

Quality Assurance Brief

July 2025

DDS Quality Outcomes QUALIFIED PROVIDERS

It is important that people receive services from provider agencies that meet basic requirements to assure people stay safe, have their health supported, and their rights respected. It is also important that agencies support people to gain their desired outcomes including in relationships, community connections, individual control, and other outcomes important to them.

L & C

% of providers initially meeting the requirement*

FY
2018-19FY
2023-24

Providers make sure staff have the right qualifications and complete regular trainings

The agency screens prospective employees per requirements.



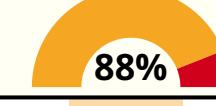
The agency assures that staff have the necessary qualifications and certifications to do the job.



The agency has and uses a system to track whether staff have completed required trainings.



The agency provides on-going supervision, oversight and staff development.



*Providers are re-assessed 60 days after their initial review. Most identified issues are resolved by this point.

Data Sources (see Q&A at end of document for further details):

L & C Massachusetts DDS Licensure and Certification data collected in fiscal years 2018-2019 (July 2017-June 2019) and 2023-2024 (July 2022-June 2024)

NCI National Core Indicators, surveys collected in Massachusetts from individuals in FY2018 (July 2017-June 2018) and FY2022 (July 2021-June 2022). Turnover data is from the 2018 and 2021 NCI State of the Workforce survey.

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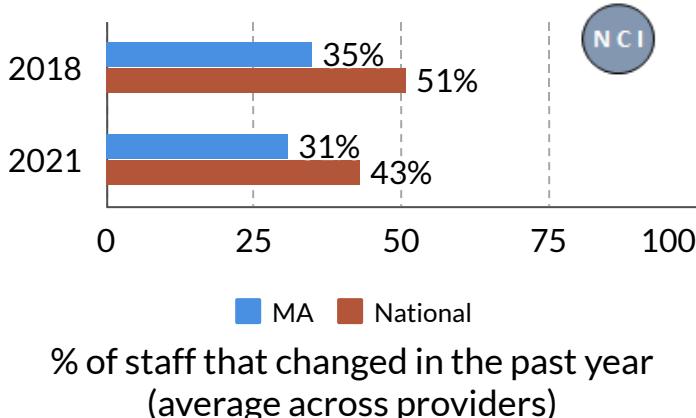
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People have consistent staff who know how to support their unique needs

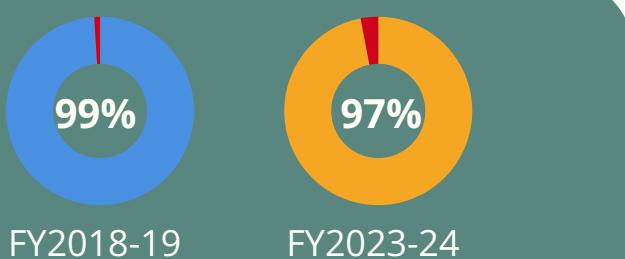


Staff in MA leave their job less often than the national average, but people would like even more consistency in their staff

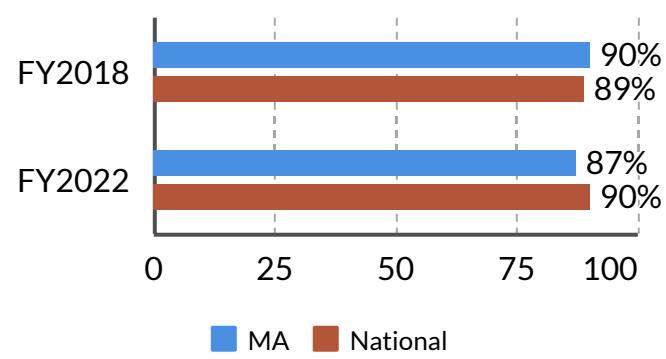


Providers make sure staff have proper training, and people agree that they have the right training

L & C



The agency assures that staff / care providers are familiar with and trained to support the unique needs of individuals.



Do you feel that staff have the right training to meet your needs?

