

2024 NEMT Program Evaluation Findings & Trend Analysis

Health Share of Oregon - Ride to Care



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 Organizations (CCO) & Brokerage:

Health Share of Oregon – In 2020 the CCO decided to delegate NEMT to CareOregon, keeping the program brand and recognition as **Ride to Care**. Ride to Care consists of four distinct organizations, operating under a collaborative framework model.



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.”

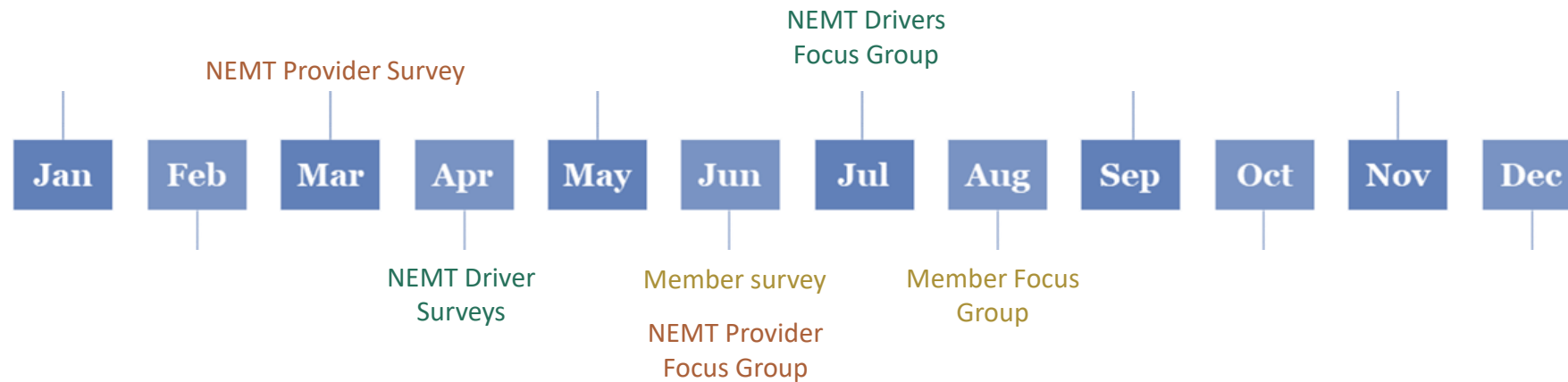
Stakeholders & Data Collection Timeline

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

- 70% are **51 years old or older**; *of those, 32% are 66 years old or older.*
- 65% are **female**.
- 84% reported living with at least one **disability**.
- Top 4 preferred languages identified were: **English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian**.
- **White, Black or African American, and Hispanic/Latino** were the top 3 race and ethnicities identified.

