

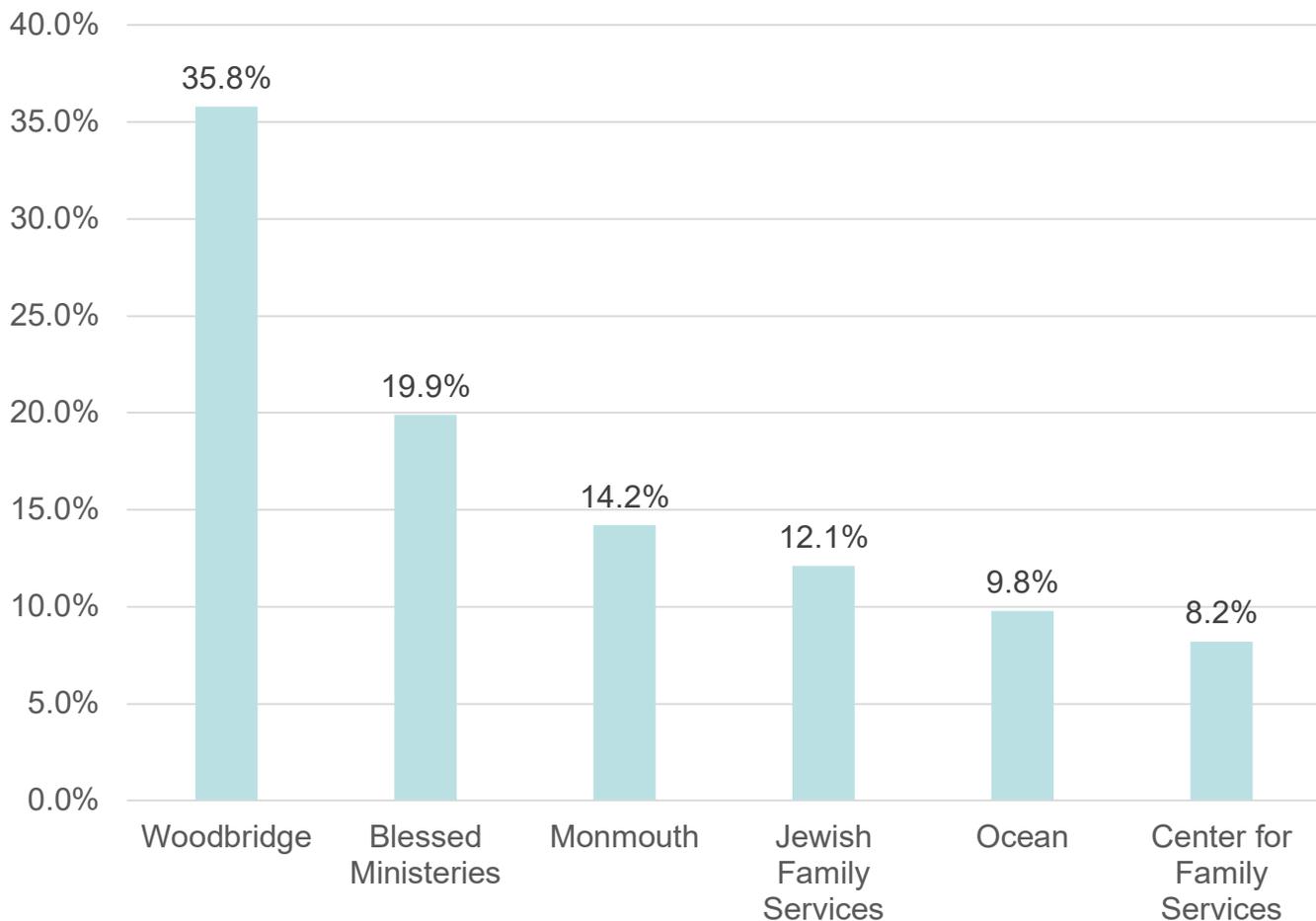


**RUTGERS**

Robert Wood Johnson  
Medical School

