

Introduction

This research was underwritten by **the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Sordoni Family Foundation, and UGI Utilities** and with support from **the Luzerne County COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund of The Luzerne Foundation, the Scranton Area Community Foundation COVID-19 Fund and the Wells Fargo Foundation.**

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in greater need among many populations who rely on social service agencies in various aspects of their life (e.g., health and mental health, food, housing, support, rehabilitation, job training, education, etc.). It has also significantly impacted the ability of those agencies to effectively deliver their services to the communities that need their help.

The Institute conducted an initial survey of staff at numerous social service agencies throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania in July 2020 in order to identify the ways in which their organizations have been impacted by the pandemic. The questions focused on the impact on service delivery, processes and procedures, staffing and volunteers, and fundraising.

The survey also sought to gain a better understanding of how the region's social service agencies have responded to the crisis, and what actions and best practices can be implemented to best serve the needs of their client populations (in addition to allowing the agencies to continue operating).

A follow-up survey, consisting of the same questions, was issued a year into the pandemic. This follow-up survey sought to discover if agencies' responses to the pandemic have improved and if their ability to serve their community has changed from the initial survey. This report compares the results from the follow-up survey to the findings included in the initial results reported in July 2020.

Agency types and service areas

The survey first asked each respondent to briefly explain the type of work their agency does. Similar to results from the initial survey, respondents to the

follow-up survey work in a broad range of social service agencies. Many are focused on health care, and provide physical and mental health care services. This includes primary health care providers, mental and behavioral health counselors, home health and hospice providers, skilled nursing facilities, addiction treatment facilities. Others provide social care services to vulnerable populations, such as seniors, disadvantaged children, the homeless, people with intellectual disabilities, and abuse victims. These agencies address issues related to poverty, like housing and food insecurity.

The survey also received responses from a number of people who work at education-focused agencies and libraries, and community organizations that provide workforce development services. Representatives for agencies providing recreational and arts programs in the community, and members of regional foundations also participated in the follow-up survey.

Respondents were then asked which counties their agencies provide services in. Echoing results from the initial survey, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties continue to be the most commonly served counties. Northern Luzerne County continues to be served by a larger portion of agencies than Southern Luzerne County. Monroe County was the third most frequently listed county. The amount of agencies serving Monroe County is only slightly higher than Wayne County.

Impact on community needs

Next, the survey asked how the pandemic has affected the short-term and long-term needs of the populations served by the respondents' agencies. The initial survey results indicated that the short-term needs of communities increased substantially in certain areas, including health care, mental health, food assistance, housing, job preparation, and child-care (as more workplaces reopen). In the follow-up survey, respondents reported unemployment and income loss are issues their communities continue to face. This has led to loss of health insurance, housing insecurity, and food insecurity. The move to remote working environments, lack of business and decreased fundraising opportunities have caused agencies to lay off employees.

Continued isolation and lack of community contact is consistently a major concern among respondents, showing the severity of the issue. Even when agencies put precautions in place to host in-person events, health and safety concerns stop people from attending. Seniors are particularly affected by this due to visitor restrictions or fear from families of spreading the virus.

Many agencies have moved to online services. The lack of technology or internet access for some has caused virtual meetings to become ineffective. Some agencies noted the increased use of telehealth services, especially for mental health consultations, however, the effectiveness of telehealth programs has been limited due to technological constraints.

In the follow-up survey, respondents' thoughts on the long-term effects of the pandemic on their community continue to echo the short-term effects. Many expect the economic impact of the pandemic to result in food and housing insecurity in the long term as well as the short term. The increase in mental health issues and decline of mental health in current patients is considered a major long-term effect of the pandemic. Respondents are concerned the delay in seeking in-person medical care may be detrimental to the health of their clients.

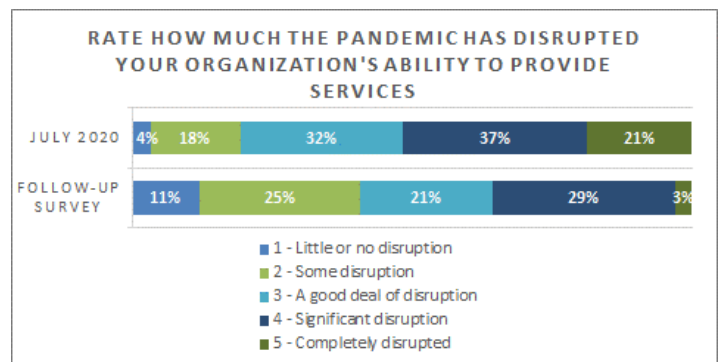
Respondents are concerned that the loss of a school year for children will have a long-term effect on their mental and physical health. Respondents also worry about the long-term effect on children's educational progress, particularly for students living in poverty and students of color. Isolation continues to be considered a long-term effect on the population, especially on the senior population.

Many respondents are unsure what long-term effects the pandemic will have on their communities' needs.

Impact on service delivery

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which the pandemic has disrupted their organizations' ability to provide services on a scale of 1 to 5. A rating of 1 means the organization has experienced little or no disruption, and a rating of 5 means the organization has been completely disrupted. Comparing the results from the initial survey in July 2020 to the follow-up survey indicates that as the pandemic has continued, its impact on social service

organizations has become less disruptive, as organizations have had more time to adjust their operations in order to continue providing services. In the follow-up survey, there was an increase in the percentage of organizations that reported little or no disruption, from four to eleven percent. While there was an increase in the percentage of organizations reporting some disruption, those that reported being significantly or completely disrupted fell from 58 percent to 32 percent, including an 18 percentage point decline in those who reported their services were completely disrupted.



