



Health and Recovery Services Administration

Addressing Employee Concerns



Thank you for your input. We are interested. We are committed.

Thank you for participating in last fall's DSHS Employee Satisfaction Survey. The results have been posted on iHRSA now for several months, and we encourage you to take a look at them. (*The administration scores are recapped on Pages 5 and 6 of this report.*)

There is good news in the survey responses. Over the past year, HRSA employees rated their administration higher than the previous year – and you rated HRSA higher than DSHS employees overall rated their own work units. That is especially welcome news to your Senior Leadership, because I know Senior Leadership takes these ratings seriously and worked hard on our action plan following the 2006 survey.

This is not to say that the workplace is perfect or that everything in HRSA is operating as it should. There is always work to be done. There are always improvements to be made.

In fact, three concerns do stand out in the survey. You gave relatively low ratings to these three questions:

- Do we use customer feedback to improve our work processing?
- Do we know how the agency measures success?
- Do we receive recognition for a job well done?

Consequently, these are areas that will get renewed focus this year. Here, in a new action plan for 2008, the Executive Committee has outlined some new ideas for the coming year. As always, we appreciate your feedback throughout the year, not just in the agency-wide survey. If you are interested in participating in this year's Agency Reassessment Project, or in working on any cross-divisional projects, please let our Communications Director, Jim Stevenson, know that you want to be more involved.

-- Doug Porter, Assistant Secretary, HRSA

-- Heidi Robbins Brown, Deputy Assistant Secretary, HRSA

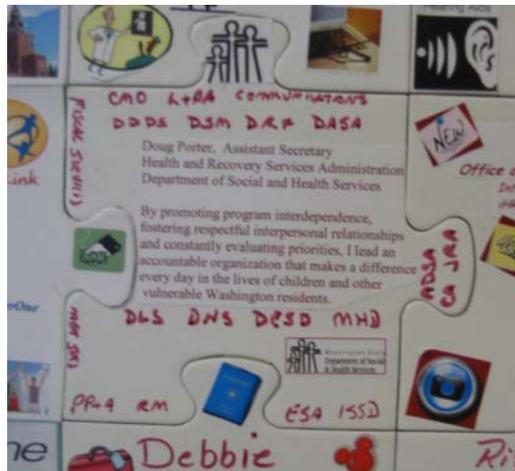


CONTACT INFORMATION

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Focus Issue 1: Using customer feedback



Summary of the Issue

HRSA employees gave this item overall the lowest rating in the 2007 satisfaction survey. The administration scored an average 45.4 points, the only area in which we scored below 50 percent. Scores were especially low in the Mental Health Division and in the Division of Disability Determination Services. But they were low everywhere.

What were employees telling us?

It is dangerous to draw too many conclusions from a single low rating. But HRSA will keep its focus on this area of customer feedback. We need to ask ourselves how we can use the feedback we receive from providers and clients more effectively, and – most importantly – how our staff can relay that feedback to managers and senior leadership so that it does not get overlooked. We also need to remember that “customers” can be internal as well as external.



Our plan for the coming year

- HRSA receives a wealth of feedback from our customers and business partners in the form of RDA client and provider surveys and data that is compiled and maintained by the MACSC staff. The Steering Committees are beginning to share data across boundaries, but this finding in the survey is a reminder that we can look beyond the costs and billings. **Jim Stevenson, Manning Pellanda, MaryAnne Lindeblad.**
- Continue quarterly employee focus groups and periodic surveys on issues of concern to HRSA employees. Prepare periodic report cards on HRSA survey responses and additional action planning. **Kay Gedrose and Jim Stevenson**
- Put a priority on leadership involvement in events and activities throughout HRSA, including division all-staff meetings, to bring top leadership into contact with line staff and to solicit feedback and ideas. **Division directors, Doug Porter, Heidi Robbins Brown**
- Improve structure of iHRSA Internet and Intranet for interactive staff communications, including more feedback opportunities between line staff and leadership. **Rich Campbell and Jim Stevenson**



Focus Issue 2: Holding ourselves accountable

Summary of the Issue

HRSA has operated with two key principles over the past eight years: We strive to be a more accountable organization, and we want to be prudent purchasers of health-care services. In some ways, we have achieved those goals. This year's supplemental budget process was very smooth – and senior leadership felt it happened because we were credible spokesmen for our administration's needs. But employees' reaction to this issue on the survey suggests we need to review those assumptions.



