has not shown much improvement for several years.

Recommendation 10: A workgroup or focus group, via a zoom webinar, may want to review training provided for CDC+ Representatives and determine if additional or updated education is warranted, particularly specific documentation about background screening requirements and how to reconcile monthly statements. Perhaps this training could include some examples from Representatives who have good systems in place to achieve either of these requirements.

Pre and mid-pandemic data show increases across multiple indicators that may suggest the desk record review process for Representatives is beneficial for document retrieval. The greatest increases were for indicators related to Directly Hired Employees (DHE). For example, there was an eight-point increase in the percent of records with accurate and approved timesheets for all DHEs available for review and nearly a seven-point increase in the percent of records with completed and signed Job Descriptions for each DHE. Complete Vendor Packets for all vendors and independent contractors available for review increased by approximately five points.

Recommendation 11: The desk-review process saves on travel time for Qlarant assessors and is proving to benefit CDC+ Representatives as well. While the remote process may not be appropriate for many of the PDR and PCR review processes, APD and AHCA may want to consider a hybrid review format and allow Representatives to continue to receive PDRs via desk-review after the pandemic ends, or receive a desk review every other time a review is completed to not lose the onsite benefits as well.

### Potential Billing Discrepancies

During the PDR, many standards are used to assess the accuracy of the provider’s billing in the claims data. Service providers perform considerably worse than WSCs and small providers have a higher billing discrepancy rate than medium or large providers. The smaller providers may not have the ability to keep up with paper work, especially if working alone. By service, the lowest compliance was for providers offering Personal Supports (68.1%), Respite (72.8%), and Supported Living Coaching (68.6%). The greatest differences compared to pre-pandemic data indicate an increase in compliance for Supported Employment and Supported Living Coaching, 11.8 and 10.3 points higher in the current year, respectively.

Recommendation 12: Qlarant could work with APD and AHCA to organize a web-based focus group discussion with providers who offer these three services (Personal Supports, Respite and Support Living Coaching) to discuss the billing discrepancy indicators and identify barriers to meeting these standards. Subsequent to this meeting, a training could be developed that targets specific issues for providers of these three services.

Recommendation 13: As part of the web-based discussion suggested in Recommendation 12, providers of Supported Employment and Supported Living Coaching may be tapped to discuss what systems they may have put in place or changes in procedures may have helped improve their billing practices. These could be shared with all providers.

### Record Reviews by Region

Scores on all the PDR components were relatively high. While data to date do not show large discrepancies across regions for the different review components (Policy and Procedures, Qualifications and Training, Service Specific Record Reviews, and My Life Interviews) Suncoast was consistently the lowest scoring region on all the record reviews.

Recommendation 14: Qlarant could provide information on documentation areas for which Suncoast scores are lowest. Qlarant could then use the next Regional Quarterly Meeting to discuss documentation, specifically targeting these areas and providing suggestions of best practices or other means to improve performance. These could also be shared across all regions to enhance documentation practices.

**S**ummary

Findings from reviews completed during the 1st two quarters of FY 2021 were generally positive. Compliance rates on average remained high, even in the midst of a global pandemic. Qlarant, AHCA and APD continue to revise and update processes to help keep providers, individuals receiving services, and Qlarant’s reviewers safe and healthy. Through these efforts the state has been able to continue oversight of this important program and at the same time help providers continue to offer critical services to a vulnerable population.

While there is some indication that satisfaction with community connections is being impacted and medication use in group home settings has increased, providers continue to offer support for the people they serve. In addition, data suggests that for some documentation, desk review processes may be beneficial to providers and reviewers alike. Moving forward, as the pandemic subsides and onsite reviews are again possible, Qlarant, AHCA and APD will discuss which portions of the remote processes may be beneficial to keep, creating a hybrid type of PDR.

