

Evaluating Quality Improvement in Local Public Health Agencies

- Experiences from the Multi-State Learning Collaborative Evaluation

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Overview

- **Evaluation Overview**
- **Quality Improvement (QI) Tool**
 - Process
 - Major domains
- **Preliminary Results**
 - Reported experience and perceptions
 - Reliability estimates
- **Next Steps**

The Evaluation

- **Contract with:**
 - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - Project Officer: Brenda Henry, PhD, MPH
- **Goals of MLC initiative:**
 - To promote the application of QI methods
 - Prepare for & contribute to national accreditation
- **Multiple data collection tools:**
 - QI tool is nested within annual survey

Purpose of QI Tool

- To identify features of an agency that may enhance or impede QI approaches
- To monitor the impact of efforts to create a favorable environment for QI to flourish
- To define potential cohorts of public health agencies for evaluation purposes

Quality Improvement Continuum

Limited QI
Orientation

Strong QI
Orientation

Survey Administration

- Part of a larger survey
- Administered annually
 - Local health department directors
 - State health departments
- Incentive
 - Agency specific report

Anywhere USA Public Health Agency Quality Improvement Profile Report

Thank you for completing the MLC-3 Annual Survey. The following report summarizes what your responses may say about aspects of your Public Health Agency that contribute to quality enhancement and those where improvement may be indicated.

We hope that this Profile serves as a useful tool in advancing your quality improvement efforts.

STRENGTHS

Your Public Health Agency has a strong foundation in the following areas for implementing change and improvement.



Organizational Culture

- Leaders are receptive to new ideas
- There is a shared vision and common goals
- The agency supports transparency of performance data.



QI Capacity and Competencies

- Staff are trained in basic quality improvement techniques
- Programs and services are routinely evaluated using objective measures

IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Following are opportunities for improving your Public Health Agency's propensity to change.



QI Improvement Initiatives - You have limited experience in implementing QI projects and applying quality improvement techniques



Alignment and Integration

- Agency policies and procedures do not support the time and effort required for quality improvement.



Spread - There is no evidence that quality improvement approaches have spread throughout your organization.

QI Tool: The Process

- **Based on Literature**
 - Research on change
 - Studies on adoption and use of QI
- **Advisory Group**
 - Brenda Henry, PhD, MPH
 - Leslie Beitsch, MD, JD
 - Mary Davis, PhD
 - William Riley, PhD

Elements of Tool

Level of QI Maturity

Domain #1



Organizational
Culture

Domain #2



Competency
& Capacity

Domain #3



QI
Experience

Domain #4



Alignment &
Spread

Testing the Tool

- **Cognitive Interviews**
 - Telephone interviews
 - To assess comprehension
- **Pilot-test**
 - Word form with text fields
 - State and local health departments (non-MLC)
- **Beta-test**
 - Online survey tool
 - To test online format and report