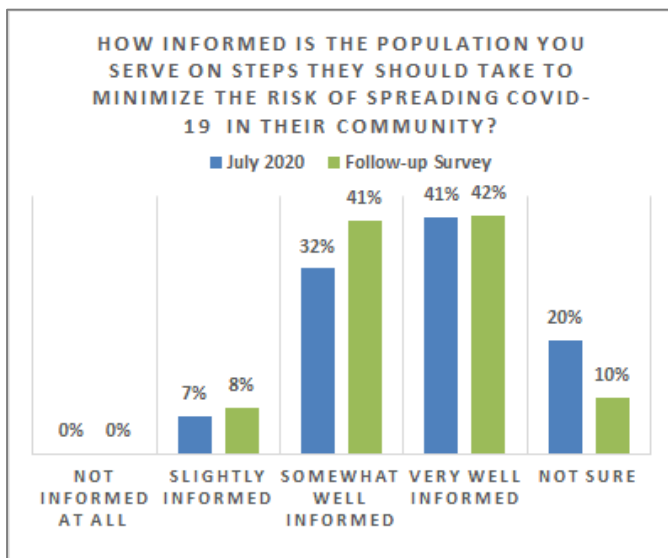
As described in the results from the initial survey, the pandemic severely limited the capacity of social service agencies and other nonprofits to provide in-person services. Many organizations had to cancel all programs and services that require staff to be in close proximity to the people they serve. Some organizations were able to transition to remote service delivery, with varying degrees of success. Agencies have faced obstacles in this type of transition; for example, clients do not always have the equipment or technical knowledge necessary for participation in virtual programs, and staff may lack training in how to effectively run these types of programs. Other disruptions have stemmed from the permanent or temporary loss of staff, the loss of volunteers, and a decline in funding.

According to the follow-up survey, remote work and virtual programming continue to be methods used by a majority of the respondents to deliver services safely. In both the initial survey and follow-up survey, 85 percent of respondents reported that their agencies have transitioned to remote work for some or all of their employees. Agencies continue to report taking additional safety precautions when meeting or providing in-person services. Organizations who have

in-person meetings have implemented policies following CDC guidelines with increased sanitation, social distancing, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Many organizations check visitor's temperatures before entering the building, and have installed air filtration and ventilation systems. Organizations are employing contact-free services such as curbside pickup, grab and go, a frozen meal program, and no-contact delivery.

Community knowledge of public health

Respondents were asked whether their organizations have been involved in delivering public health messages to the populations they serve. Examples of this include sharing information about social distancing or about where to go for COVID-19 testing. In the initial survey, more than two-thirds of respondents said their agencies have shared these types of messages. In the follow-up survey, the share of organizations that reported being involved in sharing public health messages increased to more than three-quarters, demonstrating the broadening role of social service organizations in delivering public health messages as the pandemic continued.

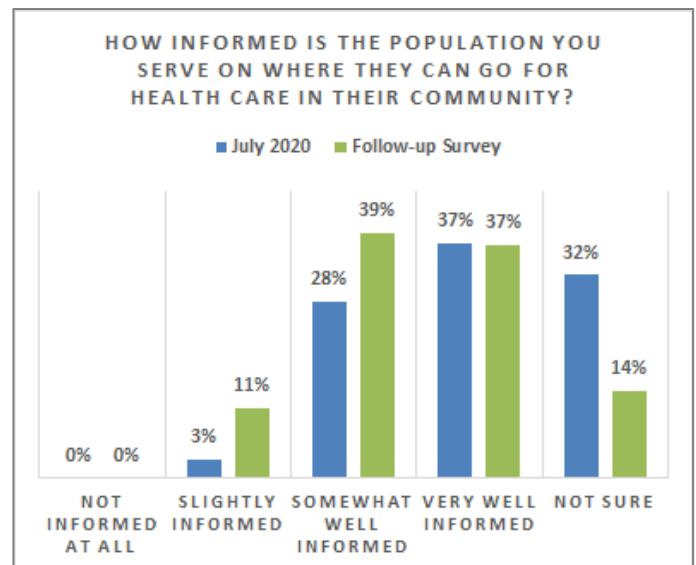


Respondents were then asked how informed the populations they serve are regarding the steps they can take to minimize the spread of the coronavirus. In the follow-up survey, there was improvement reported in how informed clients are in taking steps to minimize the spread of the virus. Similar to the original survey, no respondents said that their clients were not informed at all. Those reporting the population was somewhat well informed improved by

nine percentage points, while those reporting the population was slightly or very well informed improved slightly, by one point. Those who were unsure decreased by 10 percentage points.

Many respondents reported their utilization of social media and advertisements to reach their communities. Some organizations reported those with mental illness or a cognitive disability have had difficulty understanding or adhering to mitigation efforts.

In the follow-up survey, there was also improvement reported in clients' awareness of where to go for health care in their community. Like the initial survey, no respondents said their communities were not informed at all in the follow-up survey. The percentage of respondents who said their communities were slightly or somewhat well informed increased, while those who said clients were very well informed stayed the same. Overall, organizations were more informed about their clients' level of awareness, with the percentage of organizations reporting they were unsure declining 18 percentage points. Respondents have reported that people are aware of where to go but some cannot pay, or avoid healthcare settings, and there are some health care services that have limited availability.

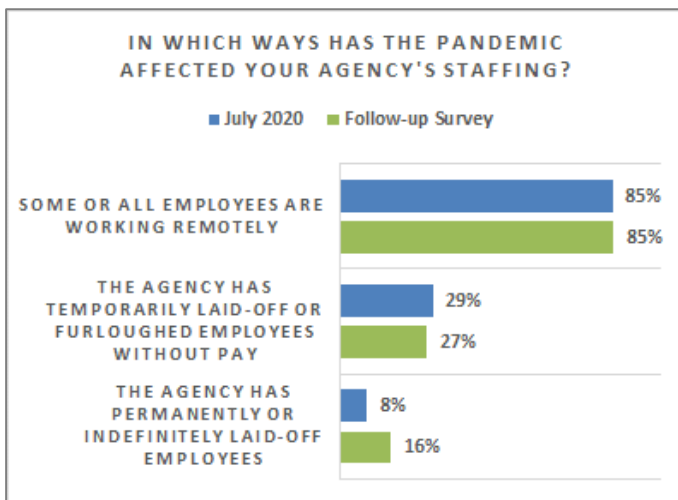


Respondents said they provide the information on where to go for care, but are unsure if it is followed due to inability to measure this. Many respondents have reported the question of where to go for a

vaccine or how to sign up has become an issue for people in their communities.

Impact on staff and volunteers

The results of the follow-up survey indicate that the pandemic has continued to have a significant effect on agencies' staffing. A large majority of respondents (85 percent) continue to report that their agencies have transitioned some or all employees to working remotely, remaining unchanged from the initial survey. There were slightly fewer agencies who reported temporarily laying off or furloughing employees without pay, down from 29 percent to 27 percent. However, the percentage of agencies who reported permanently or indefinitely laying off employees doubled from 8 percent to 16 percent.