What were employees telling us?

In the agency reassessment, which accompanies each year's satisfaction survey, a panel of HRSA employees and managers rated three areas as our top priorities for improvement. They were 1) Strengthening leadership, particularly at the front-line supervisor level; 2) Better communication between the organization and line staff; and 3) Explain more effectively to staff why we do what we do. Understanding our role in the organization is a major step toward holding ourselves accountable for what we do.



Our plans for the coming year

- Supervisors need to be more interactive with staff. A new ZIP training series this year will introduce front-line supervisors to effective management techniques and give them an opportunity to form mentoring relationships with senior staff. **Kay Gedrose.**
- HRSA's four key Steering Committees (Pharmacy, Durable Medical Equipment, Providers, and Licensed Health-Care Professional) are using new data-driven processes to make decisions about the future direction of benefits and coverage. The Steering Committee story, like that of evidence-based practices, needs to be presented on iHRSA in an informative and entertaining way for the entire staff. **Jim Stevenson** and **MaryAnne Lindeblad**
- Each office in HRSA has developed business plans for its day-to-day operations. In the coming year, HRSA must complete the journey, showing staff how daily operations mesh with the strategic plan and long-range decisions.
- Accountability also means a respectful workplace. All HRSA employees can help make the workplace a pleasant experience for their colleagues, and Senior Leadership will set an example by developing and adopting a Code of Conduct and Workplace Etiquette. **Senior Leadership.**





Focus Issue 3: Recognizing a job done well



Summary of the Issue

How am I doing? That is the question every employee has, and it is the question every good organization must answer. Accountability is a two-way street, holding us to task when things don't go well -- and recognizing our successes when things do. Recognition of good work and public acknowledgement of it must be an equal partner in this process.

What were employees telling us?

The survey indicates HRSA still needs to spend more time as an organization looking at these processes and making sure they remain on track. In 2007, HRSA moved to a new formal employee recognition system, one based at the division and office level. But employees also want to know that their efforts contribute to the overall success of the administration and the agency. Employees in focus groups and staff encounters have expressed satisfaction with the direction of our new employee recognition system. Now we need to look to the details and make sure the system continues to grow toward the goals we set out last year.



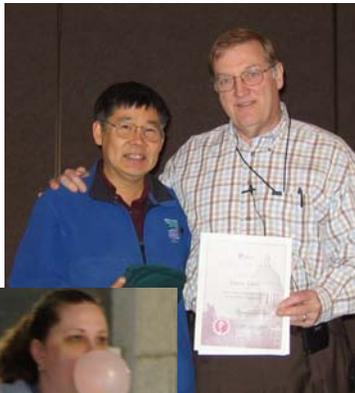
Our plans for the coming year

- EC will continue to monitor the formal recognition process put in place by the divisions, and it is important that senior leadership adjust and tweak the system when necessary. This winter, EC adopted a new funding formula for division recognition, trying to equalize the financial support of recognition events in large and small divisions. **Executive Committee**
- EC now is discouraging divisions from holding fundraising events to support employee recognition. That is an expense the organization should support, not force upon employees. **Executive Committee**
- Annual reviews should include formal and informal recognition and cite achievements – managers should include Cause for Applause-type recognition in performance evaluations. **Gail Douglas**
- Cause for Applause citations are now read at Open Communications Forums and posted on the Web page. HRSA is working on plans to automate Cause for Applause certificates and post them on iHRSA. **Jim Stevenson and Rich Campbell**
- Recognition needs to be focused on everyday achievements as well as the “walking-on-water” performances that draw praise. Remember: Many employees do not have the opportunity to save millions of dollars. And it is praise from one's immediate supervisor that means the most to us.





Other important issues



What else to watch for in HRSA in 2008

- Do we have the tools and resources we need to do our job effectively?
- Do we have opportunities at work to grow and learn?
- How are we doing on the job?
- Does our workplace and our programs reflect the diversity of our workforce, our clients and business partners?



Our plans

- EC has set front-line training skills as a priority in 2008. HRSA currently is fully funding all mandatory and skill-based training.
- Diversity issues will be a priority concern for managers in 2008. In DASA, leadership has retained a human resources consultant to review the division's diversity issues and keep staff involved in their resolution. The year-long experiment may be a model for other divisions in the future.
- Directors will be invited to future new employee orientation sessions. Both Heidi and Doug have been participating in these sessions with positive results.
- The Apple Cart, a 2007 experiment in bringing managers and line staff together during break time, will continue in 2008.
- As in 2007, focus groups and spot surveys will help HRSA stay on top of employee feedback, and employees are encouraged to provide that feedback through supervisors, Open Communications Forums and staff meetings.





