2024 OVR CSNA Findings

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Agenda

- Methodology

- Environmental Scan

- OVR Consumer Data Highlights

- Concerns Report Results

- RSA Primary Focus Areas

- Priority Needs and Strategic Recommendations

- Q&A

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Methodology

Data Sources

- American Community Survey (ACS)
- Kentucky Post Secondary Outcomes Center (KYPSO)
- Social Security Disability Insurance Program statistical data
- Annual Disability Statistics Compendium
- OVR Case Data (closed cases FFY 2021-2023)

Data Collection

- Concerns Report Assessment
- Focus groups, surveys, forums
- Key Informant Interviews

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Environmental Scan

Highlights

Disability Prevalence Rate (18-64)

Disability Employment Rate (18-64)

Disability Poverty Rate (18-64)

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Environmental Scan Highlights

Over 800,000 Kentuckians with Disabilities (18.1%)

- Top three nationally for disability prevalence
- 16.3% of working-age population (18-64)

Significant Educational Attainment Gap

16.5% of Kentucky Students Receive Special Education Services

- Less than half achieve competitive integrated employment within a year of graduating high school

32.3% Employment Rate (18-64)

- Third largest employment gap in the United States (44.2%)

31.2% Poverty Rate (18-64)

One in Ten Working-Age Kentuckians is on SSI/SSDI

- Top three national for benefits rate

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Disability Prevalence Rate (18-64)

Disability Prevalence Rate (18-64)

- 0% - 10.8%
- 10.9% - 16.9%
- 17% - 23.1%
- 23.2% - 29.3%
- 29.4% - 37.4%
- ▭ Appalachian County Boundary

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Disability Employment Rate (18-64)

Disability Employment Rate (18-64)

- 0% - 15%
- 15.1% - 25.3%
- 25.4% - 35.6%
- 35.7% - 46%
- 46.1% - 65.9%
- ▭ Appalachian County Boundary

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Disability Poverty Rate (18-64)

Statewide Summary

OVR Case Data Highlights

VR Utilization Rate (18-64)

School-Aged VR Utilization Rate (15-21)

OVR 3-Year Case Success Rate

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OVR Case Data Highlights (1 of 3)

38,465 Cases Closed Over Three-Year Period

Average Age of 39 (from age 15 to age 97)

54% of Consumers Identified as Male

80% of Consumers Identified as White

- Other races/ethnicities proportionally or better represented
- Except consumers of Asian descent

7.3% VR Utilization Rate (18-64)

23% Utilization for School-Aged Consumers (15-21)

27.8% Case Success Rate

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VR Utilization Rate (18-64)

VR Utilization Rate (18-64)

- 0% - 2.6%
- 2.7% - 5.7%
- 5.8% - 8.8%
- 8.9% - 11.9%
- 12% - 15%
- 15.1% - 18.5%
- Appalachian County Boundary