As noted in the initial survey feedback, many agencies rely heavily on volunteers for various purposes, however volunteers who generally offer hands-on assistance were more limited in their ability to help during the pandemic due to safety concerns, office closures, program cancellations, and social distancing requirements. According to respondents in the follow-up survey, ongoing COVID-19 restrictions have forced agencies to reduce their amount of volunteers or completely suspend volunteering. Individual's fears of contracting the virus have also contributed to the lack of volunteers. Some older volunteers have chosen to stop serving as volunteers.

Agencies that rely on college students for volunteers have been effected due to university restrictions. The lack of volunteers has impacted the amount of events and services that can be provided, such as food

distribution and transportation. Some agencies have had volunteers work remotely and run virtual programs.

Impact on financial resources and fundraising

The next set of questions inquired about the impact of the pandemic on agencies' financial resources and fundraising efforts. Consistent with results from the initial survey, the majority of respondents in the follow-up survey continued to report that the pandemic has had an impact on the financial resources available to their agencies. Fundraising efforts continue to be affected, with many reporting the opportunities for fundraising campaigns and events are limited or unavailable. Donors have also reduced the amount of money they donate. The pandemic has limited the grant funding some agencies rely on. Some grants are no longer available or provide less funding, although other grant opportunities have emerged to help agencies survive the pandemic. Many agencies reported they have reworked their fundraising plans or adopted alternative fundraising approaches. These have included outdoor and virtual events, although some report the virtual events have not been as successful as in-person events.

Emergency funding

The survey then asked whether agencies had applied for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a program under the federal government's coronavirus relief plan that offers loans to help small businesses keep their employees during the pandemic. In the follow-up survey, a larger proportion of agencies reported applying for funding through Paycheck Protection Program - approximately 72 percent compared to 61 percent in the initial survey. Most of those who applied received the first round of funding, but some were waiting on the second round or were ineligible for the second round. Approximately 28 percent of respondents did not apply because they were either ineligible or funding was not needed.

The majority of respondents in the follow-up survey reported they also filed for emergency funding from sources besides PPP. The other funding sources were consistent with those identified in the initial survey. A large proportion of respondents applied through local foundations such as the Scranton Area Community

Foundation, the Luzerne Foundation, and the Moses Taylor Foundation. One respondent received assistance from the Diocese of Scranton. A few organizations applied for funding through the CARES Act. Some respondents said special loans and grants were received from local, state, and federal governments and major corporations. Others reported receiving funding through the Small Business Association's (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), which is designed to provide economic relief to struggling business. There were a few respondents that were not sure if their agency applied for other funding.

Preparing for the future

Finally, the survey asked what measures their organizations anticipate taking if a similar crisis happens in the future. In the follow-up survey, respondents frequently mentioned that their organizations will continue to utilize remote working and virtual programs to be prepared to operate fully virtually if needed. The continued reliance on virtual operations demonstrates how essential technology is to organizations during this pandemic. Many health organizations plan to continue the use of telehealth services post-COVID. Besides virtual meetings being useful during a pandemic, organizations have found other benefits of virtual meetings. One respondent mentioned the continued utilization of virtual meetings will allow those who travel to be able to attend meetings all year.

While the pandemic has improved organizations' abilities to work remotely and run virtual meetings, some respondents recognized the need for more technological training for some of their employees. This pandemic made many companies aware of needed technological upgrades within their organizations. Respondents also acknowledged that technology has barriers (e.g. technology issues, some people lack the technology to participate). Several agencies also noted that while virtual platforms allowed them to maintain contact, they cannot replace the value of having in-person interactions with clients.

Respondents mentioned their organizations have put or will put policies and emergency plans in place to deal with a similar crisis in the future. Organizations will continue the use of curbside pickup and no-

contact delivery. They will continue to work in small groups and practice social distancing in their organizations.

In the follow-up survey, respondents were asked about the support their clients might need to access the COVID-19 vaccine when it became available. Approximately 40 percent of respondents said their clients would need help with transportation to vaccine sites. One respondent said transportation is an issue because some of their clients do not have cars or the money to take the bus.

Many respondents recognized that their clients may need assistance scheduling vaccine appointments. For many organizations, this is due to their clients having a lack of internet access or limited knowledge of the sign up process. A few respondents said they have clients that are homebound and will need an in-home vaccine. One respondent said they approached a local hospital that acknowledged that getting vaccines to the homebound is a concern.

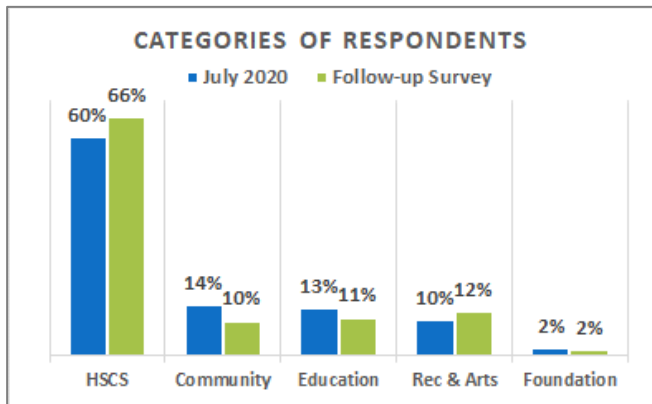
Differences between organization types

In the initial survey, The Institute received responses from over 160 agencies providing a wide range of services to communities throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. In the follow-up survey, 114 responses were received. This report organizes responses from these agencies into five broad categories in order to examine how different types of agencies were affected by the pandemic. The five categories are:

- **Health and social care services (HSCS)**, including agencies that provide health- and healthcare-focused services as well as those that provide services like food and housing assistance, and support for people with disabilities. Other agencies in this category provide services for seniors, children, and victims for domestic violence, and other social services;
- **Recreation and arts services;**
- **Foundations;**
- **Education and library services**, including those providing general education agencies, library services, and higher education organizations; and
- **Community and quality of life services**, which include community and workforce development agencies, environmental and

animal welfare agencies, historic preservation organizations, and transit services.

Although there was a slight shift in the distribution of the categories of respondents in the follow-up survey, the majority (66 percent) continued to comprise health and social care services organizations, representing 75 of the respondents. There was a slight decline in the proportion of agencies focused on community and education services, while the proportion of those providing recreation and arts services increased slightly. All three of these categories were represented by between 11 to 14 respondents. Since there was a greater need for services provided by HSCS agencies during the pandemic, and recreation and arts agencies experienced a lot of disruption due to the pandemic, these slight shifts in the categories of agencies responding are not surprising. Two



respondents from foundations were represented in the follow-up survey.

