

Department of Health LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services Survey

Introduction

In January 2015, the North Dakota Department of Health's Domestic Violence/Rape Crisis Program and the North Dakota Women's Network formed an eight person advisory committee consisting of two representatives from LGBTQ communities in Bismarck, Minot, Grand Forks, and Fargo. The purpose of the LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee is to improve the response of domestic violence/rape crisis agencies to victims from the LGBTQ community.

The survey was an effort to assess the awareness and services provided by the domestic violence/rape crisis agencies in North Dakota to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from the LGBTQ community. The survey was marketed at various LGBTQ friendly venues, such as Pride Events, college campuses, social gathers, and through established social media.

Methods

A survey tool called Qualtrics was used to collect information. The survey consisted 38-questions that were separated into three phases. Phase one gathered basic questions regarding services in North Dakota. Phase two asked open ended questions about services in order to allow for more candid survey responses. Phase three captured demographic information of the survey respondents. No personal identifying information was collected such as name, address, telephone number, identifying numbers (social security number) or any linkage to an identifier. The survey was voluntary and participants were able to respond to any questions they wanted.

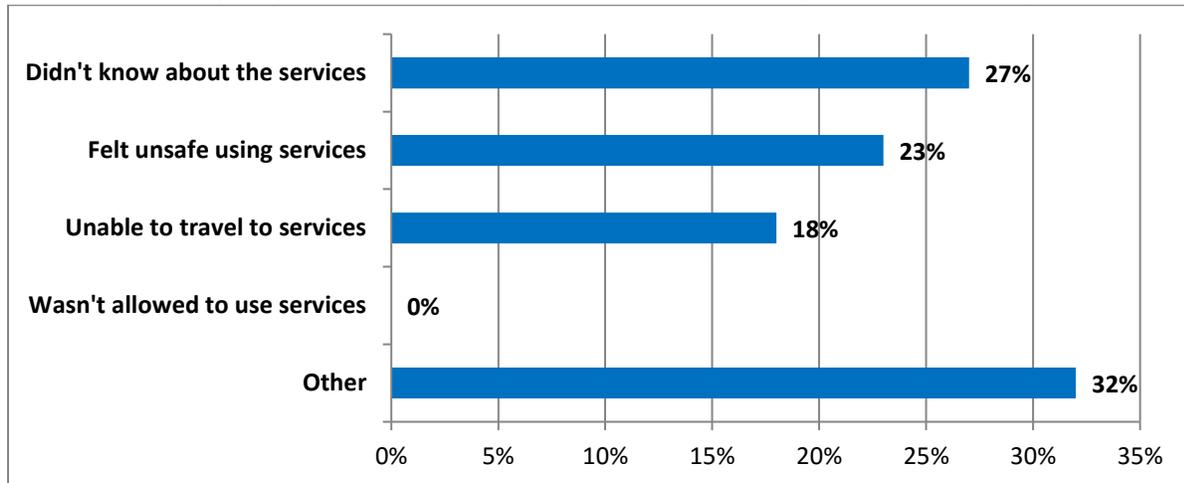
The survey was completed from June 16, 2015 to October 31, 2015.

About the data

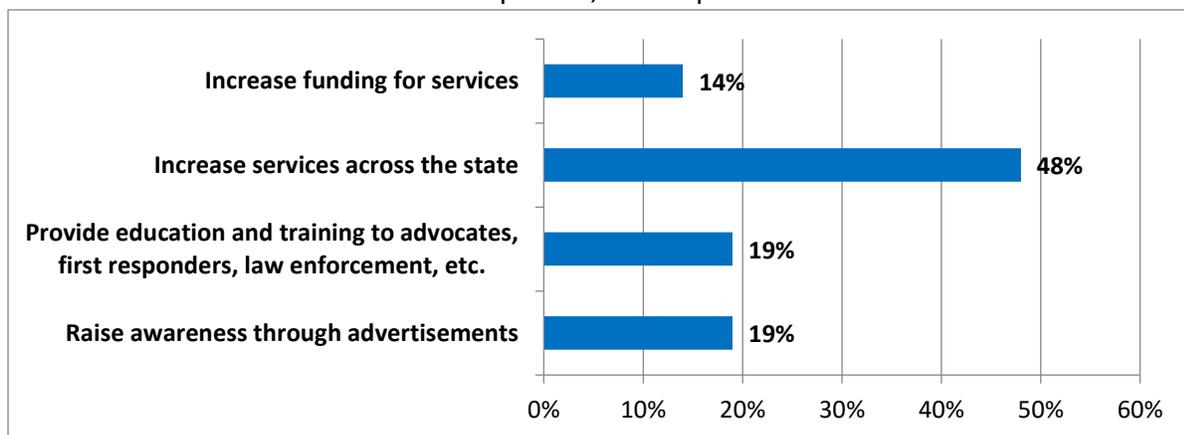
There were a total of 260 surveys that were started and 170 surveys that were completed. The overall response rate of the survey was 65%.