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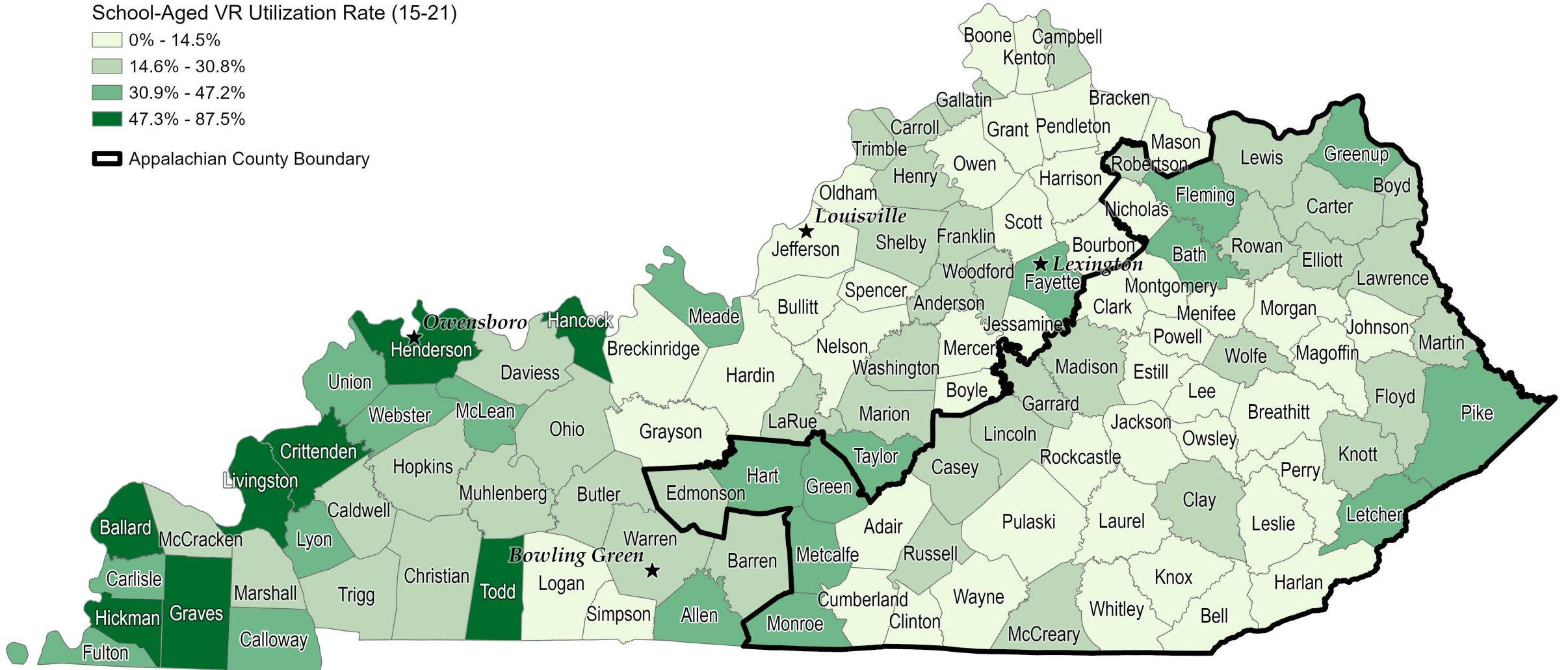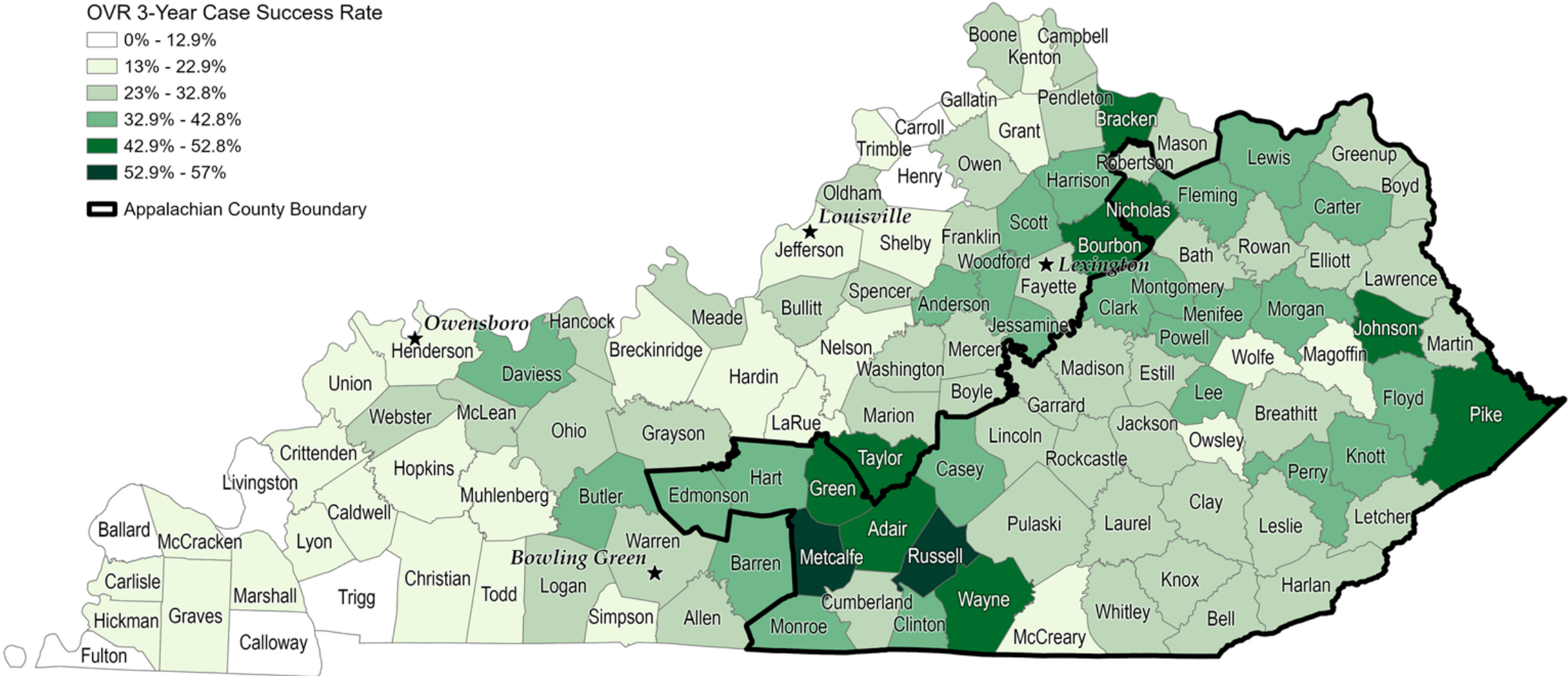