

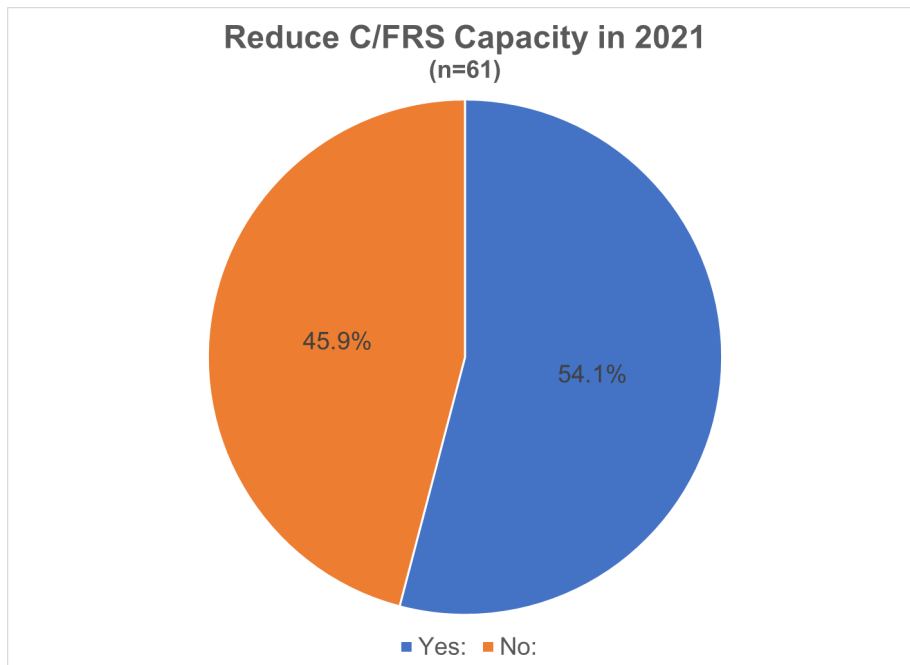
ARRM Member Survey: Residential Capacity Changes in 2021

A short survey was announced to ARRM members via the Open Forum community on November 9, with a requested response date of November 17. A total of 66 responses were received, which included 2 responses each from 2 organizations. In one of these instances, the data submitted by different contacts was not identical, and in this case, the response with the higher numbers was retained. Only 1 response from each organization was included in the analysis, for a total of 64 responses.

The information reported in this survey shows a large increase in unfilled vacancies and program closures in 2021 over 2020. Given the impacts this is having on the residential home and community-based services in regards to lost opportunities for housing for people with disabilities, and lost revenue for the providers that offer residential services, the results reported below illustrate an unsustainable pattern that needs to be addressed.

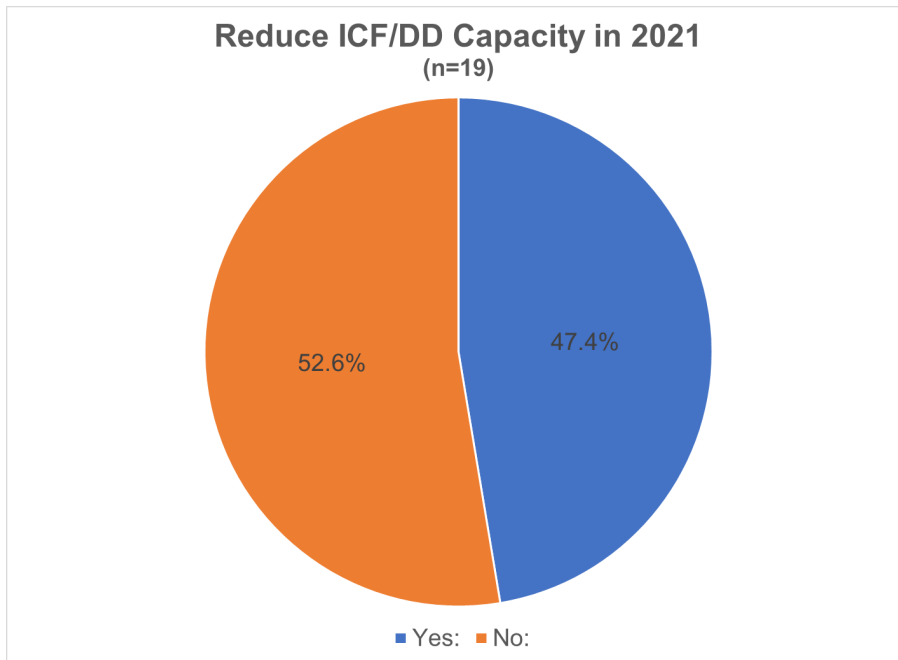
Survey Data

1. If your organization provided Community or Family Residential Services at any time in 2021, did your organization reduce capacity between January 1, 2021 and today?