In the follow-up survey, the mix of organizations responding across the different counties in the region followed a similar pattern. Health and social care organizations continued to represent the majority of agencies responding in each county. Clinton County continued to be served by the fewest number of agencies (8 in total) compared to the other counties in the region. Lackawanna County continued to have largest overall number of agencies responding that serve the county (74 in total), and the greatest number of health and social care organizations (47 total, representing 64 percent of responding agencies in the county).

The following table shows the number of counties served by the average respondent's agency in each category, followed by the share of respondents in each category who said their agencies only serve a single county. It is important to note that certain agencies were likely represented multiple times by different respondents, as was the case with the foundations discussed above.

Type of agency	July 2020		Follow-up Survey	
	Average number of counties served	Share serving only one county	Average number of counties served	Share serving only one county
Health and Social Care Services	4.5	36%	3.9	41%
Recreation and Arts	4.2	41%	3.7	36%
Community and Quality of Life	4.2	39%	6.3	27%
Education and Library	3.9	52%	3.4	50%
Foundations	1.0	100%	1.5	50%

There were some shifts in the average number of counties served by the categories of agencies in the follow-up survey. For example, health and social care service agencies responding reported serving fewer counties on average, and a higher percentage reported serving only one county. Community and quality of life agencies responding to the follow-up survey served more counties on average, and a smaller proportion reported serving only one county. However, since the number and composition of agencies responding to the follow-up survey varied from the initial survey, it should not be inferred that the shifts in the number of counties served is reflective of changes to the service territories of agencies.

Needs by type of organization

Sorting agencies into separate categories allows us to more closely examine how the pandemic has affected the needs of different groups of people. There were common, re-occurring themes among responses from different categories in both rounds of surveys, including cancellations of programs and fundraising events, and the effects of food insecurity and unemployment on families.

In the follow-up survey, agencies reported an increased need for services provided by community organizations as individuals continued to be impacted by unemployment. Individuals sought assistance with applying for unemployment and workforce development skills. Some reported the continued use

of virtual programs to serve their populations, although fewer school-based programs were offered due to lack of in-person learning. Student internship and externship opportunities were impacted due to restrictions by organizations and educational institutions. However, some agencies reported that more students were participating in the workforce since the virtual and hybrid school schedules allowed them more flexibility to work.

Respondents from education agencies reported in the follow-up survey that students were in need of remediation due to learning, and educators need long-term supports for classrooms, since many were continuing to provide instruction virtually. Some agencies noted the remote learning environments have led to declines in student attendance and participation in online classes. In some cases, students struggled to keep up with school attendance and workloads due to an increased need to work to help support their families or cover tuition costs. Some respondents are concerned about the long-term detrimental effects school closures will have on students, especially those in underserved populations. Although libraries have started to re-open, some planned to continue offering curbside service for patrons.

The two respondents to the follow-up survey from foundations continued to express concern about the short-term emergency relief needs of the community related to food, housing and small business support. Long-term, they noted that clients needed to re-engage in programs and the need to identify sustainable solutions for housing, transportation, and food insecurity challenges.

Individuals from recreation and art organizations responding to the follow-up survey were anxious for in-person activities and events to resume. Many reported their services continued to be suspended or downsized due to safety concerns, resulting in a negative financial impact on their organizations. They also expressed concerns about the resulting isolation and loss of socialization within the community, especially among seniors and teens, and the long-term impact on their mental health and emotional development. Some expected the public would be slow to resume using their services due to safety

concerns, leading to long-term negative impacts on their organizations.

Individuals from health and social care service organizations responding to the follow-up survey noted there continues to be an increased need for social services, including food, housing, transportation, and child care assistance. One respondent noted their client numbers have tripled, and they have received requests for assistance from individuals who have never sought help before. Another noted they went from serving 180 people per week in January 2019 to now serving between 350-375 people per week. However, another individual expressed concern some individuals may be falling through the cracks as agencies are not able to meet in-person with clients. Some reported parents are struggling to support children who are learning at home. Health concerns were noted as some have lost their health insurance and have delayed seeking care. Social isolation has continued to increase needs for mental health services. Similar to feedback from the initial survey, agencies have noted an increase in anxiety, depression, substance abuse and domestic violence concerns among the population they serve. Agencies are struggling to meet the increased need with fewer volunteers and resources, due to limitations on fundraising.

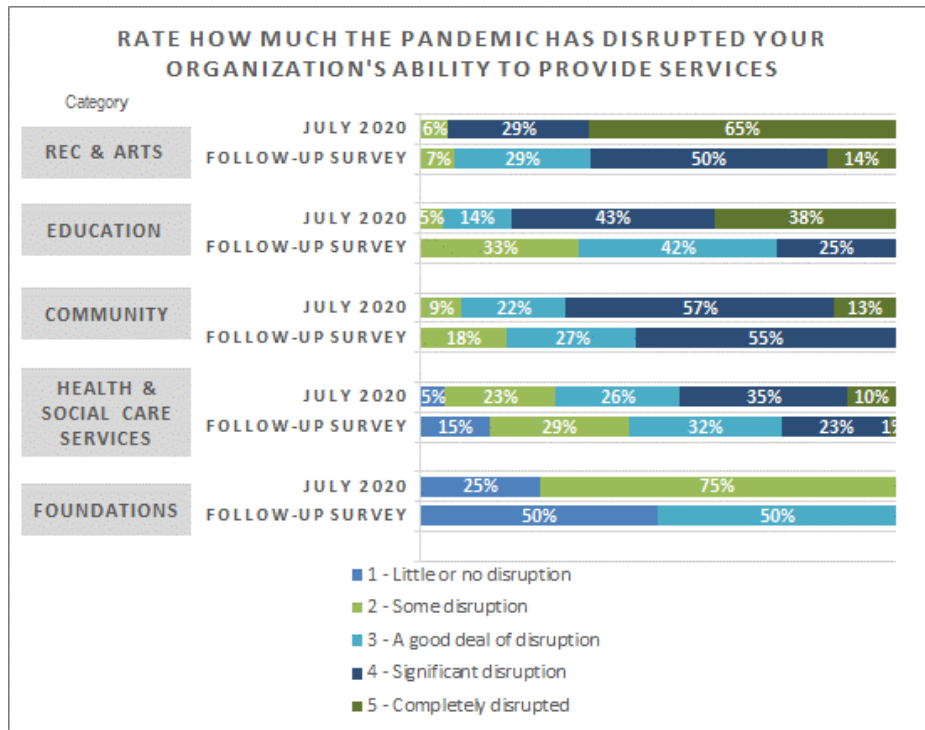
Disruption of services by type of organization

The level of disruption reported by all categories of social service agencies declined in the follow-up survey. Respondents from recreation and arts agencies continued to report the highest levels of service disruption, although those reporting their ability to provide services had been significantly or completely disrupted declined from 94 percent to 64 percent. While agencies in this category have been able adapt their services or slowly resume their programming, they are still being impacted by restrictions and concerns about in-person gatherings, and 14 percent report their services have been completely disrupted.