# Attachment 1: Customer Service Activity

**January – March 2021**

| **Customer Service Topic** | **#** | **Description** | **Outcome** | **Avg Time** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Address/ Phone/Name Update | 36 | Providers called to update their phone numbers/addresses/Names after receiving a notification letter or to ensure a letter is received in the future. | Phone numbers/addresses were updated in the Fenix application, and providers were also advised to update contact information with AHCA. | 1 day |
| Background Screening | 2 | One provider called requesting clarification on the Attestation of Good Moral Character and a second was received via a feedback survey seeking clarification regarding the Clearinghouse Roster. | One provider was guided to the APD website to locate the Attestation of Good Moral Character and the other was provided with an example of a roster. | 1 day |
| Clarification | 14 | Providers called asking for clarification on the agency/solo rate, service limitations and acceptable training. | Questions were answered by CSR or Regional Managers. Callers were referred to the iBudget Handbook, local APD Regional Office and the Qlarant tools posted on our website. | 1 day |
| Contact QAR | 13 | Providers called to contact the QAR assigned to do their review. | QARs were contacted by office staff and asked to contact the provider. | 1 day |
| HSRI Survey | 25 | Family members, legal guardians and providers call with questions such as what is the purpose of the survey, can they assist the person in completing, where to mail it and is there a Spanish version. | The purpose of the survey was explained, questions were answered and a Spanish version was mailed when requested. | 1 day |
| Miscellaneous/Other | 12 | Family, stakeholders, APD and providers called with requests unrelated to our Desk Review process, where to send their Plan of Remediation, how to report Abuse or to speak to a specific Regional Manager. | Questions within our scope of work were answered. Where appropriate, callers were referred to the Regional Manager, APD and AHCA. | 1 day |
| Next Review | 46 | Providers called asking when their next review will occur. Providers called following receipt of their PDR notification letter to advice of vacation, planned unavailability or resignation in order to avoid possible non-compliance if attempts to contact them while away are made. Providers also called with questions related to the Desk Review process. | The review process was explained to the providers, including all the factors that are involved in scheduling. If indicated the assigned reviewer is notified of issues to consider when scheduling or the provider is removed from the schedule. | 1 day |
| Review Tools | 7 | Providers called with questions regarding where to find the most review tools, most specifically the Desk Review Checklists. Providers also called with general tool related questions. | Providers were referred to our website and shown the current tools posted. Questions regarding the tools were answered, with references to the protocols and the not met reasons. | 1 day |
| Provider Feedback Survey | 3 | Providers have the option to request a call from a manager when submitting a Provider Feedback Survey after their review. | The managers assigned to the Region associated with the call back requests were notified. Contact was either made or attempted with not success. | 1 Day |
| Provider Web Search | 2 | One provider called to inquire why her Agency does not appear in the provider search website and a parent/ legal guardian needed assistance searching for a PT and Speech Therapist in their local area. | Through research it was determined only one service is showing for the provider because she has not yet billed for others and this search is driven by claims. The parent/legal guardian was assisted with navigating the site and when that was unsuccessful she was assisted with a google search. | 1 day |
| Question | 28 | Providers call with questions regarding documentation or qualification requirements; for assistance accessing resources on our website; for explanations of the review processes. | Questions are answered with references to appropriate documents or entities. | 1 day |
| Potential Billing Discrepancy | 4 | Providers call with questions about how to repay money identified as a potential billing discrepancy in their quality assurance review report. | Providers are given the AHCA email address for potential billing discrepancy. [APDProviderBilling@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:APDProviderBilling@ahca.myflorida.com) | 1 day |
| Reconsideration | 13 | Providers call asking for clarification on the process to submit a request for reconsideration or inquiring as to the status of a request already submitted. | The reconsideration process is explained to provider, including reference to our Operational Policies and Procedures. The provider is directed to the end of their PDR report and the FSQAP website where they will find detailed instructions on how to submit a request for reconsideration. | 1 day |
| Report Requested | 16 | Providers call or email requesting their report be re-sent. | Mailing addresses are confirmed and reports are re-sent. | 1 day |
| Review | 14 | Providers call asking for an explanation of their reports. | Reports are reviewed and explained; providers are referred to their local APD office for technical assistance. | 1 day |
| **Total Number of Calls** | **235** |  |  |  |

1. Also referred to just as regions in the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Minutes for each meeting are on the FSQAP Portal Client Site and available to AHCA and APD (<https://florida.qlarant.com/Public2/qualityCouncil/archive.html>). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The list of topics and number of calls per topic are presented in Attachment 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. All review tools are posted on the FSQAP website (https://florida.qlarant.com/). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The Other category for Residential Setting for the Waiver included a total of 15 in Assisted Living Facility, two in a Foster Home, two AHCA Adult Family Care home and one non-assisted living. The Other category for Primary Disability for the Waiver included Down Syndrome (41) and Spina Bifida (13), Prader Willi (5), and Phelan-McDermid Syndrome (2) and Epilepsy (2). For CDC+ “Other” included Spina Bifida (2) and Down Syndrome (2). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Some standards are weighted for calculating the overall provider’s score. For example, standards measuring health and safety items are generally more important and therefore weigh heavier when calculating the provider’s score. In this report, unless otherwise noted, unweighted results are shown (Percent Met). This provides an accurate reflection of the number and percent of providers who have the standards scored as present. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. This indicator in Year 3 was “Background screening results for all Vendors and Independent Contractors who render direct care are available for review.” In Year 4 “Vendors” was removed. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The list of medications captured in the Health Summary was revised July 1, 2018. Dozens of medications which were previously captured in the ‘Other’ category were added to the list of medications in the Health Summary. List includes over the counter medications prescribed for the person. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Recall the N sizes within different demographic categories, particularly for CDC+, are relatively small. For example, the “other” disability category had an n size of only four for CDC+. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. All review tools are posted on the FSQAP website 67<https://florida.qlarant.com/Public2/resourceCenter/providers/discoveryReviewTools/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Deemed providers are permitted to skip one year for the PDR. Deemed is currently defined as an Overall PDR Score of 95% or higher for Service Providers and 99% or higher for WSCs, with no alerts and no potential billing discrepancies for which the total reimbursement amount is five percent or greater. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. An addition 141 CDC+ Representative reviews were completed and are considered PDRs; however; results for these are reported with the CDC+ findings presented earlier. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. All PCR and PDR tools can be viewed on the Qlarant website: [https://florida.qlarant.com/Public2/resourceCenter/providers/discoveryReviewTools/index.html](https://portal.qlarant.com/sites/PAV/archive/client/PDR%20Reports/Reports%20FY19/FSQAP%20FY19%20Annual%20Report%20version%201%20to%20post.docx) [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. See the PCR My Life Interview Section for a more detailed description of the interview standards. Some standards do not apply to all services reviewed during the PDR. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. N sizes may vary throughout the report due to missing and/or not applicable data. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. The list of medications includes vitamins and over the counter medications that may have been prescribed to the person. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)