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L & C

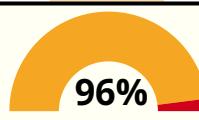
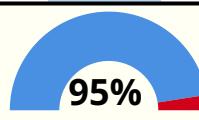
% of providers initially meeting the requirement*

FY
2018-19FY
2023-24

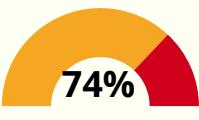
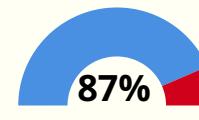
Staff know how to protect people's rights and safety



Support staff are trained in human rights.

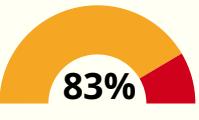


Staff / care providers are trained in the correct utilization of health-related protections and supports.

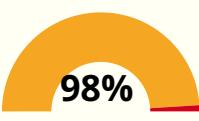
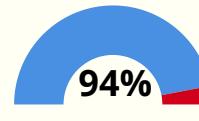


If staff need to limit what people can do so they don't hurt themselves or others, staff know how to do this safely

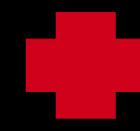
Staff are trained to safely and consistently implement restrictive behavioral interventions.



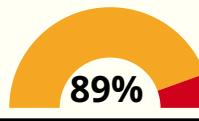
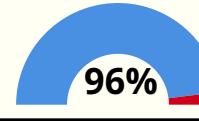
Staff are trained in safe and correct administration of restraints.



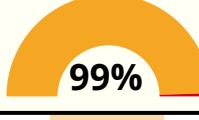
Staff know how to manage people's expected and unexpected medical needs



Support staff are trained to recognize signs and symptoms of illness (e.g., fever, sudden pain).



Support staff know what to do in a medical emergency.



When people need help taking their medications, the staff who help them are fully trained to do that.



*Providers are re-assessed 60 days after their initial review. Most identified issues are resolved by this point.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) What are Quality Assurance (QA) outcomes?

With input from stakeholders, DDS has established clear outcomes that define what is expected from its services. These outcomes form the basis for evaluating the quality of support DDS provides to individuals. The Quality Assurance Outcomes create a comprehensive view of the quality of supports in the DDS system and help pinpoint areas for potential improvement initiatives.

2) Where does the data come from?

DDS Qualified Providers data are from the following sources:

 **Licensure and Certification:** The main source of the data on DDS Qualified Providers included in this report comes from the Licensure and Certification processes. These processes ensure that providers of community services are authorized by DDS to deliver supports. Trained Quality Enhancement Specialists collect this data during on-site visits. They conduct interviews with staff, families, and service recipients, and also review documentation and observe services in action. Residential, day, and employment services are all assessed using this process. The aim is to confirm that providers meet certain quality standards, have necessary safeguards for service recipients, and achieve expected outcomes. Each standard is assessed, and providers are classified as either "met" or "not met" based on their performance. For this report, we included data collected in Fiscal Years 2018-2019 (July 2017-June 2019) and 2023-2024 (July 2022-June 2024). Due to Covid-19 pandemic disruptions, we have chosen to exclude measures from Fiscal Years 2020-2021.

 **National Core Indicators:** The National Core Indicators (NCI) is a national survey conducted periodically in participating states. Massachusetts DDS has collected NCI data every two years since 1999. Trained staff conduct face-to-face interviews with a random, representative sample of all adults who receive paid supports from the MA DDS, including people who live by themselves, in residential supports, and with family. Data are reported at the state level, can be compared to averages of all participating states. +/- 5% margin of error with a 95% confidence level. For this report, we included data collected in Fiscal Year 2018 (July 2017-June 2018) and Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2021-June 2022). NCI also carries out an annual State of the Workforce survey (formerly names the Staff Stability survey). This survey collects data on provider agencies and the Direct Support Professional workforce. This report includes data from the two most recent years that MA participated in this survey: 2018 and 2021.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

3) How often are data collected?

DDS collects data through its Licensure and Certification process each year. Each provider is required to go through the Licensure and Certification process at least once every two years. NCI data are collected every two years. A new sample is selected for each year of NCI data.

4) Where can I learn more about this process?

DDS Licensure and Certification information:

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/dds-licensure-and-certification>

DDS Quality Management:

<https://www.mass.gov/dds-quality-management>

NCI:

<https://idd.nationalcoreindicators.org/>