Agencies in the education category have shown the most improvement from the level of disruption reported in July 2020. No agencies report being completely disrupted in the follow-up survey, down from 38 percent, and only one-quarter report significant disruption, compared to 43 percent

previously. The majority (42 percent) report a good deal of disruption, but many have been able to adapt their programs to deliver services virtually. No community organizations reported being completely disrupted in the follow-up survey, although more than half continue to report significant disruption. Health and social care service agencies have also shown improvement, with those reporting significant or complete disruption declining from 45 percent to

24 percent. One of the two foundations that responded to the follow-up survey reported little or no disruption, while the other reported a good deal of disruption to their ability to provide services. Similar to the initial survey, since few respondents from foundations are represented in the follow-up survey, this data may not be fully representative of the pandemic's impact on foundations.



Service modifications by type of organization

As reported in the original study, the modifications agencies made in order to deliver services during the pandemic varied slightly between the different categories of agencies. Across all categories, respondents frequently noted that their agencies shifted to remote operations in order to continue providing their services virtually, and followed recommended health and safety protocols. These included making improvements to air ventilation systems, enhancing cleaning services, installing safety partitions, instituting health screening protocols, and making sanitizer and personal protective equipment available.

In the follow-up survey, respondents reported that their education and library organizations continue to

utilize virtual programs. Operating hours have been reduced. Library organizations have continued curbside programs as some start to slowly open back up. Any in-person classes follow CDC guidelines in regards to social distancing, PPE, and sanitation. Schools no longer have visitors, it is just students and teachers to limit the amount of people in the building.

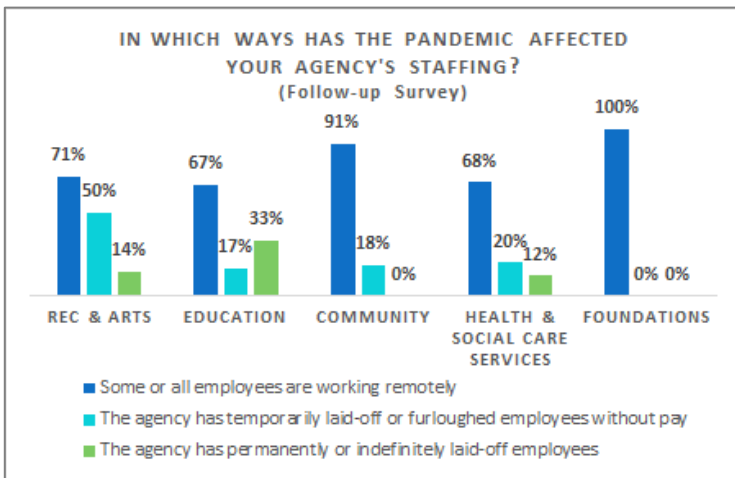
Recreation and arts agencies scheduled outdoor performances when possible, posted performances on YouTube or other online sites, or hosted smaller in-person gatherings to allow for social distancing. Community agencies offered contactless deliveries or pickups. One agency launched a "Care Call" program to check-in on seniors via phone.

Many respondents for health and social care organizations reported that they continue to utilize

virtual programs or offer telehealth services. Organizations have installed air filtration systems throughout their offices. All staff and visitors follow CDC guidelines. Many of the healthcare agencies only conduct virtual visits, but some offer in-person options as well. The amount of in-person visits have been reduced and are by appointment only. One organization created a parking lot waiting room to follow social distancing rules. Organizations continue to utilize contactless delivery or curbside pickup for meal distribution.

Impact on staff by type of organization

The majority of respondents in all categories continued to report that some or all of their employees at their organizations transitioned to working remotely. Both respondents from foundations said that they have made this change, as did nine out of ten respondents from community and quality of life agencies. Similar to the results from the initial survey, recreational and arts agencies were most likely to report they temporarily laid-off or furloughed employees without pay, with half of respondents reporting this was the case. One-third of respondents from education agencies reported they have permanently or indefinitely laid-off employees.



Impact on financial resources by type of organization

In the follow-up survey, respondents from agencies across all categories reported the pandemic has impacted the financial resources available to their

agencies. The loss of the opportunity to have fundraising events was also a problem for many agencies. Normal donors have reduced the amount they give during this time. Online fundraising is not as successful as in-person events. Like the initial survey, respondents from agencies that provide arts and recreation received less funding in favor of agencies donors consider a higher priority. The lack of ticket sales has changed the financial resources available to agencies that provide arts and recreation services.

External funding

The different categories of agencies responding to the survey continued to report varying rates of application for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Most of those who applied indicated they had received funding. Several organizations also reported receiving grants and COVID funding from regional foundations, including the Scranton Area Foundation, the Luzerne Foundation, and the Moses Taylor Foundation.

There was a noticeable increase in the proportion of community and quality of life agencies who reported applying for PPP funding in the follow-up survey (91 percent) compared to July 2020 (43 percent). Most noted they had received funding, and in some cases were eligible for both rounds of PPP funding.

All of the recreation and arts organizations and education organizations who reported applying for PPP funding had received it. Several of these organizations also reported receiving emergency funding from private regional foundations, community grants, and through SBA loans. Education agencies also reported receiving funding through the CARES Act.

Nearly two-thirds of health and social care services agencies applied for and received PPP funding. Some reported they were not eligible or the assistance was not needed. Others reported receiving funding through the CARES Act, the FCC for telehealth services, county relief programs, and other loan and grant programs. Representatives from the two foundations responding to the survey indicated both had applied for and received PPP funding.