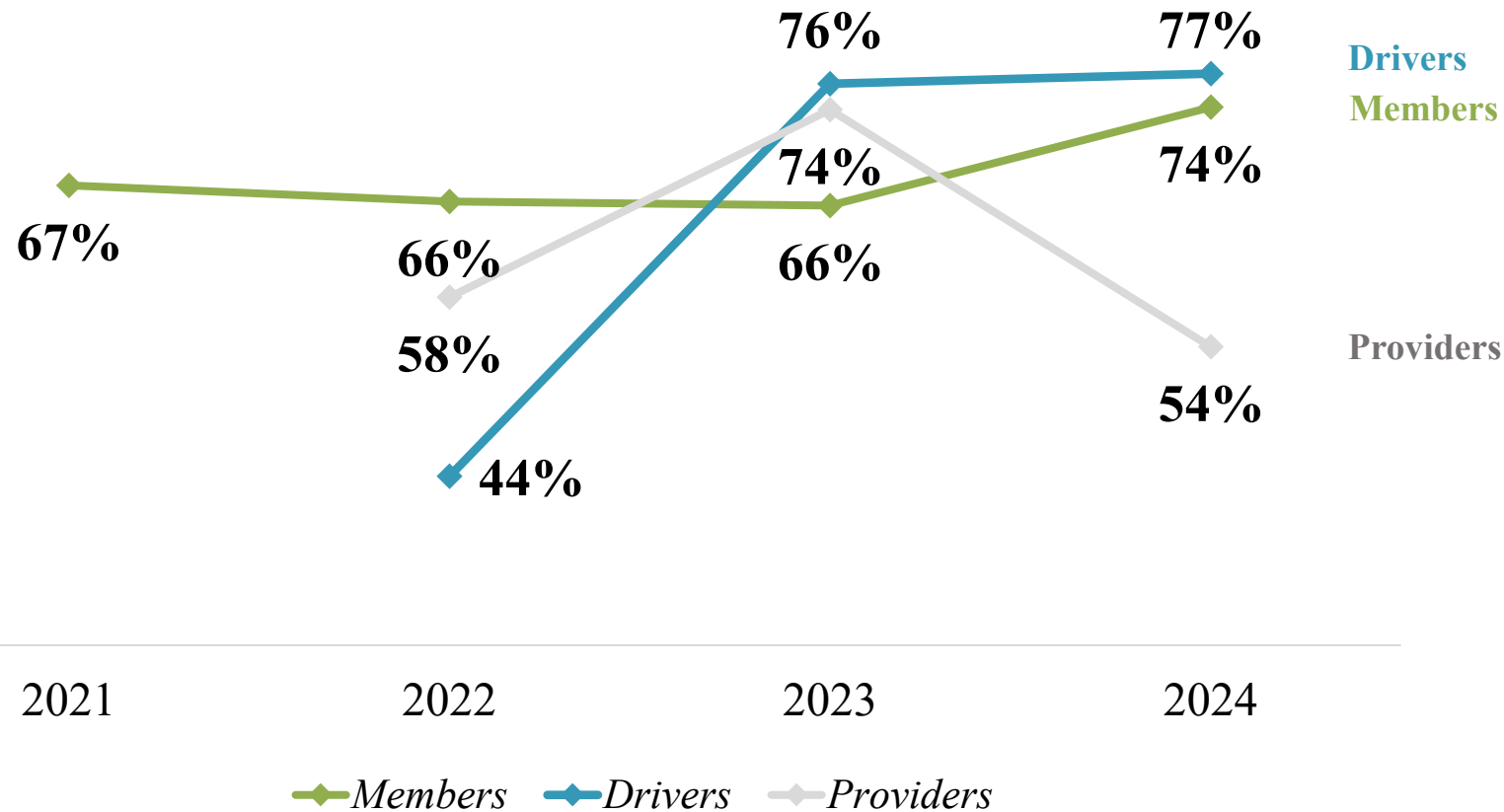
NEMT Drivers

- 40% are **51 years old or older**; *of those, 5% are 66 years old or older.*
- 70% are **male**.
- 8% reported living with at least one **disability**.
- Top 3 preferred languages identified were: **English, Amharic, and Arabic**.
- **White, Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino** were the top 3 identified race and ethnicities.

NEMT Providers

- 50% are **51 years old or older**, *of those, 8% are 66 years old or older.*
- 52% are **female**.
- 16% reported living with at least one **disability**.
- Preferred languages identified were **English, Amharic, Arabic, and Turkish**.
- **White, Black or African American, and Hispanic/Latino** were the top 3 identified race and ethnicities.