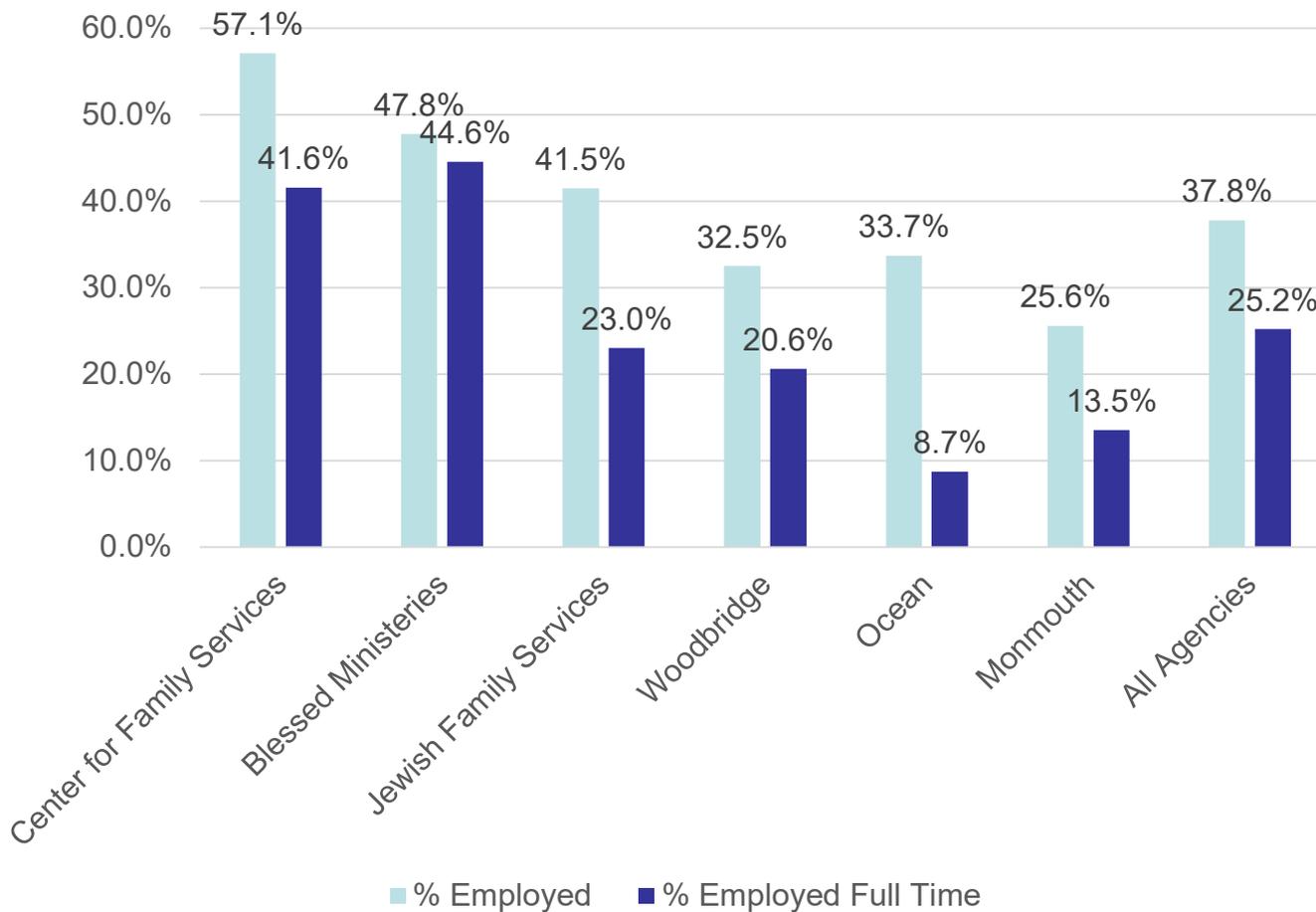
# **NJ Pathways to Recovery Successes, Challenges, and Solutions**