Emergency planning by type of organization

Respondents to the follow-up survey provided feedback consistent with responses received in July 2020 about how their organizations may plan for future emergencies. Across all categories of agencies, organizations have adapted to using technology to work remotely, and plan to continue leveraging these resources when needed. Some noted they plan to seek assistance from partners and foundations earlier in a crisis, and evaluate other options for accessing additional financial resources and improving rainy day funds in order to maintain operations.

Those representing libraries noted they would provide more outreach services and improve mobile accessibility for patrons. One health agency noted they would adhere to improved regulatory guidance stemming from the pandemic, including adopting color-coded zones related to infection control protocols. Another noted they plan to maintain a larger inventory of personal protective equipment. Several health and social care service agencies noted they are planning to upgrade their technological resources, including electronic health record systems to improve interoperability.

Organizations by geography

The two-county area of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties had the largest amount of organizations serving it who participated in both the initial survey and follow-ups study; fewer organizations are in the areas further west and north. Monroe County followed Lackawanna County and the two Luzerne County regions in the total number of organizations participating in both studies that serve the region. In both surveys, Lackawanna County is home to the largest number of organizations and Clinton County the smallest. The total number of organizations in the table should not be summed as some organizations are counted multiple times across counties as they serve more than one.

In both surveys, 60 percent or more of organizations reported they serve more than one county, while the proportion serving one county increased slightly in the follow-up survey. The largest share of organizations who serve more than one county reported they serve between two to five counties. There were a dozen organizations in the initial survey who reporting serving all 16 counties/ areas, and seven in the follow-up survey (not including Luzerne County, whole).

Organizations Responding by Counties Served		
County	Count of Organizations	
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Lackawanna County	94	74
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	88	62
Southern Luzerne County	77	45
Luzerne County (whole)	70	43
Monroe County	75	45
Pike County	54	35
Wayne County	54	41
Wyoming County	50	34
Carbon County	48	25
Susquehanna County	44	32
Schuylkill County	34	18
Columbia County	32	14
Bradford County	29	18
Sullivan County	26	14
Lycoming County	24	16
Tioga County	23	16
Clinton County	17	8
Total Organizations Responding	164	114

Counties Served	July 2020		Follow-up Survey	
	Total Organizations	Percent of Organizations	Total Organizations	Percent of Organizations
One	53	32%	47	41%
More than one	111	64%	68	60%
<i>Two to five</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>59%</i>
<i>Six to ten</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>11 to 15</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>16%</i>
<i>All</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>10%</i>

Disruption of Services by County	Percent significantly or completely disrupted	
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	62%	▼ 33%
Carbon County	58%	▼ 44%
Clinton County	53%	▼ 38%
Columbia County	66%	▼ 57%
Lackawanna County	63%	▼ 35%
Luzerne County, whole	61%	▼ 42%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	60%	▼ 40%
Southern Luzerne County	61%	▼ 44%
Lycoming County	67%	▼ 56%
Monroe County	53%	▼ 33%
Pike County	57%	▼ 29%
Schuylkill County	65%	▼ 44%
Sullivan County	62%	▼ 43%
Susquehanna County	59%	▼ 41%
Tioga County	57%	▼ 38%
Wayne County	65%	▼ 29%
Wyoming County	60%	▼ 32%
Total	58%	▼ 32%

While a majority of the organizations in each of the counties reported their organization’s services had been significantly disrupted in the initial survey, this declined substantially in all counties in the follow-up survey. Organizations serving Lycoming and Columbia Counties continued to report the highest levels of significant or complete disruption to their services, with more than half reporting this was the case in the follow-up survey. Organizations in Pike and Wayne Counties experienced the least amount of significant or complete disruption in the region in the latest survey.

Percent of Organizations Involved in Delivering Public Health Messages	Percent of Organizations Involved in Delivering Public Health Messages	
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	76%	▼ 71%
Carbon County	73%	▲ 88%
Clinton County	77%	▼ 75%
Columbia County	63%	▲ 64%
Lackawanna County	68%	▲ 72%
Luzerne County, whole	69%	▲ 79%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	68%	▲ 72%
Southern Luzerne County	69%	▲ 77%
Lycoming County	71%	▲ 75%
Monroe County	76%	▲ 78%
Pike County	76%	▲ 77%
Schuylkill County	65%	▲ 83%
Sullivan County	65%	▼ 64%
Susquehanna County	75%	▼ 69%
Tioga County	74%	▼ 69%
Wayne County	69%	▲ 71%
Wyoming County	70%	▼ 70%
Total	69%	▲ 77%

Although the overall share of organizations that report being involved in delivering public health messages increased from 69 percent to 77 percent in the follow-up survey, there were mixed results at the county level. However, the number of counties with agencies that reported increased involvement in delivering public health messages outweighed the number of counties with agencies that reported less involvement. Organizations serving Carbon, Schuylkill, and Luzerne Counties were most often involved in reporting public health information, while those serving Columbia and Sullivan Counties were least likely to report delivering public health information.

Respondents from organizations across a majority of the counties report improvements in the proportion of the populations they serve that are either somewhat or very well-informed of the steps they can take to minimize spreading COVID-19 in their community. The counties with organizations reporting the highest percentages of populations who are somewhat or very well informed in the follow-up survey are Monroe and Carbon Counties. Agencies in Clinton and Columbia Counties reported the lowest proportions of population that are somewhat or very well informed on minimizing the risk of COVID-19, with both counties reporting lower rates than the initial survey.

Percent of Population Somewhat or Very Well Informed on Steps to Minimizing Risk of Spreading COVID-19	Percent of Population Somewhat or Very Well Informed on Steps to Minimizing Risk of Spreading COVID-19	
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	72%	▲ 78%
Carbon County	66%	▲ 88%
Clinton County	76%	▼ 63%
Columbia County	69%	▼ 64%
Lackawanna County	71%	▲ 80%
Luzerne County, whole	71%	▲ 72%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	72%	▲ 76%
Southern Luzerne County	73%	■ 73%
Lycoming County	71%	▲ 75%
Monroe County	76%	▲ 89%
Pike County	72%	▲ 86%
Schuylkill County	71%	▲ 83%
Sullivan County	69%	▲ 79%
Susquehanna County	70%	▲ 72%
Tioga County	74%	▲ 75%
Wayne County	69%	▲ 78%
Wyoming County	72%	▼ 71%
Total	73%	▲ 82%

There was also improvement reported across agencies in nearly all counties in how informed their populations are on where to go for health care. In the follow-up survey, three-quarters of respondents across all counties reported their populations are somewhat or very well informed on where to go for health care, an increase of ten percentage points from the initial survey. Organizations that serve Pike, Monroe, Wayne, and Lackawanna Counties report their populations were most informed on where to go for health care, while those serving Columbia, Lycoming and Sullivan Counties continued to report lower levels of awareness among their populations.

