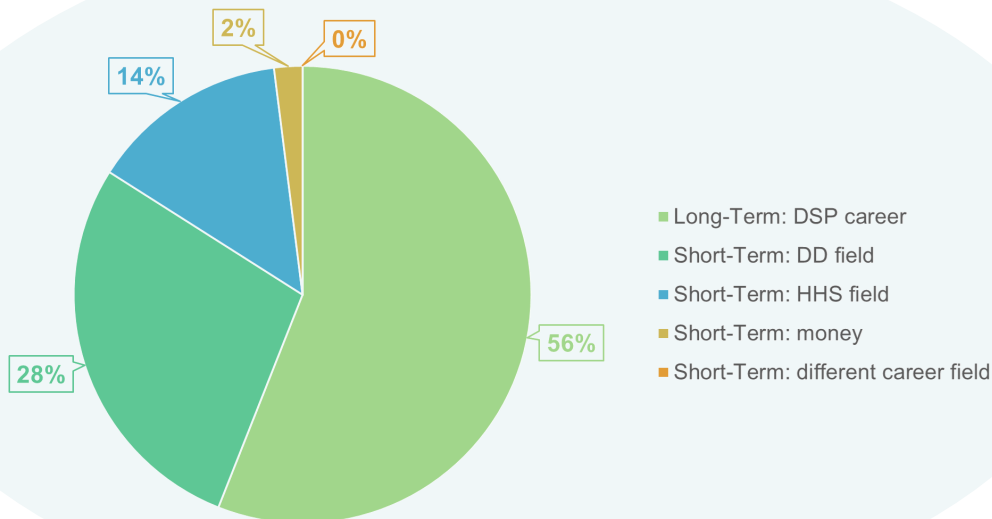


January 2023: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

These preliminary findings come from the series of 6 in-person DSPX Regional Meetings held during December 2022. Details are from notes recorded both by onsite facilitators and by attendees' participation in PollEverywhere inquiries. A 16-question SurveyMonkey questionnaire supplied demographic info.

DSPX is Direct Support Professionals providing valuable feedback and essential input to Ohio's DODD Workforce Crisis Taskforce, with an aim to improve recruitment, retention, job satisfaction, and career growth.

DSP CAREER PATHS



SYSTEMS ISSUES

DSPs desire professional development and want leadership to prioritize training and continuous education. Specific areas include, but aren't limited to: severe behavior situations; medical care procedures; communicating with family members; aging clientele; and addressing individuals' sexual activity and intimacy needs

DSPs want to and should be involved in ISP development. They often have solid, objective information regarding individuals' goals and needs. ISPs provide DSPs with daily guidance, so they need to be more realistic, relevant, and attainable.

DSPs feel that daily documentation is cumbersome, often repetitive, and they are uncertain if information reported is important. DSPs employed by agencies using electronic means or apps say these are helpful.

DSPs encounter well-meaning family members who often complicate the DSP role, with unrealistic expectations for supported individuals, outdated views of individuals' capabilities, or service demands beyond service agreements.

• helping and supporting people to reach their goals • the act of caring for people • the diversity of the job • being a connector • getting paid to do fun things •

What is the most fulfilling part of the DSP role?

DSPs find value and fulfilling purpose in their role, so they keep their positions - sometimes to the detriment of their personal finances, work/life balance, and family considerations.

DSPs enjoy the purpose of their job, the ability to help and experience jobs with individuals as well as the variety of daily activities that keep the job fresh - and these are job features they would highlight in recruitment efforts.

learning something new daily

helping people through tough times

• being an advocate • building relationships with individuals, families, and co-workers • discovering qualities and skills in people • teaching • being of service •

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SUMMARY POINTS

DSPs report a general lack of respect for the roles they play and for the responsibilities they shoulder. This absence of regard is felt with supervisors, management, family members, and the field as a whole. These perceived deficiencies, which include compensation commensurate with DSPs' roles and responsibilities, contributes to decisions *not* to develop the work into a long-term professional career.

Compensation is too low for most DSPs to consider the position as a point in a longer career. Specifically, pay is a major obstacle. Additionally, DSPs perceive many recent financial adjustments as unfair, especially to "veteran" DSPs.

DSPs lament the general lack of quality supervision and guidance, and applaud agencies and other employers that maintain frequent touch-bases and open lines of communication.

What would help DSPs envision a

LONGER-TERM

direct support career?

- Increased pay
- Better benefits
- Education and guidance for career advancement
- More acts of appreciation
- Longevity incentives
- Mentorship opportunities (to mentor and be mentored)
- Partnering with agency and state leadership to advocate for better compensation, federal SOC, etc.