# Enrollment by Agency as of June 2020



Enrollment numbers by agency: Woodbridge=335; BM=186; Monmouth=133; JFS=113; Ocean=92; CFS=77; TOTAL=936

# Proportion of Clients Employed and Employed Full-Time by Agency



# Recruitment and Referral Sources

- **Most common sources**
  - SUD treatment programs, peer recovery programs, drug/recovery courts, community outreach/presentations, word-of-mouth
- **Most successful sources**
  - SUD treatment programs
  - Leveraging existing partnerships and community relationships
    - **Developing individual, trusting, relationships are critical**
- **Challenges/barriers**
  - Continued engagement after initial contact
    - **Adapting communication methods**
  - Recruitment of those indirectly impacted (family/friends)
    - **Community outreach and partnership with family support agencies**

# Clients Served

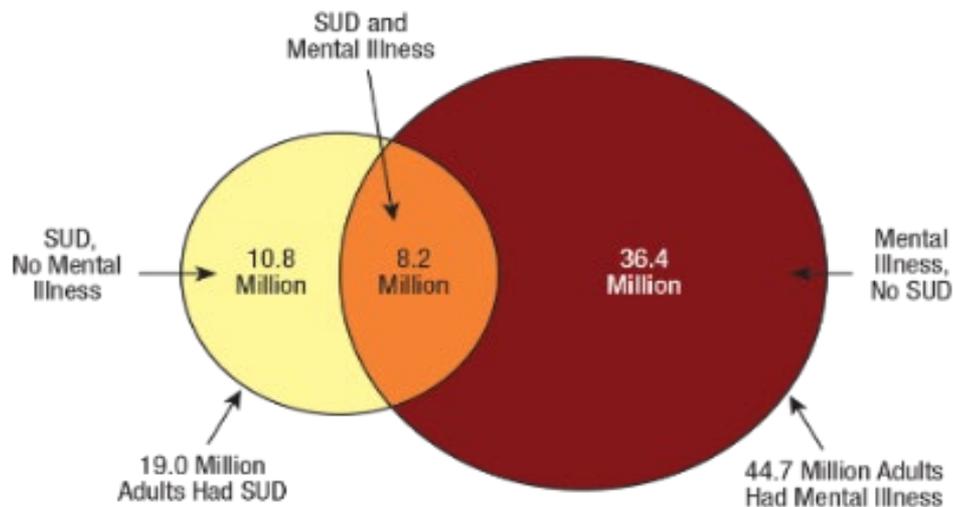
(based on program observation)

- **Diverse population**
  - 50% male/female
  - Ages 18-65
  - Diverse race/ethnicity
  - Motivation/readiness to work varies
- **Education and employment history**
  - Most HS diploma
  - Mechanical, manual labor, retail, food and beverage service, hospitality, and the transportation, logistics and distribution
  - Challenge: Lack of experience in higher paying jobs
    - **Work readiness or training. Additional training or education.**
    - **Volunteer or intern**

# Clients Served

- **Mental health history**

- Most recognized of mental health issues and trauma are common, but often untreated or inadequately treated
- Challenge: Psychiatric instability
  - **Need to ensure mental health assessments, linkage to care, ongoing communication with treatment team**