2007 Employee Survey Action Plan

Questions for all state employees:	MA-DLS	MA-DRF	MA-OAS	MA-DESD	MA-DSM	MA-HCS	ALL MA
A1. I have the opportunity to give input on decisions affecting my work	54%	69%	80%	55%	68%	64%	63%
A2. I receive the information I need to do my job effectively	69%	76%	87%	80%	84%	71%	78%
A3. I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency	77%	89%	93%	88%	87%	85%	87%
A4. I know what is expected of me at work	85%	88%	93%	92%	92%	85%	89%
A5. I have opportunities at work to learn and grow	51%	67%	73%	61%	68%	69%	65%
A6. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively	51%	78%	73%	76%	80%	73%	75%
A7. My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect	82%	85%	73%	88%	89%	85%	86%
A8. My supervisor gives me feedback that helps me improve performance	62%	74%	67%	77%	76%	67%	73%
A9. I receive recognition for a job well done	51%	62%	71%	67%	63%	60%	63%
A10. My performance evaluation provides me with meaningful information	44%	71%	42%	73%	65%	66%	67%
A11. My supervisor holds me and co-workers accountable for performance	79%	83%	80%	85%	87%	79%	83%
A12. I know how my agency measures its success	45%	63%	57%	59%	59%	55%	58%
A13. My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce	53%	70%	87%	76%	73%	63%	70%
Questions for all DSHS employees							
B1. A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my workgroup	59%	76%	80%	82%	82%	74%	78%
B2. In my workgroup we use customer feedback to improve our work processes	56%	54%	67%	46%	53%	49%	51%
B3. I am encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things	67%	67%	73%	60%	66%	67%	64%
B4. In general, I am satisfied with my job	64%	77%	87%	74%	81%	74%	76%
B5. My agency uses my time and talents well	46%	63%	93%	63%	68%	64%	64%
B6. In my workgroup people are treated fairly, without discrimination	67%	80%	87%	81%	84%	71%	79%
	Lowest: <40%	Low: <50%			Highest: >80%		



Questions for all state employees:	DDDS	DASA	ALL MHD	MHD -HQ	All HRSA '07	All HRSA '06	All DSHS '07
A1. I have the opportunity to give input on decisions affecting my work	51%	61%	49%	46%	54%	49%	53%
A2. I receive the information I need to do my job effectively	69%	61%	61%	43%	67%	60%	66%
A3. I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency	78%	80%	77%	71%	80%	75%	80%
A4. I know what is expected of me at work	86%	77%	85%	60%	86%	82%	84%
A5. I have opportunities at work to learn and grow	50%	55%	53%	60%	57%	49%	58%
A6. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively	72%	54%	57%	49%	63%	55%	62%
A7. My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect	78%	82%	78%	83%	81%	76%	81%
A8. My supervisor gives me feedback that helps me improve performance	64%	65%	61%	54%	65%	57%	65%
A9. I receive recognition for a job well done	47%	55%	47%	57%	51%	46%	52%
A10. My performance evaluation provides me with meaningful information	55%	50%	56%	45%	59%	50%	56%
A11. My supervisor holds me and co-workers accountable for performance	76%	68%	74%	74%	77%	76%	77%
A12. I know how my agency measures its success	63%	49%	43%	29%	49%	44%	54%
A13. My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce	63%	57%	56%	40%	61%	n/a	62%
Questions for all DSHS employees							
B1. A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my workgroup	63%	61%	61%	46%	66%	62%	66%
B2. In my workgroup we use customer feedback to improve our work processes	31%	57%	43%	32%	45%	43%	43%
B3. I am encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things	43%	58%	48%	54%	52%	49%	52%
B4. In general, I am satisfied with my job	64%	57%	64%	63%	68%	n/a	66%
B5. My agency uses my time and talents well	56%	58%	53%	46%	56%	48%	56%
B6. In my workgroup people are treated fairly, without discrimination	64%	58%	65%	56%	69%	62%	69%
	Lowest: <40%	Low: <50%			Highest: >80%		