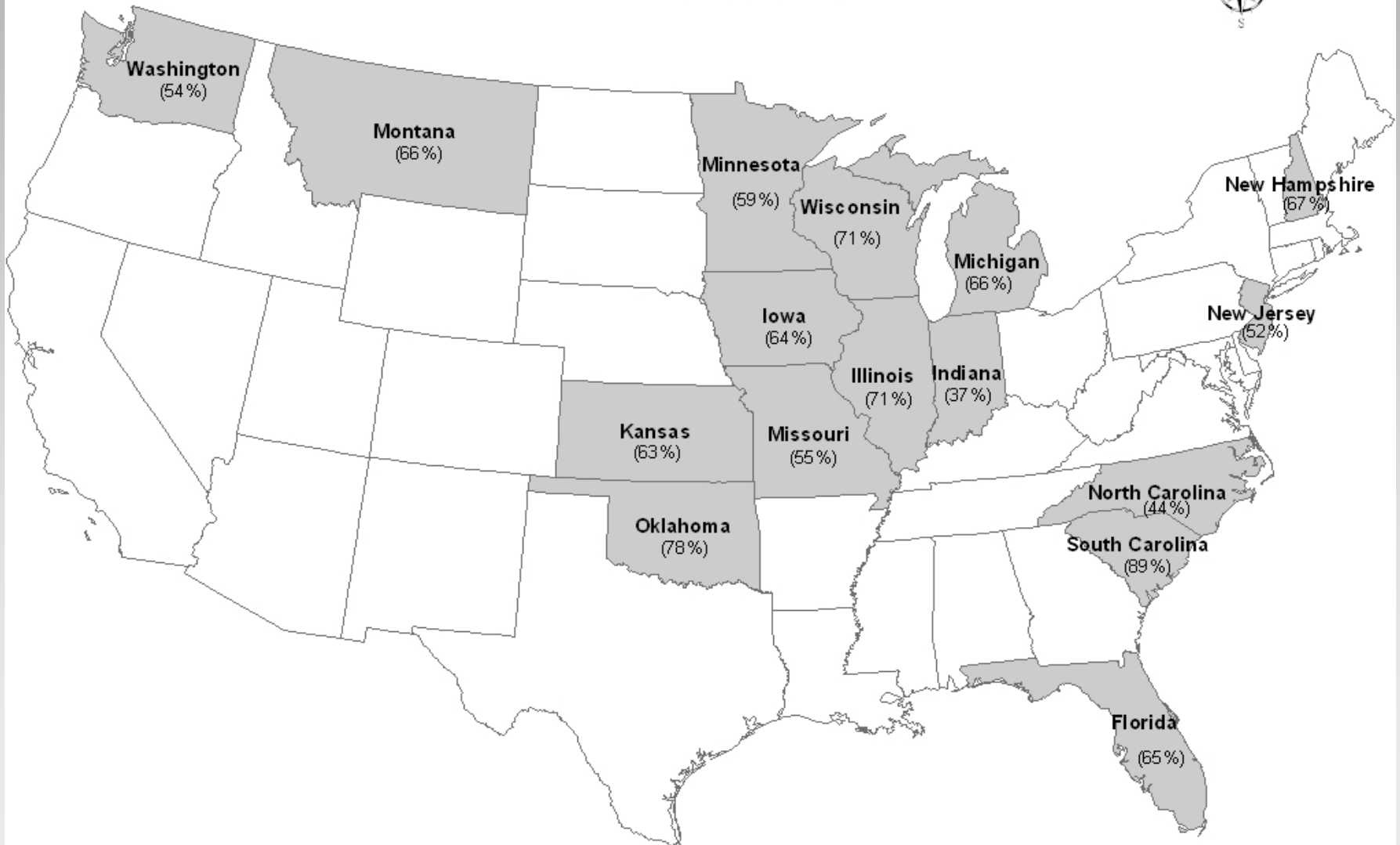
Limitations

- **Core constructs from literature not yet tested with public health agencies**
- **Blunt instrument for assessing QI status**
- **Relies on self-report of *one* agency representative**

Response Rate (n=690)

MLC Annual Survey Response Rate

(Average Response Rate = 60%)