Vocational Rehabilitation
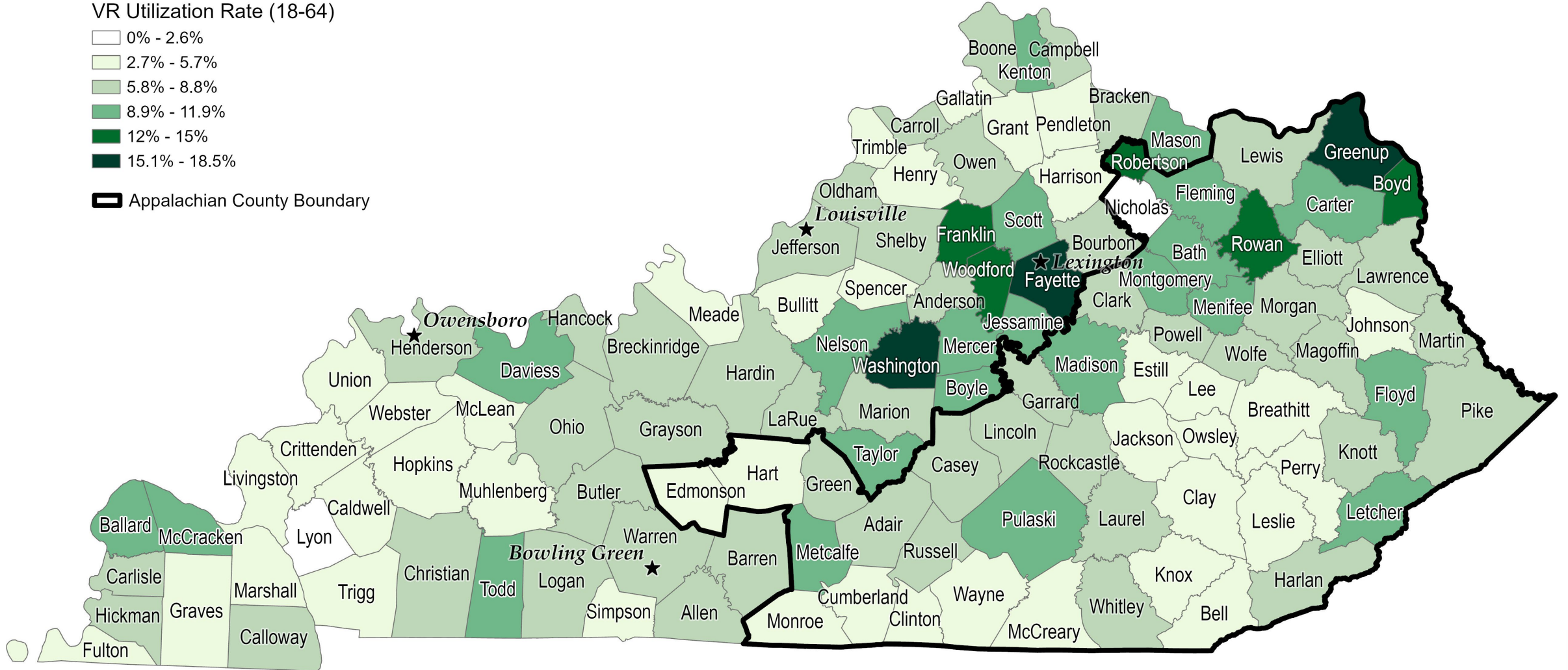
School-Aged VR Utilization Rate (15-21)