Yearly Satisfaction Trends



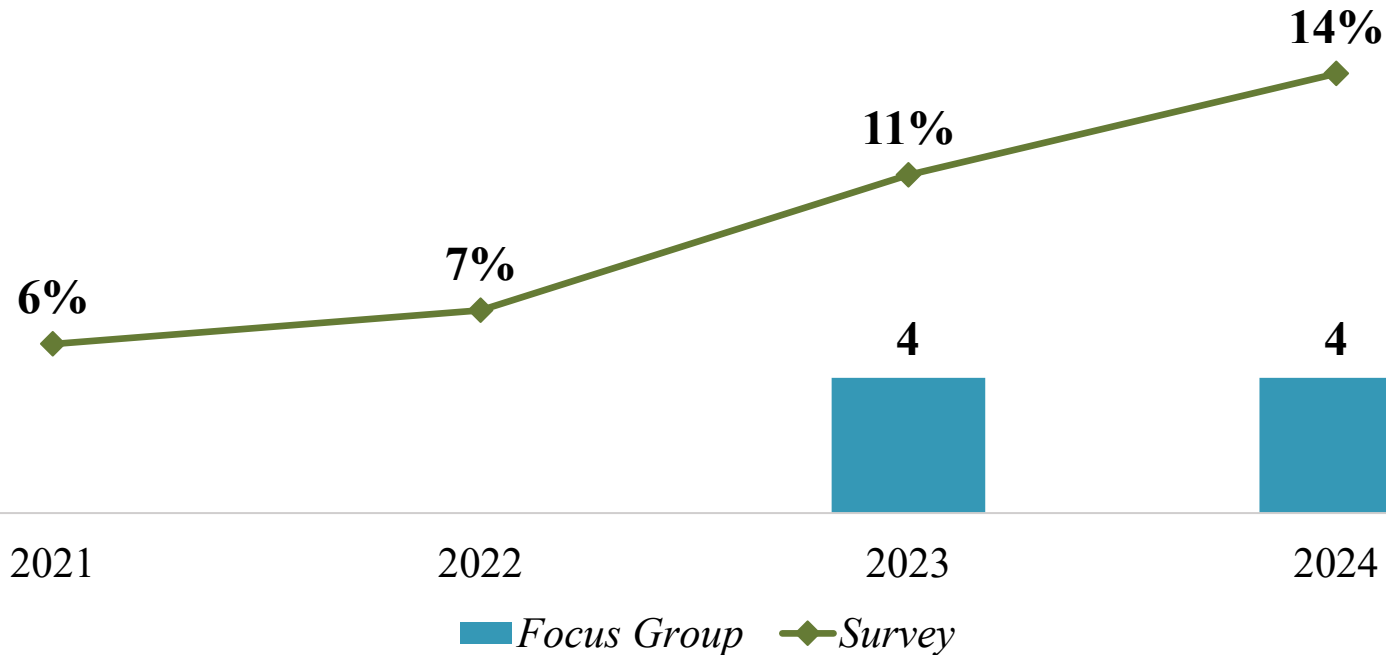
Member satisfaction decreased from 2021 to 2022 but increased from 2023 to 2024, to the highest rating in four years.

NEMT driver satisfaction has been increasing over the years, with its highest rating in 2024.

NEMT provider satisfaction increased from 2022 to 2023 but decreased in 2024, to its lowest rating.

**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 been consistent two years in a row.

Focus groups were first offered in 2023.

Barriers & Challenges for Members



About 1 out of 6

Participants reported that a **language differential creates barriers** to accessing the NEMT program and services.



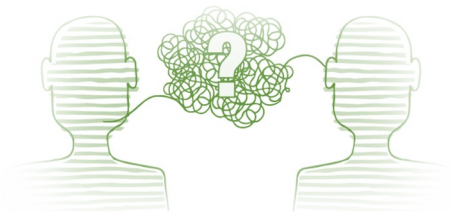
More than 2 out of 5

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.*



More than 3 out of 4

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** - 67% had a positive experience with calling in and requesting bus fare, and 71% had a positive experience with receiving bus fare.



- **Transport by NEMT drivers** - 82% had a positive experience with NEMT drivers during trip transport, and 96% feel safe with NEMT drivers transporting them.



- **Mileage reimbursement** – 68% had a positive experience with the mileage reimbursement process.

Member's Experience with Quality Assurance

Challenges:

31% of participants do not find the *grievance resolution letter* to be helpful.

50% of participants did not find the *trip denial explanation letter* to be helpful.

44% of participants *did not feel heard*, or that a resolution met their needs, after submitting a grievance.