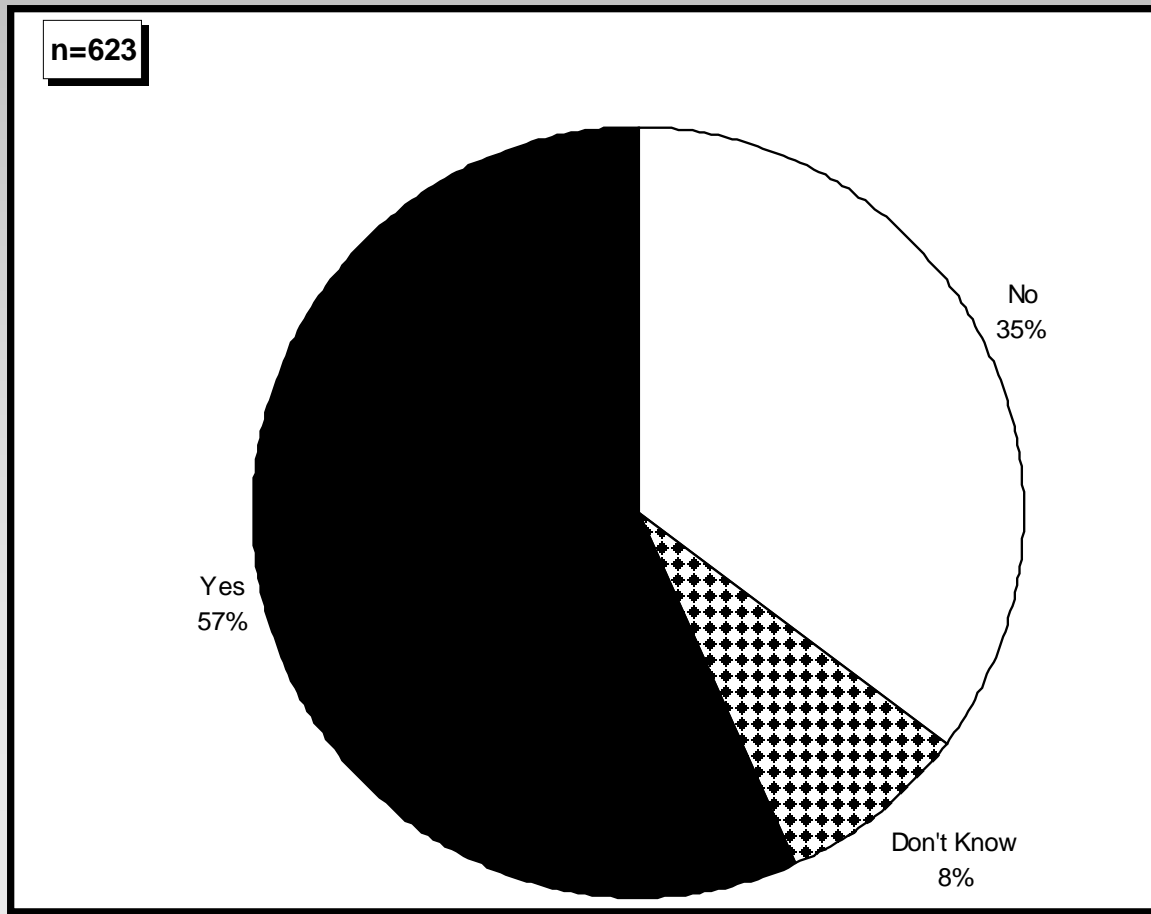


Characteristics

- **Merged with NACCHO dataset**
 - 77% county health departments
 - 30% had budgets < \$500,000
 - 49% had < 50 FTEs
 - 62% serve population < 50,000
- **No differences between respondents and non-respondents**

Preliminary Findings

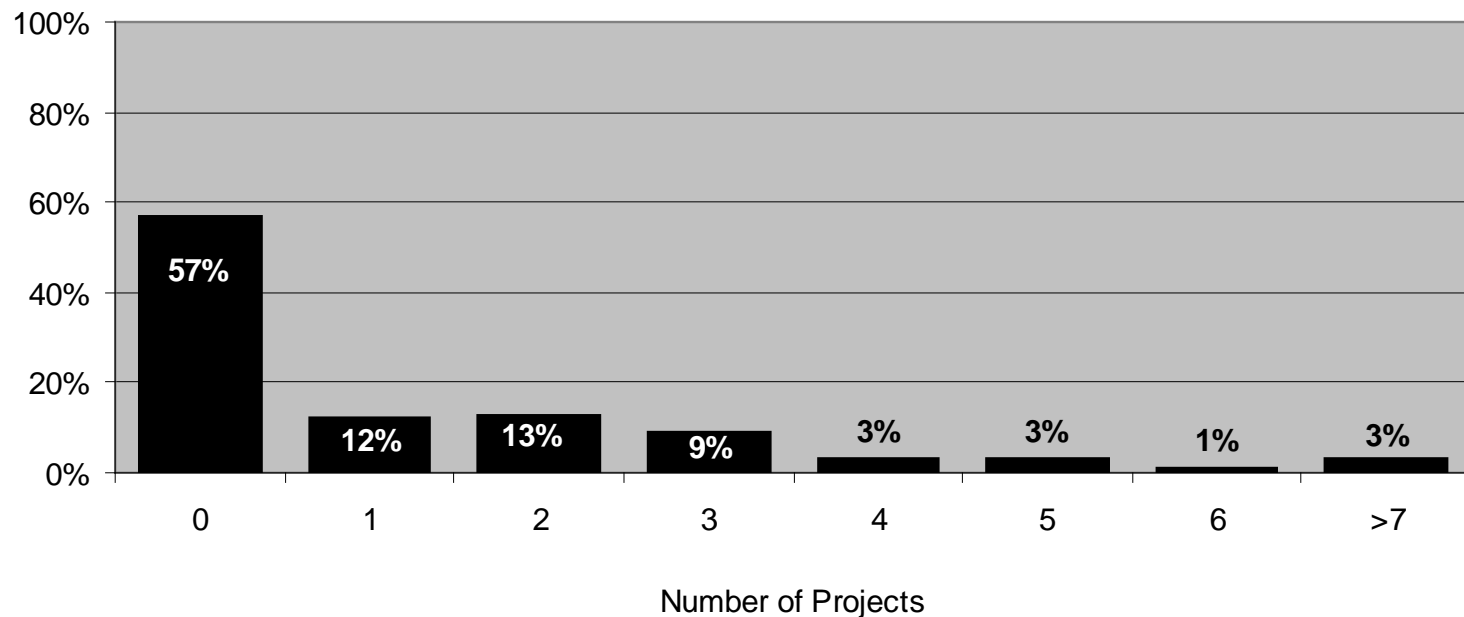
Has your public health agency ever implemented a formal process to improve the performance of a specific service or program, process or outcome?



