

A woman with dark, curly hair and glasses is smiling warmly. She is resting her chin on her right hand. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

# Using Technology to Survey People Receiving Supports from State Service Systems

Lessons from National Core Indicators<sup>®</sup> and National Core Indicators—Aging and Disabilities<sup>™</sup>



- Established: 1997
- Participating states: 46 and D.C.
- Population addressed: **Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD)**
- [nationalcoreindicators.org](http://nationalcoreindicators.org)



- Established: 2015
- Participating states: 20
- Population addressed: **Older adults and people with physical disabilities**
- [nci-ad.org](http://nci-ad.org)

- NCI and NCI-AD initiatives developed **validated** sets of **performance indicators** for DD systems (NCI) and State Medicaid, aging, and disability agencies (NCI-AD) used to measure and track their own performance.
- NCI and NCI-AD collect information **directly from individuals receiving services**

# Why test remote modes?

Due to COVID-19, NCI and NCI-AD stopped face-to-face survey implementation for 2019-20 survey cycle

Important to understand whether or how mode would affect surveying

Both surveys undertook a pilot test to understand the affects of using remote modes on the surveying of the respective populations

# Goal of Remote Pilots

- Determine feasibility of conducting NCI and NCI-AD surveys through remote modes
- Refine protocol and best strategies for surveying with remote surveying
- Enhance ability to collect information on quality and performance of state service systems

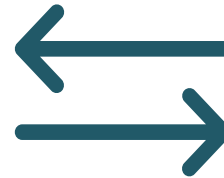
## Pilot studies were guided by these questions:



What were the experiences of surveyors and participants?



What were the technical challenges encountered? This includes technology access.



Did the representativeness of participants in the remote survey differ by mode in ways that impact the data?



Did mode appear to effect responses to survey questions?



In what ways can the mode differences be minimized by refining the protocols and surveyor trainings?



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# NCI Remote Surveying Pilot and Results

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National Core Indicators® for DD  
Systems

