

# 2024 NEMT Program Evaluation Findings & Trend Analysis

*Columbia Pacific CCO - NW Rides*



*Program Evaluation Completed by Yelena Voznyuk with CareOregon*

# What is Program Evaluation?

*Program evaluation is an evidence-based practice that help leaders make data-driven decisions using scientific methods. Evaluations allow leaders to measure the outcomes of services and resources and how they impact participants and communities. Data collected through evaluations can help advocate for support such as increased funding and policy changes. Three major areas capture the process of program evaluation:*

## **1) Statement(s):**

- What do you believe to be true about your program?
  - *i.e.: Calling members the night before, to remind them of their scheduled trip, will reduce member no-shows.*

## **2) Evaluation Question(s):**

- What do you want to know to prove your statement(s)?
  - *i.e.: Do reminder calls reduce member no-shows?*

## **3) Evidence Gathering:**

- What data do you need to collect, and from whom, to answer your question(s) to confirm your statement(s)?
  - *i.e.: Track trips with reminder calls vs trips without a reminder call and trip completion rates.*
    - *Why is this important to gather?*

# Who & What is NEMT?

## NEMT Program:

Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) program is a benefit regulated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to provide Medicaid recipients with transportation assistance to and from their health care appointments.

## Care Coordinated Organization (CCOs) & Brokerage:

*Columbia Pacific CCO* – The contract was awarded to Tillamook County Transportation District (TCTD) and began offering NEMT services as the newly formed **NW Rides** brokerage in July 2018.



State



CCO



Contract  
Manager



NEMT  
Program

# Statement

*“The NEMT program provides safe and reliable transportation to and from covered services for Medicaid-enrolled members. These members are enrolled with Health Share of Oregon, Jackson Care Connect, and Columbia Pacific CCO.*

*It is important for all stakeholders, regardless of how they interact with the program, to be supported by and satisfied with the NEMT program.*

*Avenues are provided for those experiencing barriers to share their feedback with both the brokerage and CareOregon. The feedback identified through program evaluation efforts is used to make recommendations for program development and improvement.”*

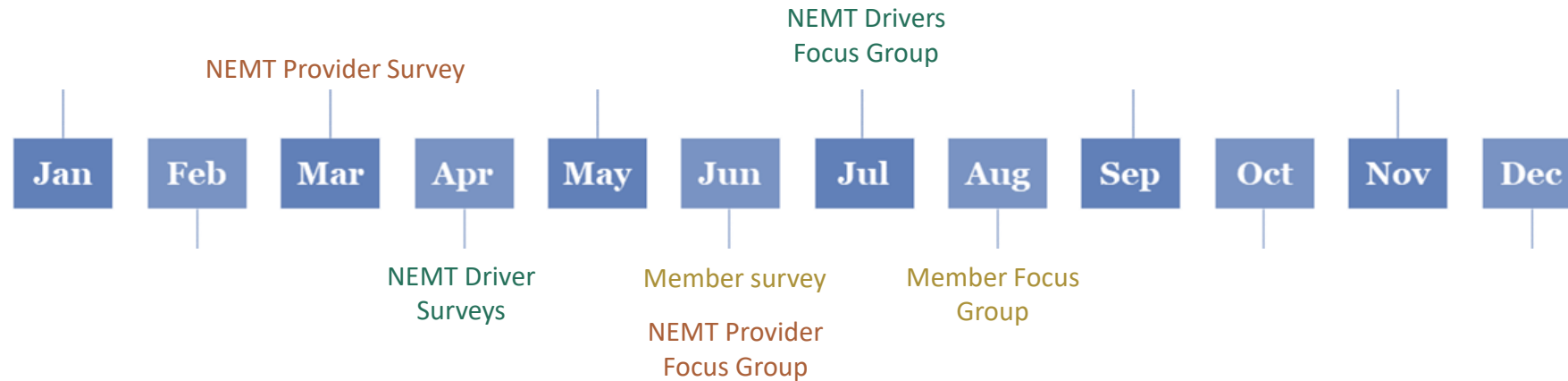
# Stakeholders & Data Collection Timeline

## Stakeholders:

- **NEMT Providers:** Providers under contract with each brokerage in 2024.
- **NEMT Drivers:** Drivers employed by or contracted with NEMT providers in 2024.
- **Members:** CCO members who used the NEMT program at least 10 times in the fourth quarter of 2023. Surveys were sent to members based on their most frequent mode of transport. Members who used the grievance process received a separate quality assurance survey.