Suggestions:

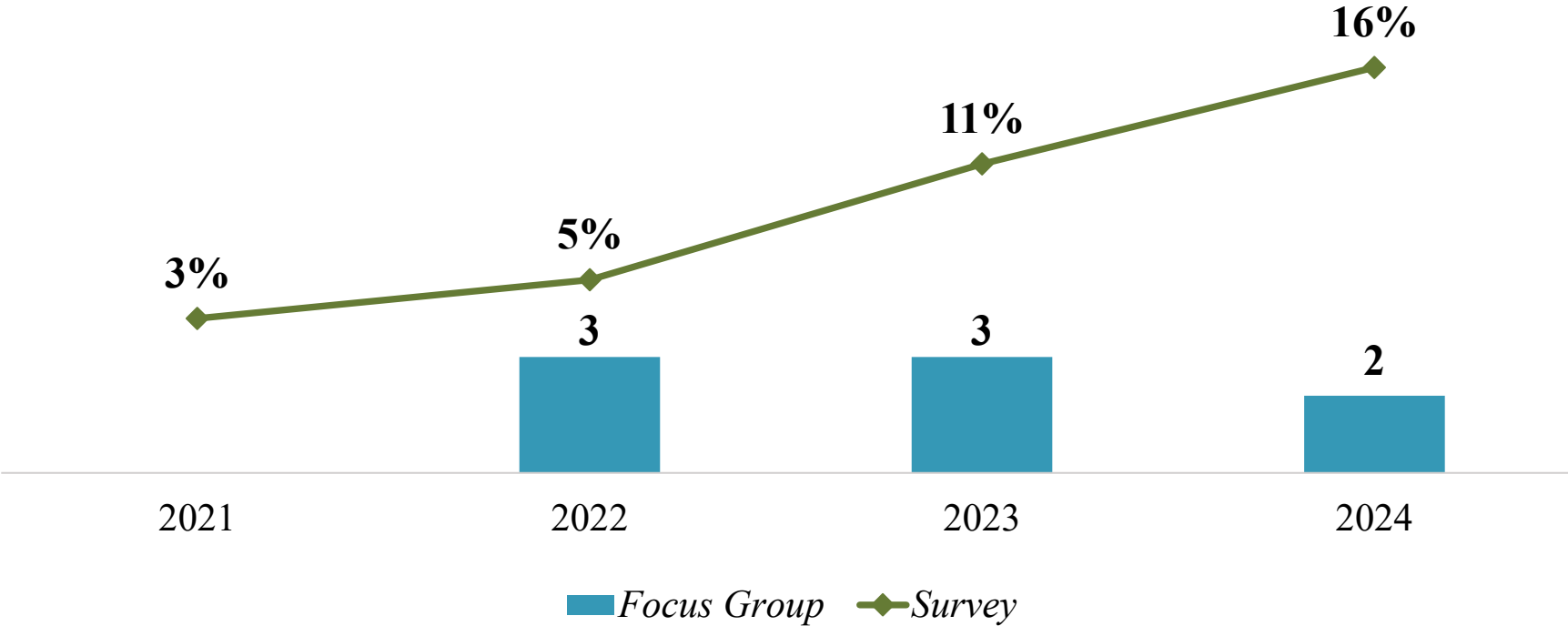
77% would like to check the status of their grievance case *online*.

67% would like to *opt out of* some or all the letters.

72% would like a *reduced* amount of grievance letters sent.

77% would like the resolution letter to be *shortened*.

NEMT Driver Participation Trends



Survey participation has been increasing over the last four years.

Participation in the **focus group** has been successful every year but decreased in 2024.