School-Aged VR Utilization Rate (15-21)

- 0% - 14.5%
- 14.6% - 30.8%
- 30.9% - 47.2%
- 47.3% - 87.5%
- Appalachian County Boundary

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OVR 3-Year Case Success Rate

OVR 3-Year Case Success Rate

- ☐ 0% - 12.9%
- ☐ 13% - 22.9%
- ☐ 23% - 32.8%
- ☐ 32.9% - 42.8%
- ☐ 42.9% - 52.8%
- ☐ 52.9% - 57%
- ▬ Appalachian County Boundary

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6,739 pre-ETS Cases (17.5% of all closed cases)

- 70.1% never applied for services
- Only 22.9% made it to IPE-phase
- 31.4% that made it to IPE-phase achieved successful closure

Females Underserved

- Possible influence from male-dominated transition numbers

Consumers with Blindness or Visual Impairment Underserved (-16.7%)

Overserving Those Who Were Employed

22% Were on SSI/SSDI at Application

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OVR Case Data Highlights (3 of 3)

½ of OVR Consumers Never Make It to IPE-phase

Unsuccessful Closures = Average of $5,837 and 1,033 Days

- Outliers- $794,728 and 10,629 days (29 years)

Successful Closures = Average of $6,384 and 692 Days

- Outliers- $407,094 and 7,144 days (19 years)

55.5% of Those Who Make It to IPE-phase Achieve Successful Closure

Average Annual Increase of $19,719 for Successful Closures

Concerns Report

High Satisfaction Areas

Potential Growth Areas

Priority Improvement Areas

High Satisfaction Areas

Consumer Engagement and Feedback

- OVR provides opportunities for consumers to give feedback and listens to their concerns, with high satisfaction rates among both general and transition-age consumers (89.9% and 83.6%, respectively).

- OVR emphasizes consumer involvement in creating individualized plans of employment, ensuring services are tailored to meet specific needs (86.9% satisfaction among general consumers).

Professionalism and Support

- OVR counselors are dedicated to providing quality services and are professional and helpful, achieving high satisfaction ratings across various groups (89.7% satisfaction among general consumers and 81.8% among transition-age consumers).

- OVR staff and administration respond in a timely manner to both consumer and CRP needs (84.2% satisfaction among general consumers and 75.9% among CRPs).

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High Satisfaction Areas

Accessibility and Availability of Services

- OVR services are accessible and available to consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities, with high satisfaction ratings (88.3% among general consumers and 81.4% among CRPs).

Collaboration with CRPs

- OVR values and emphasizes partnerships with CRPs, fostering a collaborative environment to provide necessary services (87.8% satisfaction among CRPs).

- Clear and open communication between OVR staff and CRP staff is a notable strength (80.8% satisfaction among CRPs).

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Potential Growth Areas

Awareness and Outreach

- Awareness of OVR services among Kentuckians with disabilities needs improvement, with the lowest satisfaction rating identified among general consumers (62.2%) and transition-age consumers (67.1%).

- CRPs also indicated that awareness of OVR services needs enhancement (67.5%).

Resource Availability and Support

- Insufficient funding and resources impact the service provision, with CRPs highlighting the need for increased financial support and transparency.