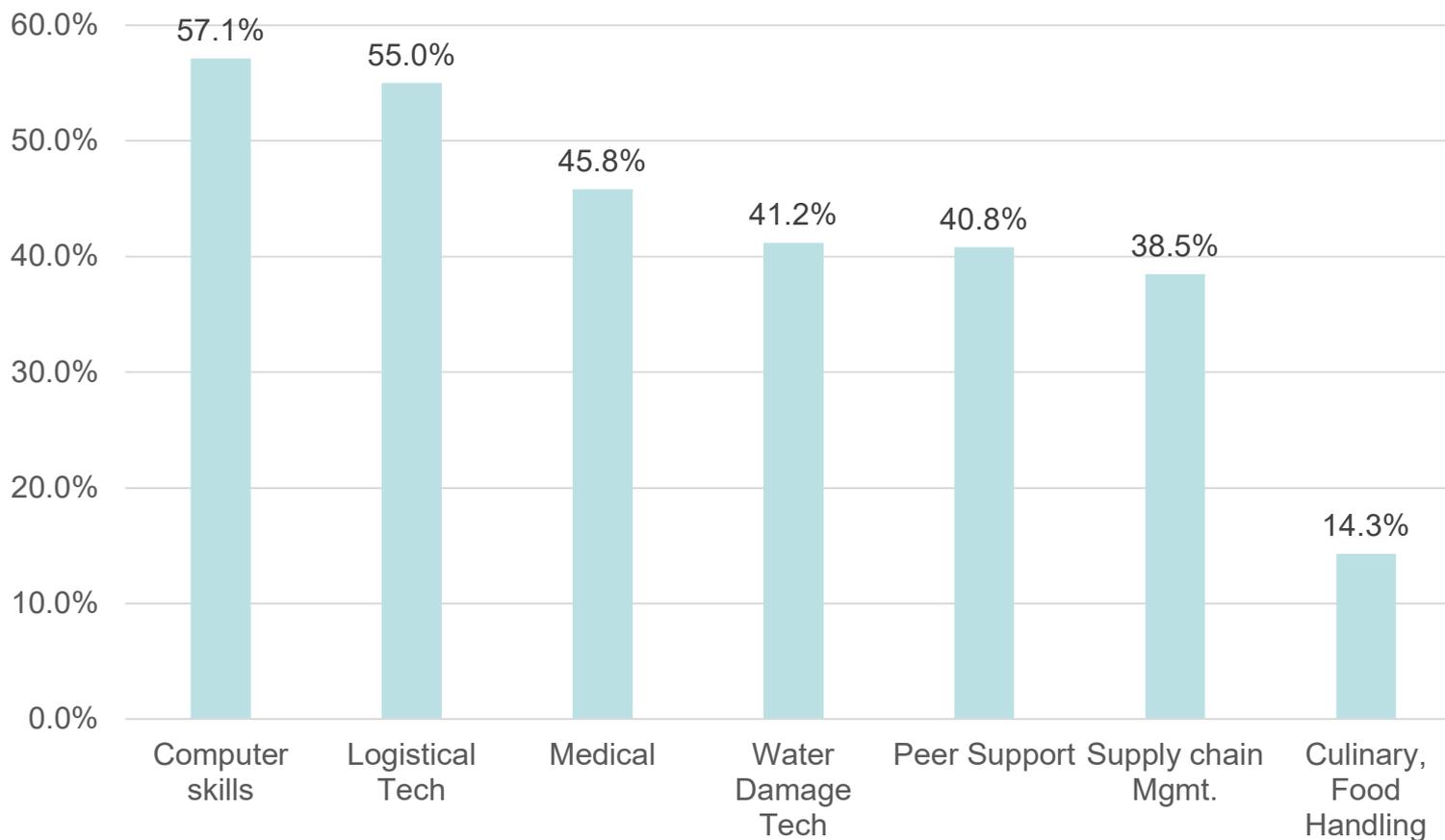


SAMHSA, 2017

# Training and Other Needs

- **Training**
  - Work readiness
  - Most needed training, utilized/wanted training
  - Ex. HVAC, computer
  - Challenge: Resistance to training (clients need/want to get right to work)
- **Basic necessities**
  - Housing
  - Clothes, toiletries, sanitary supplies
  - Phone, email
- **Assessment of learning differences** (always overlooked)
- **Mental health assessment and referral**