## Data Collection Methods:

- **Survey:** Quantitative data collection
- **Focus Group:** Qualitative data collection – gathering stories from stakeholders that can expand on quantitative data



# Evaluation Questions

The program evaluation was designed to answer the following five questions:

- 1) **Demographics** – *Who are the participants?*
- 2) **Satisfaction** – *What is the yearly satisfaction with the NEMT program?*
- 3) **Barriers** – *What are the barriers with accessing, driving for, or operating for, the NEMT program?*
- 4) **Quality Assurance** – *What is the members' experience with the quality assurance processes?*
- 5) **Providing Feedback** – *What is the experience for providing feedback about the NEMT program?*

# Participants of the satisfaction survey

## Members

- 72% are **51 years old or older**; *of those, 31% are 66 years old or older.*
- 54% are **female**.
- 84% reported living with at least one **disability**.
- Preferred languages identified were **English, Romanian, Spanish, and Vietnamese**.
- **White and American Indian or Alaska Native** were the top 2 race and ethnicities identified.

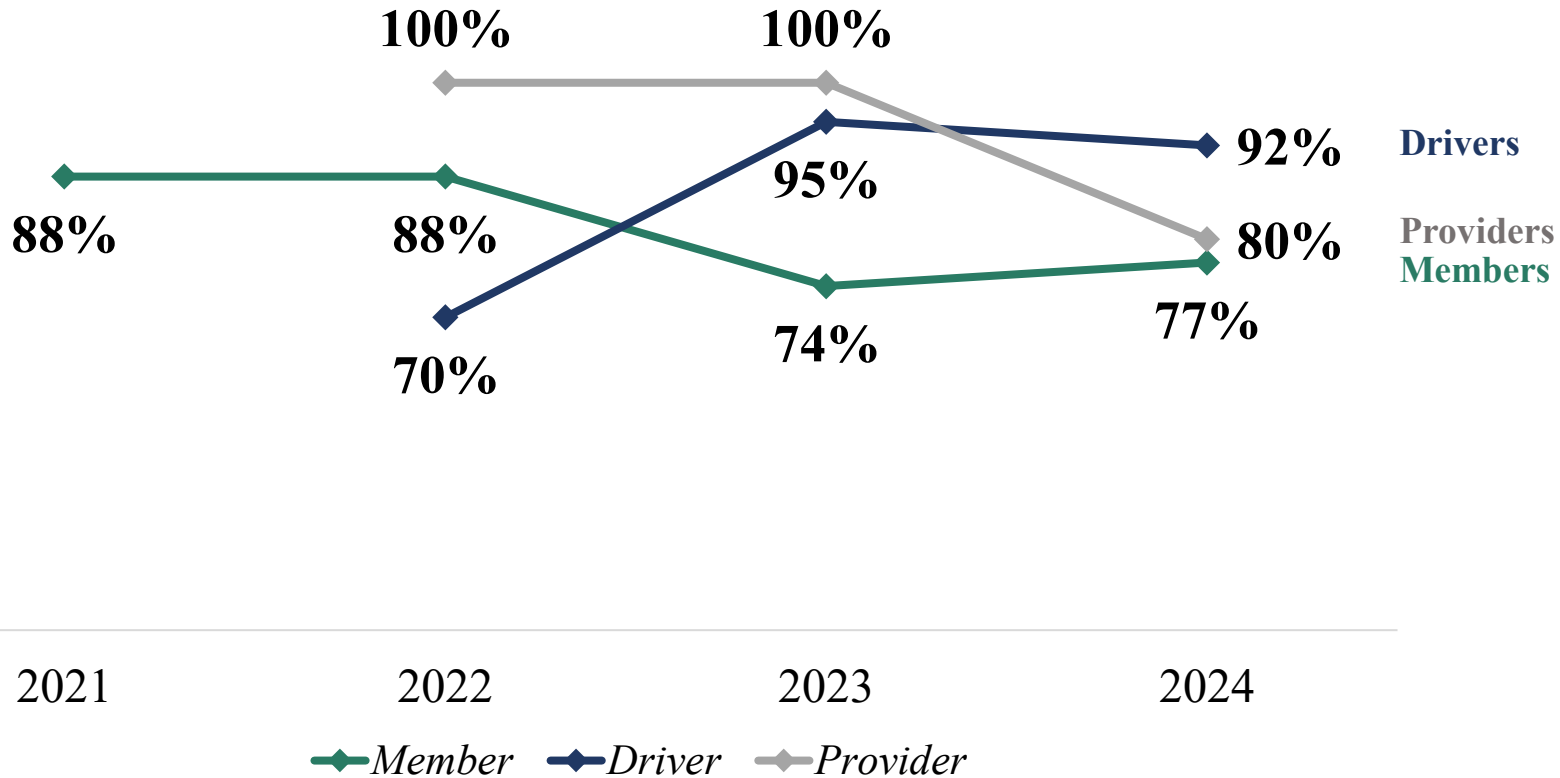
## NEMT Drivers

- 62% are **51 years old or older**; *of those, 25% are 66 years old or older.*
- 62% are **female**.
- No one reported living with a **disability**.
- Preferred languages identified were **English and Spanish**.
- **White, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Hispanic/Latino** were the top 3 identified race and ethnicities.

## NEMT Providers

- 60% are **51 to 65 years old**.
- 60% are **male**.
- No one reported living with a **disability**.
- **English** was the only identified preferred language.
- **White, Biracial, and Asian** were the top 3 identified race and ethnicities.

# Yearly Satisfaction Trends



**Member** satisfaction decreased from 2022 to 2023 but increased in 2024.

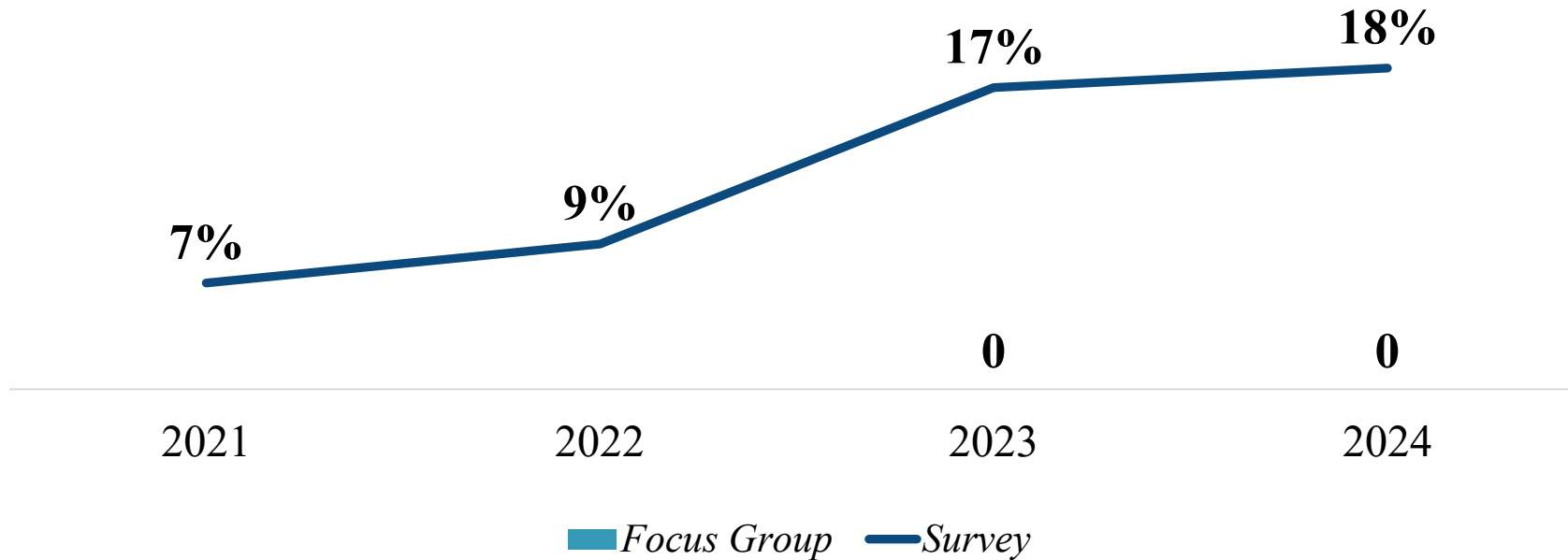
**NEMT driver** satisfaction increased significantly from 2022 to 2023 and maintained a high rating into 2024.