Percent of Population Somewhat or Very Well Informed on Where to go for Health Care		
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	57%	▲ 67%
Carbon County	54%	▲ 68%
Clinton County	65%	▼ 63%
Columbia County	53%	▲ 57%
Lackawanna County	61%	▲ 70%
Luzerne County, whole	61%	▲ 67%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	60%	▲ 65%
Southern Luzerne County	61%	▲ 69%
Lycoming County	54%	▲ 56%
Monroe County	63%	▲ 73%
Pike County	57%	▲ 77%
Schuylkill County	65%	▲ 67%
Sullivan County	54%	▲ 57%
Susquehanna County	55%	▲ 66%
Tioga County	59%	▲ 63%
Wayne County	55%	▲ 73%
Wyoming County	59%	▲ 62%
Total	65%	▲ 75%

There were shifts in agency's staffing in the follow-up survey. Respondents from agencies across a majority of counties reported a decline in employees working remotely. Counties with agencies that had temporarily laid off or furloughed employees without pay were split between those reporting an increase from the initial survey and those reporting a decline. At the same time, the majority reported an increase in permanently or

There was an increase in the share of organizations in the region that applied for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program, from 61 percent to 72 percent in the follow-up survey. At the county level, agencies across a majority of counties reported an increase in applications for PPP funding. While there was a smaller share of agencies that reported applying for PPP funding in some counties, it should be noted that there were fewer respondents from these counties in the follow-up survey, which impacted these results.

Percent of Organizations that Applied for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program		
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	65%	▼ 61%
Carbon County	56%	▼ 52%
Clinton County	56%	▼ 50%
Columbia County	53%	▼ 50%
Lackawanna County	68%	▲ 71%
Luzerne County, whole	68%	▲ 73%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	72%	▲ 74%
Southern Luzerne County	70%	▲ 74%
Lycoming County	68%	▼ 47%
Monroe County	55%	▲ 68%
Pike County	63%	▲ 67%
Schuylkill County	61%	▼ 41%
Sullivan County	63%	▲ 64%
Susquehanna County	69%	▲ 70%
Tioga County	65%	▲ 69%
Wayne County	65%	▲ 75%
Wyoming County	68%	▲ 71%
Total	61%	▲ 72%

In which ways has the pandemic affected your agency's staffing?						
	The agency has temporarily laid-off or furloughed employees without pay		The agency has permanently or indefinitely laid-off employees		Some or all employees are working remotely	
	July 2020	Follow-up Survey	July 2020	Follow-up Survey	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
Bradford County	16%	▲ 19%	10%	▲ 15%	74%	▼ 65%
Carbon County	25%	▼ 16%	7%	▲ 19%	68%	▼ 65%
Clinton County	17%	▲ 18%	6%	▲ 18%	78%	▼ 64%
Columbia County	24%	▼ 20%	8%	▲ 15%	68%	▼ 65%
Lackawanna County	22%	▼ 20%	10%	▲ 12%	67%	▲ 67%
Luzerne County, whole	22%	▲ 25%	8%	▲ 14%	70%	▼ 61%
Northern Luzerne County/Wyoming Valley	22%	▲ 25%	8%	▲ 15%	71%	▼ 60%
Southern Luzerne County	23%	▲ 24%	9%	▲ 15%	69%	▼ 61%
Lycoming County	23%	▼ 17%	13%	▲ 22%	65%	▼ 61%
Monroe County	25%	▼ 17%	8%	▲ 12%	67%	▲ 71%
Pike County	19%	▼ 15%	10%	▲ 10%	71%	▲ 75%
Schuylkill County	26%	▼ 21%	9%	▲ 21%	65%	▼ 58%
Sullivan County	17%	▲ 20%	10%	▲ 15%	73%	▼ 65%
Susquehanna County	19%	▲ 25%	9%	▲ 15%	72%	▼ 60%
Tioga County	15%	▲ 18%	12%	▲ 14%	73%	▼ 68%
Wayne County	21%	▼ 20%	10%	▲ 10%	70%	▲ 70%
Wyoming County	20%	▲ 25%	10%	▲ 18%	70%	▼ 57%

indefinitely laid-off employees. These shifts indicate that while social service agencies in some counties are less likely to have employees working remotely, the pandemic has had a long-term impact on their staffing levels, with agencies across nearly all counties reporting an increase in permanent or indefinite employee layoffs. Agencies serving Lycoming and

Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties Supplement

Agencies serving Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties reported short and long-term needs similar to the broader region. Community organizations serving the two counties reported an increased need for services as individuals continued to be impacted by loss of employment, food insecurity, child care issues, and social isolation. Although many agencies transitioned to providing virtual programs, some felt this limited their reach. Education agencies reported an increased need for access to technology and support for students and teachers as schools continued to provide remote instruction. Some agencies reported employment losses as some services had to be cut and part time staff were let go. Some expressed concerns the disruptions would lead to long-term academic achievement gaps.

Respondents from foundations expressed concern about the short-term emergency relief needs of the community related to food, housing and small business support, and the need to identify long-term solutions for housing, transportation, and food insecurity challenges. Recreation and Arts Organizations continued to deal with event cancellations and loss of fundraising opportunities. Health and social care service agencies noted the increasing need for their services and a reduced ability to meet the increased needs due to the inability to provide in-person services. Many expressed concerns about the long-term impacts of unemployment, social isolation, and delays in seeking health care.

There was notable improvement in the level of disruption reported by agencies in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties between July 2020 and the follow-up survey. In Lackawanna County the proportion of agencies reporting their services had been significantly or completely disrupted declined from 63

Schuylkill Counties were most likely to report long-term impacts on staffing, with nearly one in five reporting employees have been permanently or indefinitely laid-off in the follow-up survey. One-quarter of agencies serving Luzerne, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties report agencies have temporarily laid-off employees.

percent to 35 percent, and in Luzerne County it declined from 61 percent to 42 percent.

While 60 percent or more of agencies responding in both counties report that at least some employees are working remotely, this had declined in Luzerne County while remaining stable in Lackawanna County. However, respondents from both counties reported an increase in agencies permanently or indefinitely laying off employees.