Conclusions

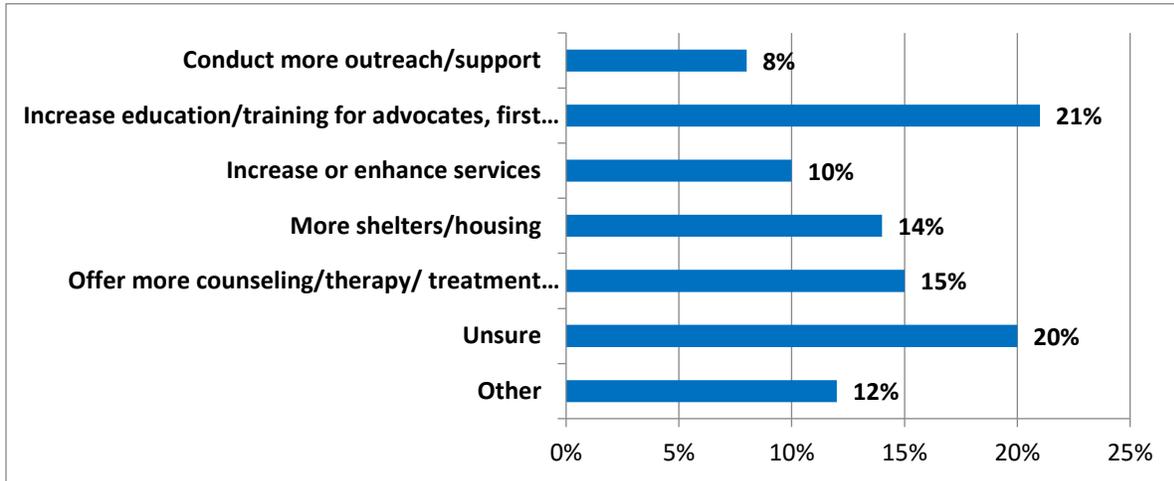
- **71% of those who sought services were satisfied with them.** Of those that weren't satisfied half the respondents felt that there needed to be more training for advocates, first responders, law enforcement, etc. when it comes to providing services to LGBTQ persons in order to reduce re-victimization. 17% stated that they didn't feel comfortable or welcomed with these services.
- When asked why respondents didn't feel comfortable utilizing services, the responses were:



- The comments under the "other" category included:
 - All of the above.
 - I didn't think to use them and was ashamed.
 - I didn't know if there was such a service locally. I didn't feel like I would be in a safe place to be out as gay or that I would be judged and not receive the same level of care.
- When asked how services could be improved, the responses were:



- Recommendations for expanding services were:



- **Some of the notable things we discovered through this survey:**

- Being unsure of whether or not a service center would be welcoming to LGBTQ folks was a common barrier to seeking services.
- Transgender individuals felt unsure of how their medical needs would be addressed while seeking services.
- **There is a need for more training and education** for service providers, law enforcement, and court systems on LGBTQ issues and inclusion, specifically in rural communities.
- **Anti-LGBTQ attitudes prevent LGBTQ survivors from seeking services.** If a survivor has encountered anti-LGBTQ attitudes in other areas of their lives, they are less likely to seek care from these community systems.
- **The concern of being “outed” while seeking services was mentioned several times.**
- Several of the larger community centers have sought out visibility within the LGBTQ communities (Grand Forks, Fargo, Bismarck) by partnering on events and education. **This was applauded by our respondents, many of whom said seeing the centers partner with LGBTQ groups made them feel more comfortable in approaching them for services.**

For more information about this survey, please contact Caitlin at caitlin@ndwomen.org