**NEMT provider** satisfaction decreased in 2024.

*\*Drivers and providers were asked about satisfaction rate starting in 2022.*



# Member Participation Trends



**Survey participation** has been increasing over the years, with the highest participation rate in 2024.

**Focus group participation** has not been successful, yet.

*Focus groups were first offered in 2023.*

# Barriers & Challenges for Members



**1 out of 4**

Participants reported a difficult experience with **the mileage reimbursement process.**



**More than 1 out of 3**

Participants reported they **experience a barrier** to accessing the NEMT program and services. *Such as drivers not showing up for a scheduled ride, requiring specific vehicles but are unavailable, living with a disability, etc.*



**5 out of 6**

Participants reported they **experience a financial burden** with self-transporting and waiting for mileage reimbursement.



# Successes for Members



- **Call center** - 74% had a positive experience with contacting the call center to schedule trips, ask questions, or provide feedback about their experience with the NEMT program.



- **Bus fare** - 75% had a positive experience with calling in and requesting bus fare, and 75% had a positive experience with receiving bus fare.



- **Transport by NEMT drivers** - 86% had a positive experience with NEMT drivers during trip transport, and 100% feel safe with NEMT drivers transporting them.



- **Ease of use** – 73% had an easy time with accessing the NEMT program and services offered.