Preliminary Findings

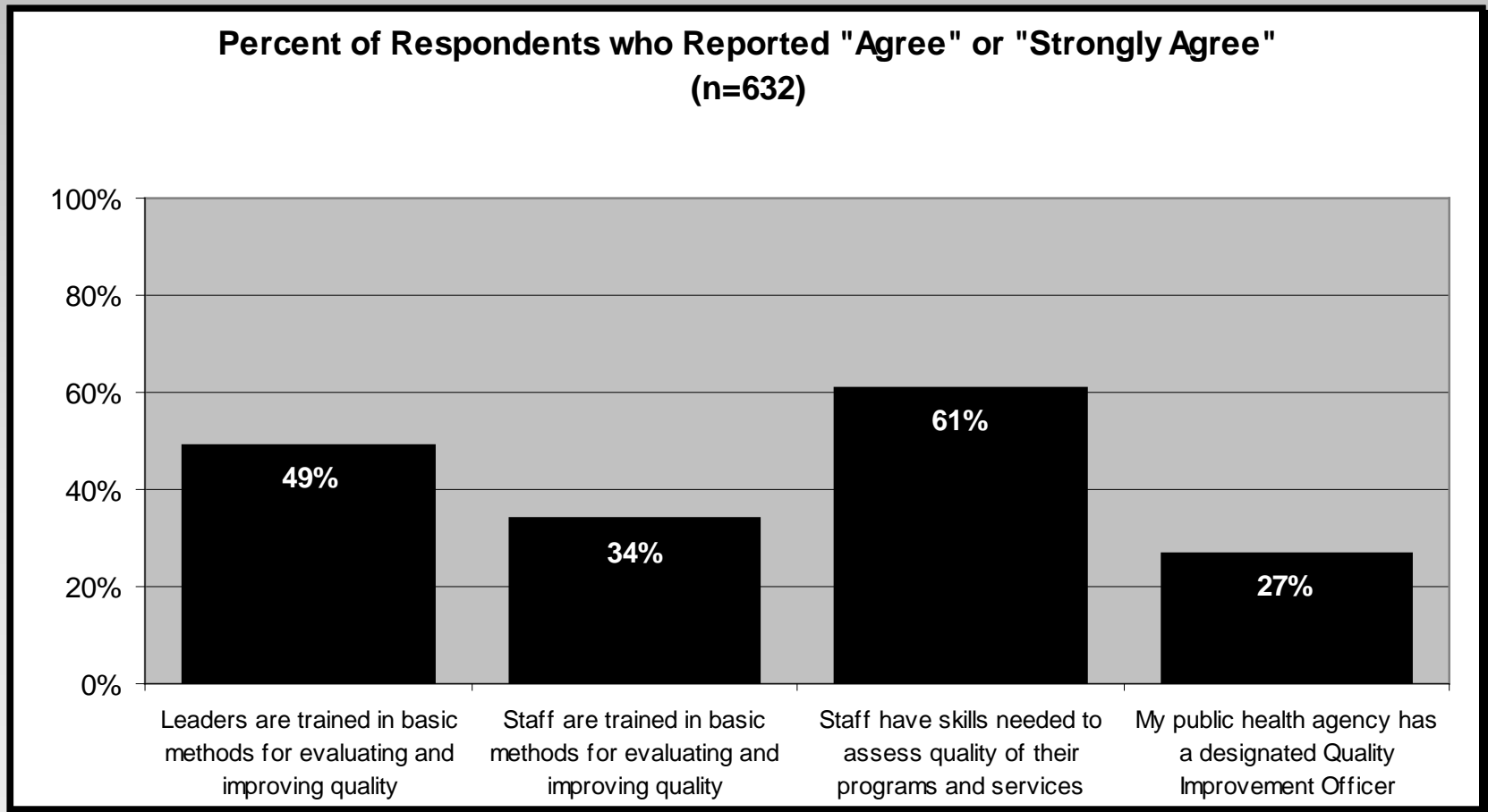
Formal QI Projects Implemented

Number of QI Projects Implemented by Agency in Past 12 Months
(n=623)