Across nearly all categories of agencies in both counties, there was a larger share in the follow-up survey who noted their financial resources have been affected by the pandemic. Among health and social care services agencies, the proportion remained relatively stable in both regions of Luzerne County, with over half reporting their financial resources have been impacted.

Percent of Agencies whose financial resources have been affected by the pandemic			
	Category	July 2020	Follow-up Survey
<i>North Luzerne</i>	HSCS	58%	56%
	Community	12%	50%
	Education	7%	33%
	Rec & Art	13%	56%
	Foundation	2%	0%
<i>South Luzerne</i>	HSCS	58%	54%
	Community	12%	67%
	Education	8%	33%
	Rec & Art	10%	80%
	Foundation	3%	0%
<i>Lackawanna</i>	HSCS	56%	62%
	Community	13%	80%
	Education	13%	40%
	Rec & Art	10%	55%
	Foundation	0%	0%

A higher proportion of agencies in both counties reported they had applied for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program in the follow-up survey. Many agencies in Lackawanna County noted they received emergency funding support from area foundations, including: the Scranton Area Foundation, the Luzerne Foundation, and the PNC Foundation, in addition to the Lackawanna Department of Arts and Culture, and the Diocese of Scranton. Those serving Luzerne County also received supported from area foundations and from Luzerne County COVID funding. Agencies from both counties also used other grant opportunities, state and federal funding, including CARES Act funding, SBA loan, and corporate programs to secure emergency funding.

Conclusions and recommendations

The responses to the follow-up survey indicate the pandemic is continuing to impact social service organizations in Northeastern Pennsylvania and the communities they serve. However, it has become less disruptive to agencies since they were initially surveyed in July 2020, as organizations have had more time to adjust their operations in order to continue providing services. Respondents from recreation and arts agencies continued to report the highest levels of service disruption, although fewer report their ability to provide services had been significantly or completely disrupted. Agencies in the education category have shown the most improvement from the level of disruption reported in July 2020.

As communities continue to rely on social service agencies to help address the challenges brought on by the pandemic, many of the initial recommendations proposed following the initial study are still applicable. Other additional recommendations are also outlined to address emerging issues stemming from the pandemic.

Continue addressing the basic needs of communities in both the short and long-term. In the follow-up survey, respondents reported unemployment and income loss are short-term issues their communities continue to face. This has led to loss of health insurance, housing insecurity, and food insecurity. Many expect the economic impact of the pandemic to also result in food and housing insecurity in the long-term. Continue outreach efforts in the community to

Similar to feedback received in the initial survey, many agencies across both counties continued to report that their fundraising efforts have been impacted. Some who switched to virtual fundraising events reported limited success.

A larger proportion of agencies in both counties report being involved in delivering public health messages in the follow-up survey. Agencies in both counties also reported improvements in the how informed the populations they serve are in steps to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19, and where to go for health care.

identify individuals in need and ensure their basic needs are being met. Develop collaborative relationships among social service agencies to refer those in need to the appropriate agencies for assistance. This will become even more imperative as emergency food distribution, housing support, and other assistance programs established during the pandemic start to taper off. The expiration of the eviction moratorium, rental assistance program, and expanded unemployment benefits will likely increase the need for assistance from social service agencies in the long-term.

Strengthen supports agencies that provide mental health services. Respondents note that continued isolation and lack of community contact among the population they serve continues to be a major concern, especially among the senior population. An increase in mental health issues is considered a major long-term effect of the pandemic. Improving availability and access to mental health services will help those in need of support. Advocate for continued availability of telehealth services to help address the gaps in mental health care.

Address learning loss and gaps in education by expanding support for agencies that provide educational services. Respondents are concerned that the lack of in-person instruction and schooling will have a long-term effect on children's mental and physical health. In addition, they also worry about the long-term effect on children's educational progress, particularly for students living in poverty and students

of color. Offer tutoring and remediation programs to help address gaps in education caused by pandemic related school-closures and lack of in-person instruction.

Continue to support public health initiatives. As the pandemic progressed, social service organizations have played a broader role in delivering public health messages to the populations they serve. They also report that clients are more informed about steps to take to minimize the spread of the virus, and where to go for health care in their community. However, some agencies report that although clients are more aware of where to go for care, some struggle to cover health care costs, avoid seeking needed care, or have difficulty getting health care services due to limited availability.

As the COVID-19 vaccine became available, social service organizations report the question of where to go for a vaccine or how to sign up has become an issue for people in their communities. Some also noted clients would need help with transportation to vaccine sites, and homebound clients would need to have the vaccine administered in-home. Agencies involved in providing health and health care services should continue efforts to educate the community about the importance of vaccination, and assist with scheduling and transportation to vaccination appointments.

Explore alternatives to bolster funding, restore staffing levels, and improve volunteerism to support the expanded need for social services. The majority of agencies responding to the follow-up survey continue to work remotely and use virtual programming when possible to deliver services safely. They have also reported an increase in long-term staffing disruptions. The percentage of agencies who reported permanently or indefinitely laying off employees doubled from 8 percent to 16 percent in the follow-up survey.

COVID-19 restrictions forced agencies to reduce their amount of volunteers or completely suspend volunteering. In addition, fears of contracting the virus have also contributed to a lack of volunteers. Agencies are struggling to meet the increased need for their services with fewer volunteers and resources, due to limitations on fundraising.

The majority of respondents in the follow-up survey continue to report that the pandemic has had an impact on the financial resources available to their agencies. Fundraising efforts continue to be affected, with many reporting the opportunities for fundraising campaigns and events are limited or unavailable. While many have pursued virtual fundraising opportunities, some report the virtual events have not been as successful as in-person events. Donors have also reduced the amount of money they donate, and the pandemic has limited some grant funding opportunities.

A larger proportion of agencies reported applying for funding through Paycheck Protection Program - approximately 72 percent compared to 61 percent in the initial survey. The majority of respondents have also filed for emergency funding from other sources, including through local foundations, the CARES act, and special loans and grants from local, state, and federal governments and agencies. Agencies should continue to explore fundraising opportunities, including resuming in-person events when possible.

Leverage lessons learned from the pandemic to improve crisis planning and secure needed resources.

The continued reliance on virtual operations demonstrates how essential technology has been to organizations during this pandemic. It has also highlighted the need for more technological training for some employees, and made many companies aware of needed technological upgrades within their organizations. While virtual platforms have helped agencies maintain contact with the populations they serve, many report they cannot replace the value of having in-person interactions with clients.