# Member's Experience with Quality Assurance

## Challenges:

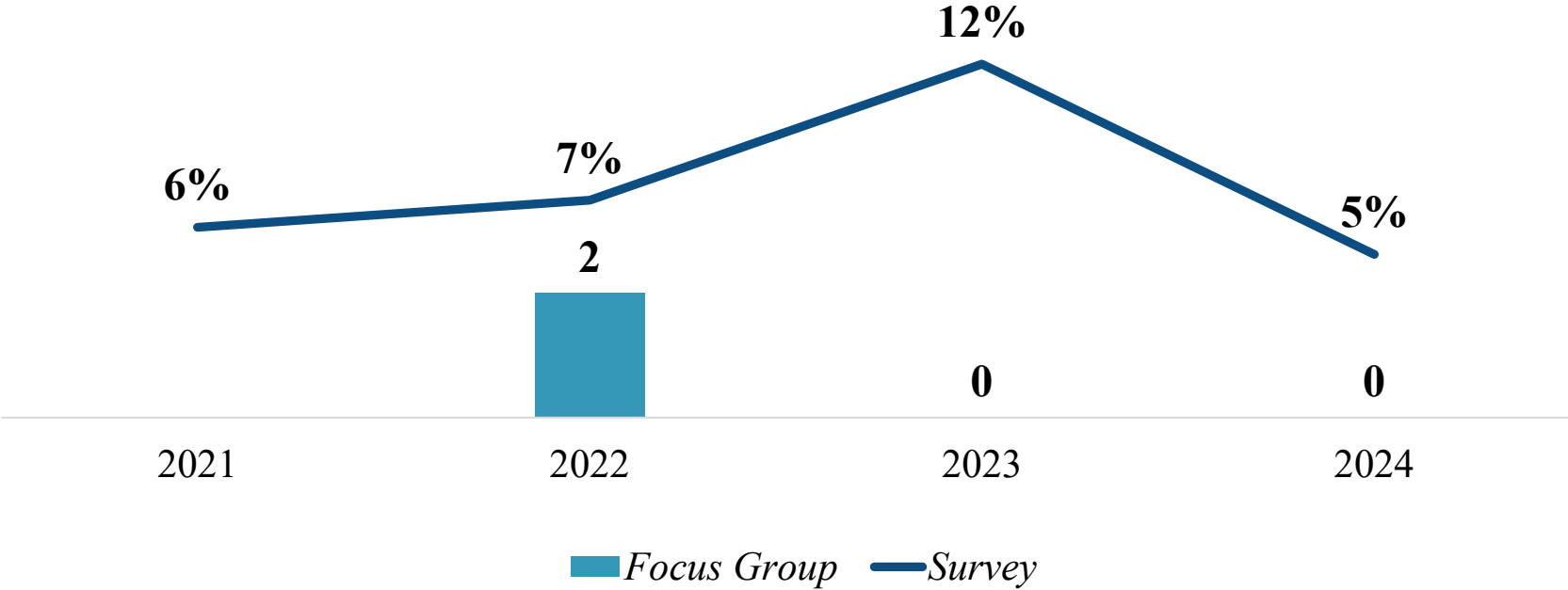
- Participant did not find the grievance resolution letter to be helpful.
- Grievance letter included reported information that was untrue.
- Did not feel heard after submitting a grievance.

*\*One participant completed this survey*

## Suggestions:

- Would like to know what was denied so the member can try something else.
- Would like to check the status of their grievance online.
- Would like to opt out of all, or some, letters.
- Would like the number of grievance letters sent to them be reduced.

# NEMT Driver Participation Trends



Survey participation was increasing from 2021 to 2023 but decreased to its lowest participation in 2024.

Participation in the **focus group** was successful in 2022 but no participation in 2023 and 2024.

# Barriers & Challenges for NEMT Drivers



1 out of 2

Participants experienced **unsafe behaviors** at least once a year from members and/or their caregivers during transport.



3 out of 4

Participants were asked to **help a member** with something that was **outside of approved transportation needs**.