A majority of the responding organizations that provided residential services (33/61 or 54.1%) reported reducing capacity in 2021, through mid-November, which resulted in 257 fewer beds being available to support people with disabilities throughout the state.

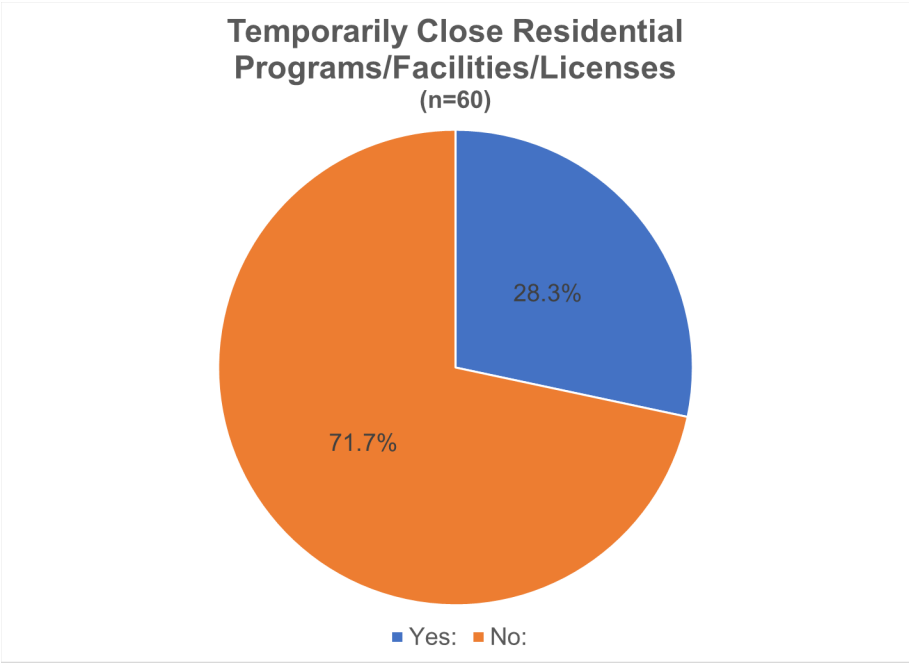
2. If your organization operated ICFs/DD at any time in 2021, did your organization reduce capacity between January 1, 2021 and today?



Of the 19 organizations that operated ICF/DD facilities, slightly less than half (9/19 or 47.4%) reported reducing capacity thus far in 2021, which resulted in 90 fewer beds available for this level of support.