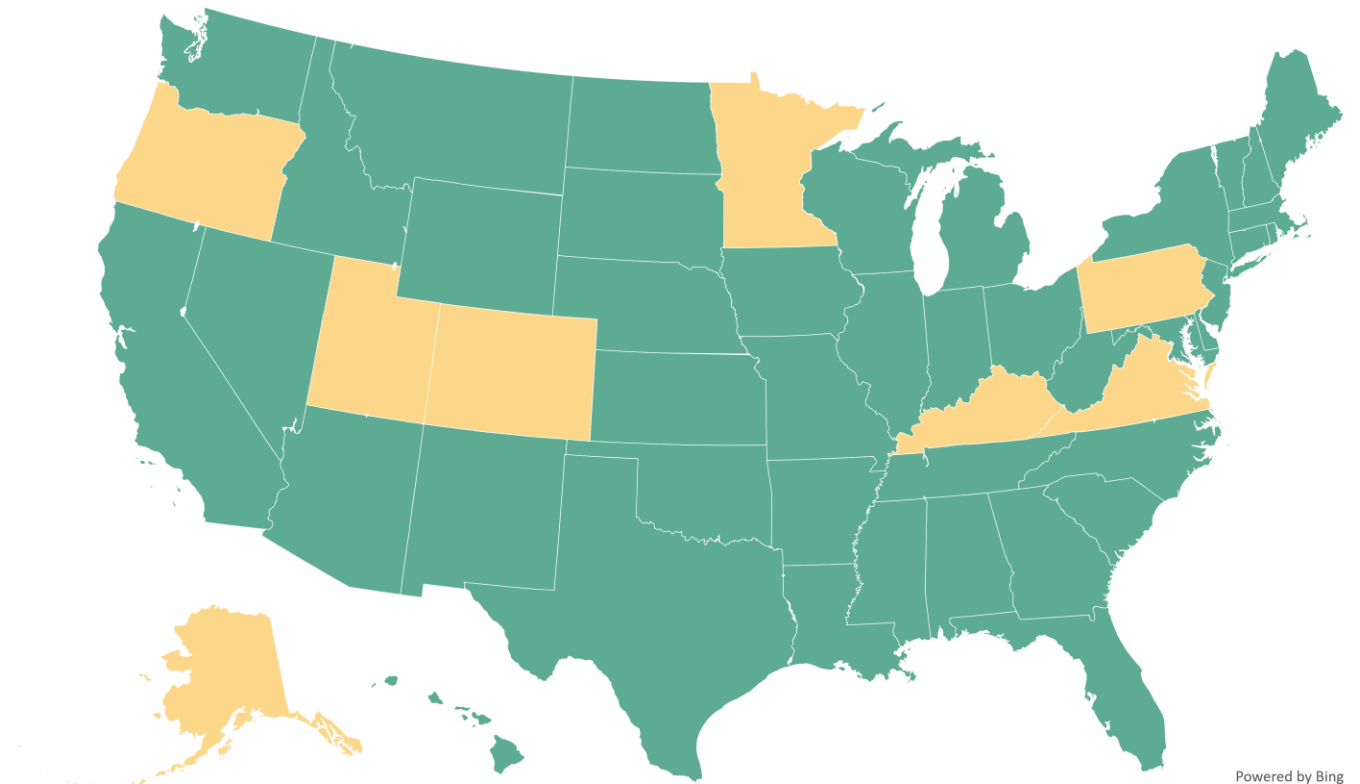


**NATIONAL  
CORE  
INDICATORS®**

NCI began a remote  
**VIDEO CONFERENCE**  
surveying pilot at the  
start of the 2019-20  
data cycle with  
Alaska due to  
geographic  
limitations

## Due to COVID-19, IPS surveying stopped fully in March 2020

- NCI expanded remote surveying pilot—May-June 2020
- Eight states participated:  
AK, CO, KY, MN, OR, PA, UT VA





Developed specific protocol and requirements, including...

### **Sample**

- States were to continue using the sample drawn for 2019-20

### **Surveyor and participant technology requirements**

- High-speed internet and connected device
- Working web cam – *all* participants had to be on video for the entirety of the survey
- Participant could use smart-phone with video

### **“Survey Status”**

- Surveyors were required to indicate when and why a person did not take part in the survey

### **Feedback**

- Participants and surveyors completed a detailed feedback form about the mode
- All surveyors completed a **live remote training** with NCI national staff
- NCI national staff conducted **shadow surveys** with each state

What did we  
find from  
the NCI  
Pilot?





## Technical Details

- **810** people were contacted to complete a remote survey
- **226** surveys were completed
- **27.9%** response rate
- Participating states also had **1,806** face-to-face surveys conducted prior to the shutdown to use for comparison purposes

## Why didn't people participate?



**50%** was non-contact (either due to incorrect contact information or some other reason)

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**7%** participant or guardian refusal

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**8%** technology-related barriers



# How do the modes compare?

Comparing remote surveys to face-to-face

# Factors that did not differ by survey mode

- Community type (metropolitan, micropolitan, small town, rural)
- Gender
- Race
- Preferred mode of communication (spoken vs. non-spoken)
- Level of ID (mild/moderate vs. severe/profound)
- Presence of a mental illness diagnosis (other than behavioral challenges)
- Mobility (full, with wheelchair/aid, none)
- Vision impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Extent of need for paid support (daily vs. less frequent than daily)
- Extent of proxy use in responding to questions

**FACTORS  
THAT  
DIFFERED  
BY SURVEY  
MODE  
( $P < 0.05$ )**

Pandemic effect?

	Face-to-Face	Remote
Primary language is English	98.6%	94.6%
Average age	41.9	39.4
Self-reported health is "very good" or "excellent"	66.5%	72.3%
Engages in moderate physical activity for at least 10 min. 5+ times a week	32.8%	52.5%
Has a legal guardian	44.1%	56.7%
Lives in own home/apartment	14.1%	8.0%
Has behavioral challenges (e.g., aggression, self-injury)	35.1%	23.7%
Average level of behavioral support needs, measured on a scale of 0 – 9 <i>Areas of support need: Behaviors that are (a) self-injurious, (b) disruptive, (c) destructive or harmful to others</i>	1.3	1.6
"Sometimes" or "often feels lonely"	39.7%	47.8%
Average score on the Personal Choice Summary Measure, range: 0 – 1 0 = did not provide the highest possible personal choice response on any item 1 = provided the highest possible personal choice response on all 6 items	0.56	0.62



# Surveyor and Participant Feedback:

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- Most participants
  - Said getting on to video conference was easy or in-between
  - Had help connecting (from family, friends, staff)
  - Used a device belonging to staff, provider or family
- Poor call quality was a common issue – this usually happened when signing into the meeting
- Visibility issues broke down into two main categories –
  - (1) bad video quality and
  - (2) camera/body positions that made it difficult for interviewers to consistently see all of an individual's face and read their expression.
- Sending a reminder email shortly before the meeting and providing extra-clear step-by-step instructions was helpful
- Most surveyors reported being able to build rapport with the participant