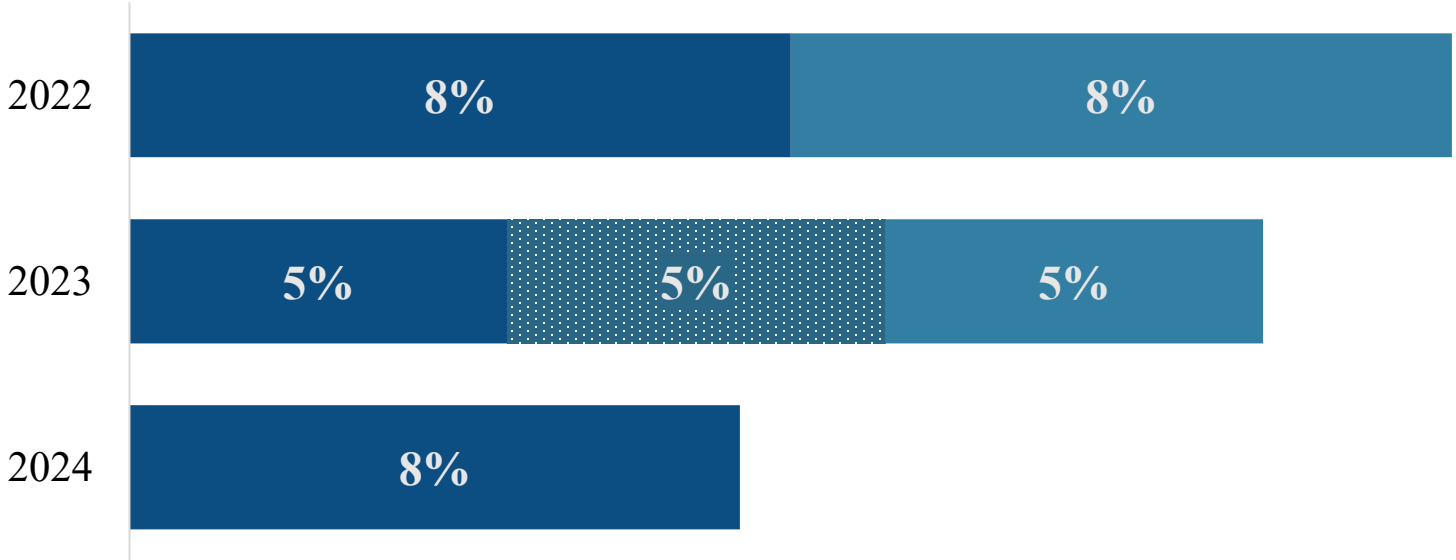


More than 4 out of 5

Participants received trip information with **missing or inaccurate member contact information**, such as their phone number. *This was the most common error in trip details.*



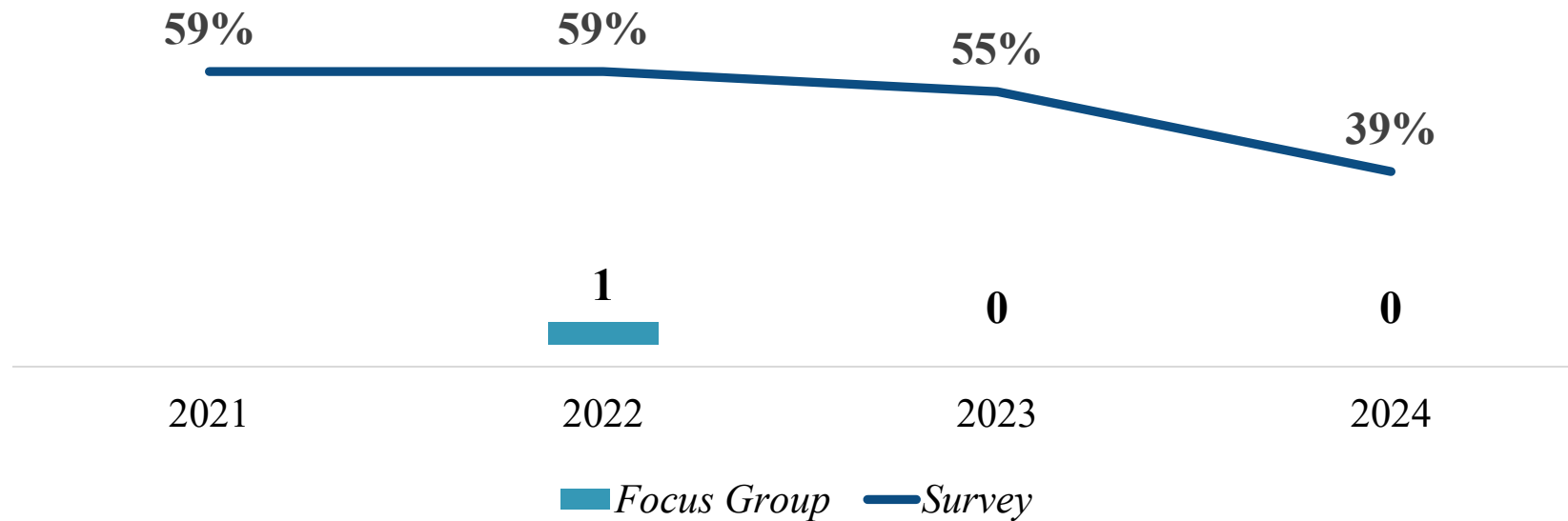
# Success for NEMT Drivers



Drivers are reporting a **decrease in being discriminated against** year after year.