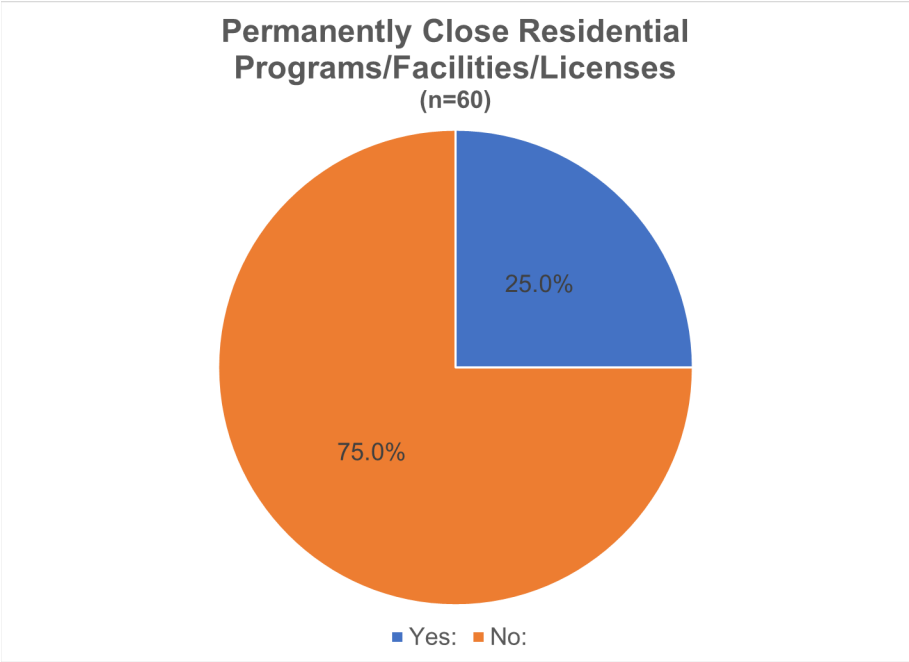
3. If your organization provided any residential services (C/FRS or ICF/DD) at any time in 2021, did your organization *TEMPORARILY* close any programs/facilities, or surrender any site licenses, between January 1, 2021 and today?

Of the 60 organizations that answered this question, just over one quarter (17/60 or 28.3%) reported that they temporarily closed any programs, facilities or site licenses. A total of 47 programs/facilities/licenses were affected, which impacted 150 individuals.



4. If your organization provided any residential services (C/FRS or ICF/DD) at any time in 2021, did your organization **PERMANENTLY close any programs/facilities, or surrender any site licenses, between January 1, 2021 and today?**

Fifteen of 60 (25.0%) respondents reported that they permanently closed 35 programs, facilities or site license, which affected 123 individuals.



Analysis

Roughly half of the organizations that provided Community and Family Residential Services (C/FRS), and those that operated ICF/DD facilities, reported reducing their capacity in 2021, through the middle of November. This is a much greater proportion than respondents to the 2021 Industry Survey reported for all of 2020: 6 of 41 (14.6%) C/FRS providers and 2 of 14 (14.3%) ICF/DD operators reported reducing capacity. And while in 2020, a total capacity of 58 beds were reduced, the number greatly increased to 347 for the first 10.5 months of 2021. Between the surveys, the proportions of reported reductions were similar for both service types.

While approximately one-quarter of the 60 organizations that operated any residential service in 2021 reported either temporarily or permanently closing any programs, facilities or surrendering any licenses through mid-November (17 and 15 organizations, respectively), 8 of 42 (19.0%) organizations temporarily closed programs in 2020, and none permanently did. In 2021, 47 programs were temporarily closed, which impacted 150 individuals, and 35 programs were permanently closed, which impacted 123 individuals.

The results of this survey clearly illustrate that 2021 has been a much more challenging year than 2020. Providers have reported how serious their staffing challenges have been, with substantial time, effort and resources going to support retention and recruitment efforts, but these figures show the affects staffing and other issues that impact capacity¹ have on the lives of people with disabilities. With so many spots unavailable, they are not able to live in residential settings of their choice, and providers lose the revenue they would otherwise receive. This is an unsustainable situation.

¹ A Vacancy Task Force met in November, 2021, and identified several factors that contribute to the increasing number of vacancies and the difficulty in filling them.

- Staffing, especially for high health/high behavioral needs. The number of longer-term staff is declining and the overall skill level goes with it. There is greater competition for trained and skilled staff.
- Rates: DWRS residential rates spread shared hours over the number of licensed beds in a facility, and not the number of residents that actually live there, which reduces revenue for the beds that are filled.
- Reimbursement. Some providers are able to get approval for exceptions that make the rates feasible.
- Compatibility with roommates. Variables include age (it's harder to match younger people) and acuity.
- Lack of referrals. A provider was surprised to learn that people looking for placements are searching tools for specific providers, rather than searching by location or amenities/features, which is how providers promote their services. Some providers are likely to be overlooked this way. Also, contracted case managers don't have a high level of familiarity with providers and homes in their areas, so they are less helpful with referrals. It also seems like DHS Regional Resource Specialists are not providing the level of support they did in the past.
- County case managers do not seem to be receiving or understanding information from DHS on changes, especially around Waiver Reimagine.
- Evictions are a growing issue.