# Proportion of Clients Who Received Job Placement by Type of Training Received



# Employers

- **Largest employers**
  - Peer recovery programs, supermarkets, warehouses, delivery services, casinos, food services, and retail.
- **Challenges with finding employers**
  - The majority of PTR programs specifically mentioned that employer stigma of clients prevented them from establishing a relationship with some employers. If this occurred, programs shifted focus away from these employers to other more recovery-friendly companies.
  - **Provide comprehensive training program for employers**
- **Relationships with employers**
  - It takes time to build relationships
- **Developing employer networks**
  - Cold-calling, familiar with management or owner, outreach

# Job Placement Challenges

- **Stage of recovery**
  - Some had many clients in early recovery (although others had clients in longer-term recovery)
  - Challenge: Not enough treatment support
    - Need to ensure all clients in appropriate level of treatment and facilitate access to medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD)
- **Criminal record or legal issues**
  - Refer and connect the client to legal services
  - Build relationships with employers

# Job Placement Challenges Continued

- **Documentation**

- Lack necessary documents for employment

- Assist clients with documentation issues surrounding driver's license, birth certificate, etc.

- **Logistics**

- Lack transportation

- Provide public transportation passes where available
- Arrange monetary support for ride sharing or car services

- Lack childcare

- Provide monetary support for childcare costs
- Assist with finding license childcare facilities