Barriers & Challenges for NEMT Drivers



Nearly 1 out of 2

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



More than 2 out of 3

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

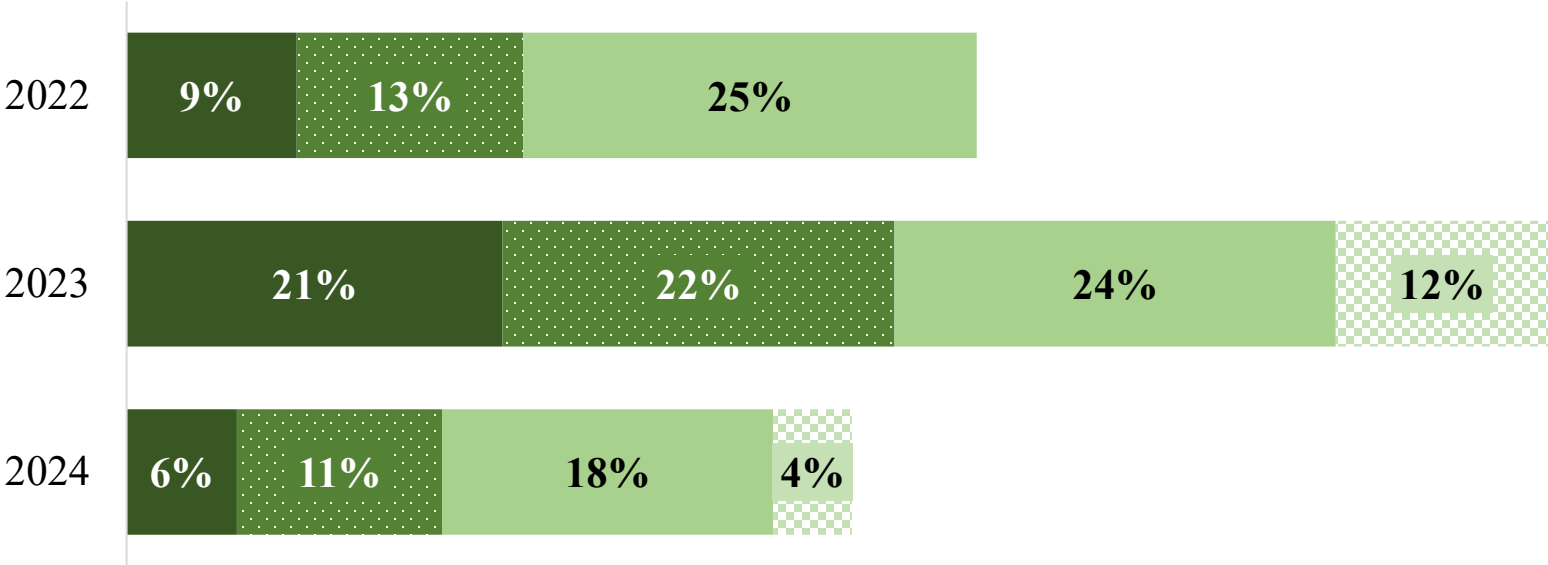


3 out of 4

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.*



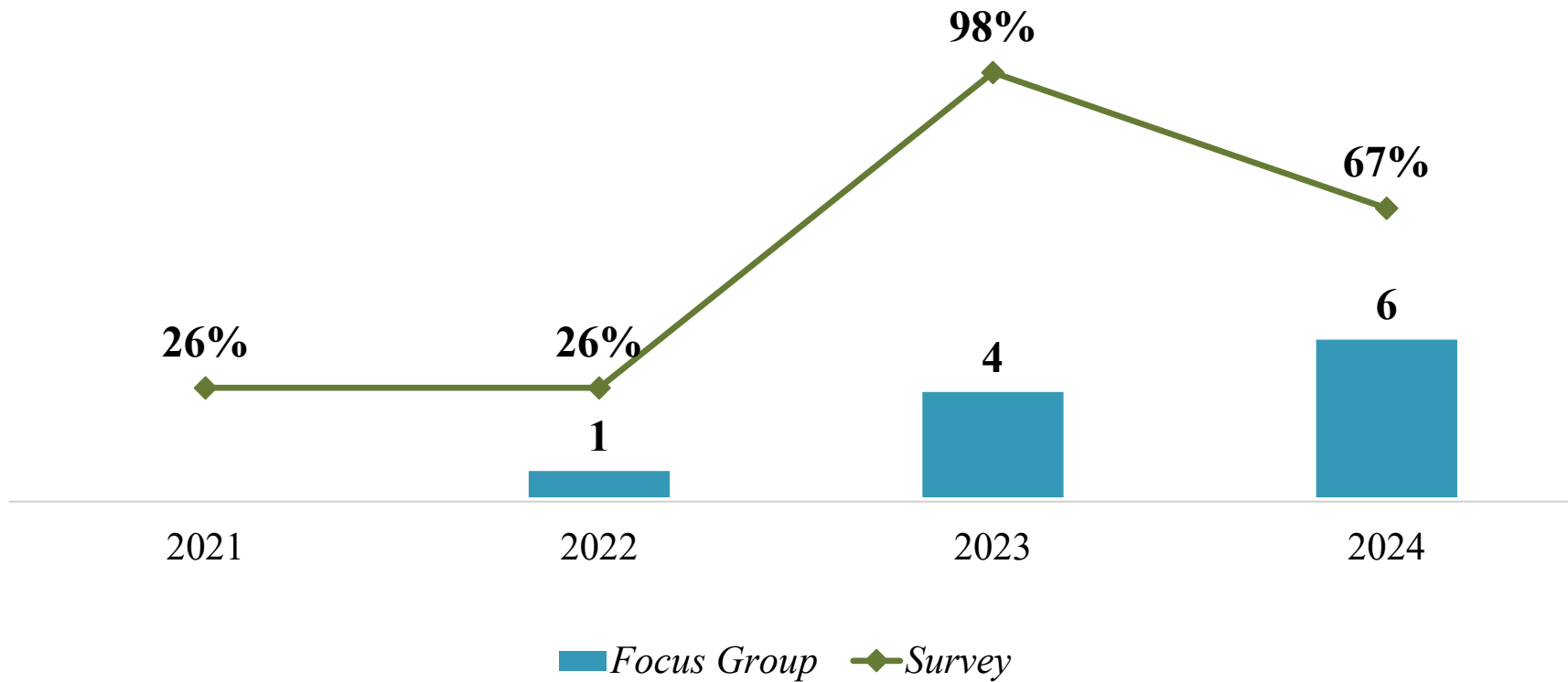
Success for NEMT Drivers



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

Despite seeing an increase from 2022 to 2023, **discrimination against drivers** decreased in 2024.

NEMT Provider Participation Trends



Survey participation increased from 2021 to 2023 but decreased in 2024. *It is normal to see a decrease in percentage when a high participation happens, like in 2023.*

Participation in the **focus group** has been increasing three years in a row.

Barriers & Challenges for NEMT Providers



1 out of 3

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



Nearly 1 out of 2

Participants **experience discrimination** from members, caregivers/representatives, healthcare providers, the brokerage, or a combination of any of the above listed.



Successes for NEMT Providers



- **Trip assignments** - 73% received trip assignments that matched their availability and resources.



- **Trip management** - 77% received trip assignments with enough time to manage them.



- **Trip changes** – 70% were notified of trip changes with enough time to respond and adjust.

80%

Feel valued as an NEMT provider.

Providing Feedback about the NEMT Program

NEMT Drivers

81% of drivers **share about their experience** with driving for the NEMT program at least sometimes. *Responses included 'sometimes', 'often', and 'always'.*

62% drivers share about their experience **with their employer.** *Top response.*

53% feel comfortable sharing feedback, however, **37%** would like the opportunity to **share anonymously.**

NEMT Providers

85% of providers **share about their experience** with operating for the NEMT program at least sometimes. *Responses included 'sometimes', 'often', and 'always'.*

56% share about their experience by participating in the **CareOregon satisfaction survey.** *Top response.*

55% feel comfortable sharing feedback. However, **26%** would like the opportunity to **share anonymously.**

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 declined in 2024).
- Offer an outlet for NEMT drivers to share feedback anonymously.
More than 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.
More than 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:

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