- There are challenges in ensuring that referrals to CRPs are appropriate and well-informed of service expectations (66.2% satisfaction among CRPs).

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Concerns Report Results (4 of 6)

Potential Growth Areas

Training and Professional Development

- OVR staff performance evaluations, opportunities for growth and advancement, and competitive compensation need improvement to enhance staff satisfaction and effectiveness.
- There is a need for more training and resources for both counselors and CRPs to ensure high-quality service provision.

Transportation and Accessibility

- Transportation access remains a significant barrier for consumers, particularly in rural areas, impacting their ability to access services and employment opportunities.
- Improvements in website usability and accessibility are necessary to enhance service delivery and communication.

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Potential Growth Areas

Specific Service Gaps

- Supported employment services need to be more appropriately emphasized and available, particularly for transition-age youth with disabilities.

- Ensuring high-quality pre-ETS and restoring original services and funding levels are critical to better meet the needs of this group.

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Concerns Report Results (6 of 6)

Priority Improvement Areas

Service Efficiency and Timeliness

- OVR staff are given the time and resources to focus on serving consumers (48.4% satisfaction among OVR counselors and staff).

- There is a reasonable number of staff to address consumers' needs (38.1% satisfaction among OVR counselors and staff).

- The CMS system is user-friendly and efficient (34.6% satisfaction among OVR counselors and staff).

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Primary Focus Areas

Section I: Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities

Section II: Needs of Individuals Who Have Been Unserved and Underserved

Section III: Statewide Workforce Investment System

Section IV: Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities

Section V: Community Rehabilitation Programs

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RSA Primary Focus Areas

I. Vocational Rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD)

II. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and those who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program

III. Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system

IV. Transition-age youth with disabilities

V. The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state.

Employment barriers

- High unemployment rates
- Rural employment disparities

Economic challenges

- High poverty rates
- Benefits dependency

Housing and Healthcare

- High housing burden
- Limited accessible housing
- Health insurance coverage

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Access and transportation

- Healthcare access
- Transportation barriers
- Supported employment

Service accessibility and communication

- Challenges in reaching staff
- Website usability issues
- Long wait times
- Independent living services

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Unserved/Underserved Groups Proportionally Represented

- OVR served most racial and ethnic groups at proportional or better rates compared to state census data.
- OVR also served consumers who are deaf and hard of hearing at proportional rates.

High Pre-IPE Exit Rates from Services

- Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American consumers had high pre-IPE exit rates (34.1% and 30.2%, respectively) compared to White OVR consumers (18.6%).

Low Utilization Rates

- Consumers who are blind or visually impaired were significantly underrepresented, with utilization rates far below the state average (-16.7%).
- Consumers who identified as Asian were also underrepresented within OVR case records.

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Disparities in Service Provision

- Certain unserved/underserved groups had lower case expenditures and/or shorter service durations compared to other groups.

- Most notably, Hispanic/Latino consumers had on average, lower case expenditures ($4,690) and shorter service durations (507 days) compared to White consumers ($6,236 and 874 days, respectively).

Disparities in Outcomes

- The case success rates varied substantially for unserved/underserved groups.

- For example, OVR consumers from the rural and Appalachian parts of the state had higher overall case success rates (57.3% and 57.9%, respectively) relative to their metropolitan and non-Appalachian counterparts.

- Notably, rates of successful outcomes for Black/African American consumers (36%) lagged far behind that of White consumers (57.7%).

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Stronger Stakeholder Collaboration

- Enhanced collaboration among vocational rehabilitation services, Kentucky Career Centers, employers, and educational institutions is necessary to streamline service delivery and improve employment outcomes.

- For example, the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) survey indicated that 80% of respondents reported having a good or excellent working relationship with OVR.

Integration with Workforce Development Programs

- Effective integration of VR services with broader workforce development programs.

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Resource Availability

- Improved access to resources, including funding, technology, and support services, is necessary to address the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.

- According to KCC survey respondents, 88.3% reported that their technology needs were met, but there are still gaps in resources, particularly for alternate or accessible formats.