- Unstable housing

- Connect clients to housing resources

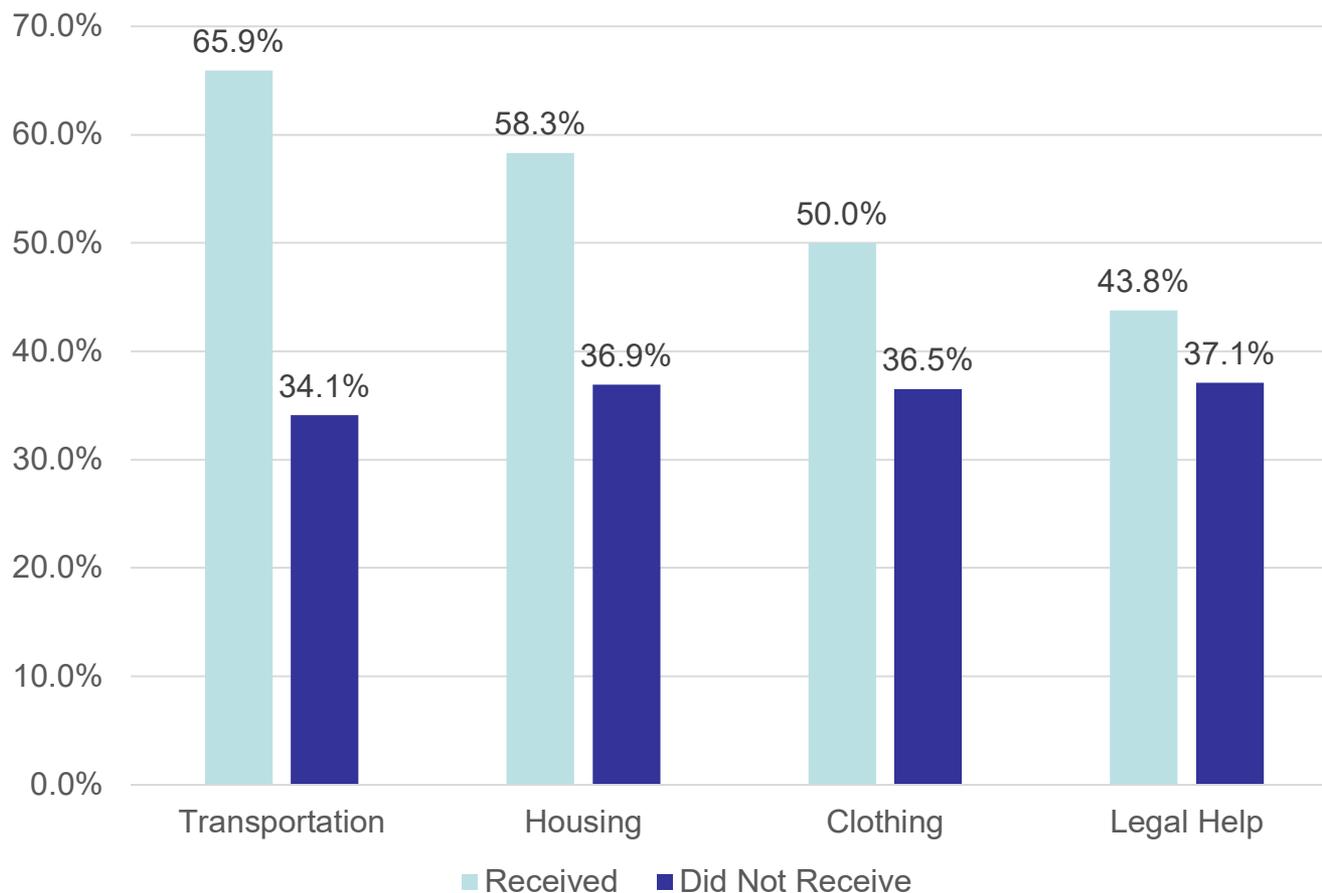
- Clothing/Work equipment

- Provide monetary support for clothing

# Job Placement Challenges Continued

- **Mental Health and Trauma**
  - Refer clients to mental health services
- **Lack of Social Support**
  - Develop a plan to build the client's social support system
- **Lack of client follow-through**
  - Develop a plan to build the client's social support system

# Proportion Placed in Employment by Type of Support Services Received



# Job Retention Challenges

- **Relapse**
  - Ensuring those in the program are receiving treatment or are referred to treatment upon enrollment
- **Stress and Mental Health**
  - Training for staff, partners, and employers on mental health conditions
  - Performing mental health assessments at intake to identify co-occurring disorders
  - Provide strategies for stress management and coping mechanisms
- **Interpersonal Conflict**
  - Work readiness training that incorporates strategies to deal with interpersonal conflict and how to behave professionally

# Job Retention Challenges Continued

- Job Fit

- Environmental barriers – temperature, COVID-19 requirements

- Providing clients with additional clothing, equipment, or alternative PPE
    - Shifting workplace area and working with employer on reasonable accommodations

- Production issues

- Reassess individuals capabilities and job needs – explore other positions
    - Provide trainings on workplace conduct and professionalism

# Impact of Covid-19

- **Social distancing requirements**
  - Adapting recruitment, client meetings, job fairs, and trainings to virtual or phone-based mechanisms
- **Clients lack of technological resources and usage knowledge**
  - Purchasing phone/data plans, providing tablet, or laptop access
  - Provide trainings on how to performing activities online or via phone
- **Unreliable transportation**
  - Provide public transportation passes
- **Clients laid off or furloughed due to shutdown**
  - Provide assistance filing for unemployment benefits and stimulus payments
  - Assist with job search in essential services
- **Clients afraid to work in essential positions**
  - COVID-19 resources to promote disease understanding and protection measures
  - Providing PPE (masks/shield, gloves) for work
- **Destabilization - housing vulnerabilities, loss of childcare, relapse/mental health**
  - Providing or referring clients out to partner agencies for additional support

# Future Directions and Next Steps

- **Continue to learn from each other and implement solutions to address concerns or issues**
  - Ensure clients have stable treatment (MOUD)
  - Develop relationships with employers
  - Address mental health, trauma, and learning differences
  - Continue to work with community partners etc.
  - Provide trainings for staff and partners regarding mental health and learning differences
- **Toolkit, outreach to and training of community and employers**