# What does this mean for NCI?



With sufficient care and attention to surveyor training, protocols, and working to ensure access to the technology for all those who want to participate, remote surveys are feasible



Currently all NCI states are conducting at least some Remote Surveying



Many are looking for solutions when remote surveying is not possible



# NCI-AD Remote Surveying Pilot

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National Core Indicators—Aging and  
Disabilities



## NCI-AD Remote Survey Pilot



- NCI-AD piloted video conference *and* telephone surveys between October 2020 January 2021
- Seven states participated: AL, IN, KY, MI, NE, OK, WI
  - Three states are brand new to NCI-AD surveying this year



# How does the pilot work?

Refined protocol from NCI pilot for the additional mode

Different than NCI

- **Sample:**
  - Work with each state to develop sample
  - States that collected 2019-20 data using similar sample frame to allow for comparison
- **Video conference & Telephone**
  - For pilot purposes, participants *do not get choice* in mode
- **“Survey Status”**
  - Surveyors were required to indicate when and why a person did not take part in the survey
- **Feedback**
  - Participants and surveyors completed a detailed feedback form about the mode
- All surveyors completed **standard NCI-AD training**
- NCI-AD national staff conducted **shadow surveys** with each state

# NCI-AD Pilot Participation

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Contact information was the primary reasons survey did not get scheduled (50%)

**21%**

(N=271)

Incorrect contact information

**29%**

(N=370)

Contact information correct, but person could not be reached

**18%**

(N=226)

Technology-related barriers

**14%**

(N=173)

Person refused

**5%**

(N=57)

Refused by guardian/family

**4%**

(N=47)

Deceased

**5%**

(N=60)

Person is not receiving services

**6%**

(N=7)

Other

# Reason people did not participate due to technology barriers...



**25%**  
**(N=57)**

Does not have access to web cam



**23%**  
**(N=52)**

Does not have support needed to participate in video conference



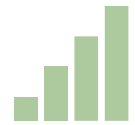
**14%**  
**(N=31)**

Does not have access to phone or phone plan



**8%**  
**(N=17)**

Does not have support needed to participate in conference call



**29%**  
**(N=66)**  
Other

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284  
telephone

Surveys  
completed

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102  
video conference

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*386*  
*total*

# Technical Issues and Distractions

## Trouble seeing on video conference

- **14%** of respondents had trouble seeing surveyor (N=94)
- **14%** of surveyors had trouble seeing respondents (N=94)

## Trouble hearing

- **Video conference**
  - **19%** surveyors had trouble (N=103)
  - **27%** respondents had trouble (N=99)
- **Telephone**
  - **13%** surveyors had trouble (N=178)
  - **27%** respondents had trouble (N=186)

## Distractions

- **12%** video conference (N=99)
- **11%** telephone (N=182)

Use of Proxy Version was higher for remote surveys compared to in-person\*

In-person (N=3,211)

- 11%

Remote (N=237)

- 51% video conference
- 49% phone

Differs from  
NCI pilot

\*Based on data from three states with 2019-20 data



# Mode Perspectives

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# NCI-AD Surveyor reports remote surveying is as effective meeting in-person:



## Telephone (N=187)

73% yes

12% no

15% don't know



## Video conference (N=103)

84% yes

9% no

8% don't know

If given choice,  
respondent  
would conduct  
survey  
(N=96)...

**47%**

Over the phone

**18%**

in-person

**10%**

video  
conference

**25%**

no  
opinion

What does this mean?

Remote surveying can be a feasible way to collect data provided that:



States/surveyors are appropriately trained and knowledgeable about survey administration, and



States/surveyors carefully adhere to specified protocol

# Lessons Learned from NCI and NCI- AD

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# NCI and NCI-AD Conclusions:

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- NCI and NCI-AD Remote Pilots determined the tested remote modes were feasible with continued attention to:
  - Surveyor training
  - Protocols
  - Ensuring access to the technology for all those who want to participate
  - Stakeholder outreach
- **Remote modes are feasible, but face-to-face is still gold-standard**
- As further multi-mode survey data become available in the future, NCI and NCI-AD will continue
  - to conduct analyses comparing the two modes and
  - to report on the results and
  - to revise protocols, training and resources according the results of ongoing analysis.

# Thank you

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- [sgiordano@hsri.org](mailto:sgiordano@hsri.org)
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- [www.nci-ad.org](http://www.nci-ad.org)