Infrastructure Support

- Investment in modern infrastructure and technology is crucial to support remote or hybrid service models, particularly in rural areas.

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Evaluation of Workforce Programs

- Continuous evaluation of workforce programs is needed to measure their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- The Kentucky Inclusive Workforce Summit and RETAIN Kentucky are examples of initiatives aimed at enhancing program effectiveness.

Tailored Programs

- Development of tailored workforce programs that address the specific needs of individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, is vital.
- Survey data showed that training needs for KCC staff include support for Social Security Work Incentives, Assistive Technology, and various disability-specific supports.

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Kentucky Inclusive Workforce Summit

- This summit, organized by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, brings together stakeholders to discuss strategies for improving employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

RETAIN Kentucky

- This project has served over 3,000 Kentuckians, helping individuals with disabilities stay at work and return to work, demonstrating a positive impact on workforce retention and health integration.

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High Rates of Early Exit from Services

- A significant proportion (66.3%) of transition-age youth exited services before IPE phase.

Low Pre-ETS Conversion Rates

- The conversion rate from pre-ETS to VR services was 29.9%, with significant variability (ranging from 23.6% to 43%).

Varied VR Utilization Rates

- VR utilization rates for individuals aged 15 to 21 vary widely across counties.
- For instance, Ballard County shows an exceptionally high rate (87.5%), while Jackson County has a low rate (2.5%).

Lack of Awareness of Services

- Only 67.1% of survey respondents feel that students with disabilities are aware of OVR services.
- Also emerged in focus groups and key informant interviews.

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High Satisfaction with Counselor Support

- 83.6% of respondents are satisfied with the opportunities for giving feedback and being heard by OVR.

- Additionally, 82.8% feel that OVR prioritizes student preferences for job goals and Assistive Technology.

Professionalism and Helpfulness

- 81.8% of transition-age consumers survey respondents feel that OVR counselors and staff are professional and helpful

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Lack of Quality Employment Opportunities

- Only 68.2% of respondents feel that OVR helps transition students achieve and maintain quality employment opportunities.

Supported Employment Services Availability

- 69.8% of respondents feel that supported employment services are available when needed.

Job Seeking Skill Gaps

- There are significant gaps in essential job-seeking skills.

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Regional Disparities:

- High-quality transition services are more available in certain areas.

Availability of CRPs and Pre-ETS

- Lack of CRPs and pre-ETS availability in certain parts of the state affects the quality of services provided.

Specialization and Staffing

- Insufficient OVR staff to specialize and provide focused transition-age services in some regions.

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High Satisfaction with Counselor Support

- 88.4% of CRP respondents expressed satisfaction with OVR counselors' compassion and flexibility.

Strong Partnerships with CRPs

- 87.8% of respondents felt that OVR values and emphasizes partnerships with CRPs.

Clear Communication and Support

- 80.8% of respondents indicated that there is clear and open communication between OVR staff and CRP staff.

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Insufficient Funding

- 39% of CRP respondents identified a lack of long-term support funding as a major barrier to providing services.

Need for Better Consumer Vetting

- 66.2% of respondents felt that referrals to CRPs were not always appropriate candidates for services and were not well-informed of service expectations.

Transportation Challenges

- 68.7% of respondents cited transportation access as a significant barrier to service delivery.

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Issues with pre-ETS Rollout and Sustainability

- Only 68.3% of respondents felt that high-quality pre-ETS are being provided to transition-age youth.

Desire for Restored Services and Funding Levels

- There is a call for restoring pre-ETS services and funding levels to better meet the needs of transition-age youth with disabilities.

Transparent and Inclusive Planning

- There is a strong desire among CRPs for transparent and inclusive long-term planning with OVR.

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Need for Increased Support and Financial Transparency

- CRPs advocate for more support and transparency in financial processes.

Authorization and Reimbursement Delays

- Only 77.8% of respondents were satisfied with the timeliness of OVR authorizations and reimbursements.

Lengthy Processes

- Concerns were raised about lengthy authorization and intake processes.

Access to Resources

- 88.3% of respondents indicated that their technology needs were met, but there is still a call for more quality-focused training and resources.