- Health care provider (staff at hospital or clinic)
- Representative/caregiver (family member)
- Member

# NEMT Provider Participation Trends



Survey participation has been decreasing since 2022.

Participation in the **focus group** was successful in 2022 but no participation in 2023 and 2024.



# Barriers & Challenges for NEMT Providers



**1 out of 5**

Participants were **not offered opportunities to interact** with other providers for knowledge sharing and support.



**1 out of 5**

Participants **experienced discrimination** from healthcare providers.



# Successes for NEMT Providers



- **Member Complaints** - 100% reported that member complaints were correctly assigned to their company.



- **Trip management** - 100% received trip assignments with enough time to manage them.



- **Trip changes** – 100% were notified of trip changes with enough time to respond and adjust.

100%

Feel valued as an NEMT provider.

# Providing Feedback about the NEMT Program

## NEMT Drivers

**75%** of drivers **share about their experience** with driving for the NEMT program. *Responses included 'sometimes', and 'often'.*

**63%** drivers share about their experience **with their employer.** *Top response.*

75% feel comfortable sharing feedback, however, **25%** would like the opportunity to **share anonymously.**

## NEMT Providers

**100%** of providers **share about their experience** with operating for the NEMT program. *Responses included 'often', and 'always'.*

**80%** share about their experience **with the brokerage dispatch or other brokerage staff.**

100% feel **comfortable sharing** feedback.

# Program Evaluation Recommendations for Improvements

## Members

- Raise awareness and access to services and materials offered in member's preferred language.  
*This is a barrier for about 1 out of 6 members.*

## Drivers

- CareOregon to communicate directly with drivers about NEMT surveys and focus groups.  
*To increase participation in the survey and focus groups (which have been declining).*
- Offer an outlet for NEMT drivers to share feedback anonymously.  
*About 1 out of 3 reported they would feel more comfortable sharing anonymously.*

## Providers

- Increase opportunities for providers to engage with other providers for knowledge sharing and support.  
*Relationship building between the brokerage and NEMT providers.*
- Offer an outlet for NEMT providers to share feedback anonymously.  
*About 1 out of 4 reported they would feel more comfortable sharing anonymously.*

# Program Improvements Made & Planned For

- **Network Investments**

- NEMT brokerages using awarded funds to make investments that may apply to these areas:
  - Expansion or development of supplemental NEMT Driver training
  - Ambulance and accessible levels of service capacity analysis and feasibility for solutions
  - Modernization and efficiencies for processing member reimbursements
  - Increase fleet size and program capacity across NEMT provider network
  - Creation or expansion of volunteer driver program offerings

- **Education and Awareness**

- Published introductory NEMT educational video on each CCO Transportation page
  - Continuing to partner with CareOregon BMC team on educational content and materials to improve broad awareness and understanding of transportation resources and NEMT benefit offerings

- **Members**

- Increased reimbursement rates for mileage, lodging and meals
- Early stages of online/mobile app options for scheduling and accessing NEMT services

## Thank you to everyone who assisted with the program evaluation:

San SunOwen – *Director of Transportation*

Jen Martinek – *Transportation Manager*

Anna Criteser – *Partner Operations Supervisor*

Erin Moomey – *Partner Operations Supervisor*

Cody Biesanz – *Quality Assurance & Compliance Specialist*

Sophia Cheng – *Data Analyst II*

Gabe Contreras – *Data Analyst II*

Ashley Vanness – *Technical Writer*

Brokerages – *NW Rides Staff*

*The complete NEMT Evaluation Findings Report is available on the [Home - News \(careoregon.org\)](#) page for internal staff or by contacting Yelena @ [voznyuky@careoregon.org](mailto:voznyuky@careoregon.org) for a copy.*