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Priority Need Areas

Identified Needs

Strategic Recommendations

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10 Priority Need Areas Identified

1. Engaging and Retaining Consumers
2. Increasing Awareness and Outreach
3. Streamlining Service Processes
4. Addressing Geographic Disparities
5. Expanding Services and Supports for Consumers
6. Addressing Staffing Issues
7. Improving CRP Engagement and Sustainability
8. Strengthening Statewide and Regional Partnerships
9. Expanding Evaluation Efforts
10. Enhancing Data Management

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1. Engaging and Retaining Consumers

Identified Need

Consumers are exiting OVR services early at high rates, particularly among specific subgroups. There is also a low conversion rate from pre-ETS to VR services. Additionally, there are challenges in maintaining open communication with consumers throughout their rehabilitation journey.

Strategic Recommendations

- Develop a Consumer Retention Program
- Improve Pre-ETS Conversion Rates
- Enhance Website and Social Media Presence
- Varied Application Methods

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2. Increasing Awareness and Outreach

Identified Need

There is low satisfaction with outreach and awareness efforts among staff and counselors. Additionally, certain underserved groups, such as consumers who are blind or visually impaired, Asian consumers, and those who are unemployed and have exited the workforce, are not adequately reached.

Strategic Recommendations

- Utilize Technology and Community Resources
- Targeted Outreach Campaigns
- Social Media and Online Engagement

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3. Streamlining Service Processes

Identified Need

Low satisfaction with the CMS system and service processes is hindering efficiency. There are also delays in authorization and reimbursement impacting service delivery.

Strategic Recommendations

- Improve the Case Management System (CMS)
- Streamline Application Processes
- Provide Timely Authorizations

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4. Addressing Geographic Disparities

Identified Need

There are significant disparities in service utilization and outcomes across different regions, with specific challenges faced by Appalachian Kentucky.

Strategic Recommendations

- Evaluate Regional Differences
- Targeted Support for Rural Areas
- Address Challenges in the Appalachian Region

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5. Expanding Services and Supports for Consumers

Identified Need

There are gaps in service provision, particularly for supported employment services, mental health support, and independent living. Additionally, the high incidence of benefits receipt in the state poses a barrier to employment.

Strategic Recommendations

- Increase Availability of Independent Living Services
- Promote Self-Advocacy
- Integrate Mental Health with VR Services
- Expand Transportation Programs and Improve Transportation Infrastructure
- Expand Supported Employment Programs

6. Addressing Staffing Issues

Identified Need

High caseloads and insufficient staff impact service delivery. There is also a need for more counselors in specific geographic regions and specialized transition-age counselors.

Strategic Recommendations

- Increase OVR Staffing Levels
- Regional Staffing Needs
- Provide Specialized Training

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7. Improving CRP Engagement and Sustainability

Identified Need

Insufficient funding and resources impact the viability of CRPs. Better communication and collaboration between OVR and CRPs are also needed to ensure effective service delivery.

Strategic Recommendations

- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Alternative Funding Solutions
- Regular Communication Schedule

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8. Strengthening Statewide and Regional Partnerships

Identified Need

There is a need to improve relationships with key partners to enhance service delivery and resource sharing. Strengthening partnerships with educational entities, workforce investment systems, and healthcare providers is crucial.

Strategic Recommendations

- Enhance Collaboration with Educational Entities
- Support Workforce Investment System
- Advocate for Inclusive Workforce
- Partner with Healthcare Providers

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9. Expanding Evaluation Efforts

Identified Need

There is a need for specialized evaluations to understand specific population needs and service effectiveness. Assessing the reach and impact of OVR's online presence and social media efforts is also important.

Strategic Recommendations

- Conduct Specialized Evaluations
- Assess Online Reach
- Regular Assessments of Service Outliers

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10. Enhancing Data Management

Identified Need

Incomplete or missing data impacts the ability to draw meaningful conclusions. There is a need for better data collection and analysis to support decision-making.

Strategic Recommendations

- Improve Data Collection Methods
- Streamline Data Coding Processes
- Track Additional Demographics

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Q&A

Questions and feedback

Thank you!

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