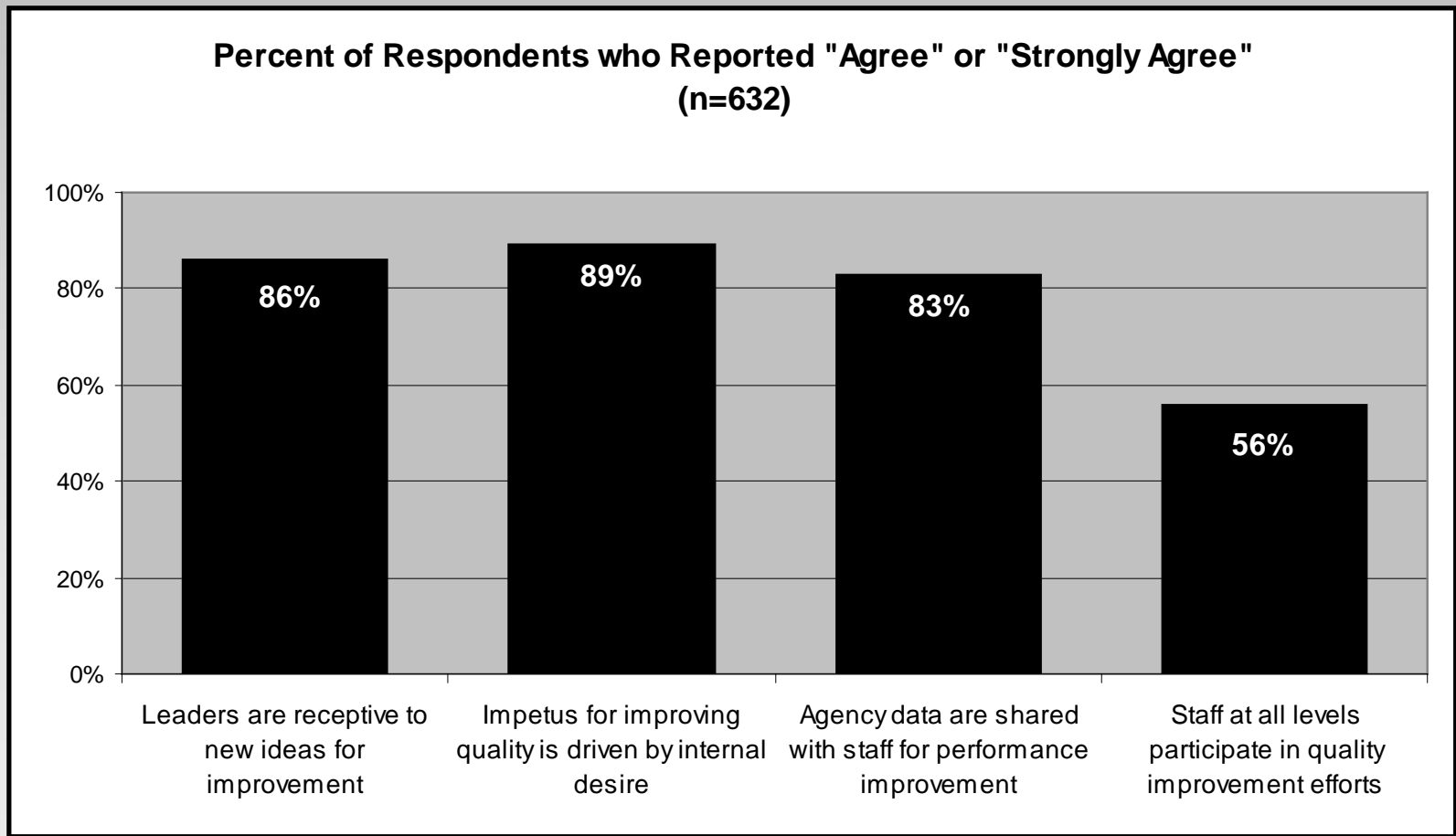
Preliminary Findings

QI Capacity and Competency: Selected Items



Preliminary Findings

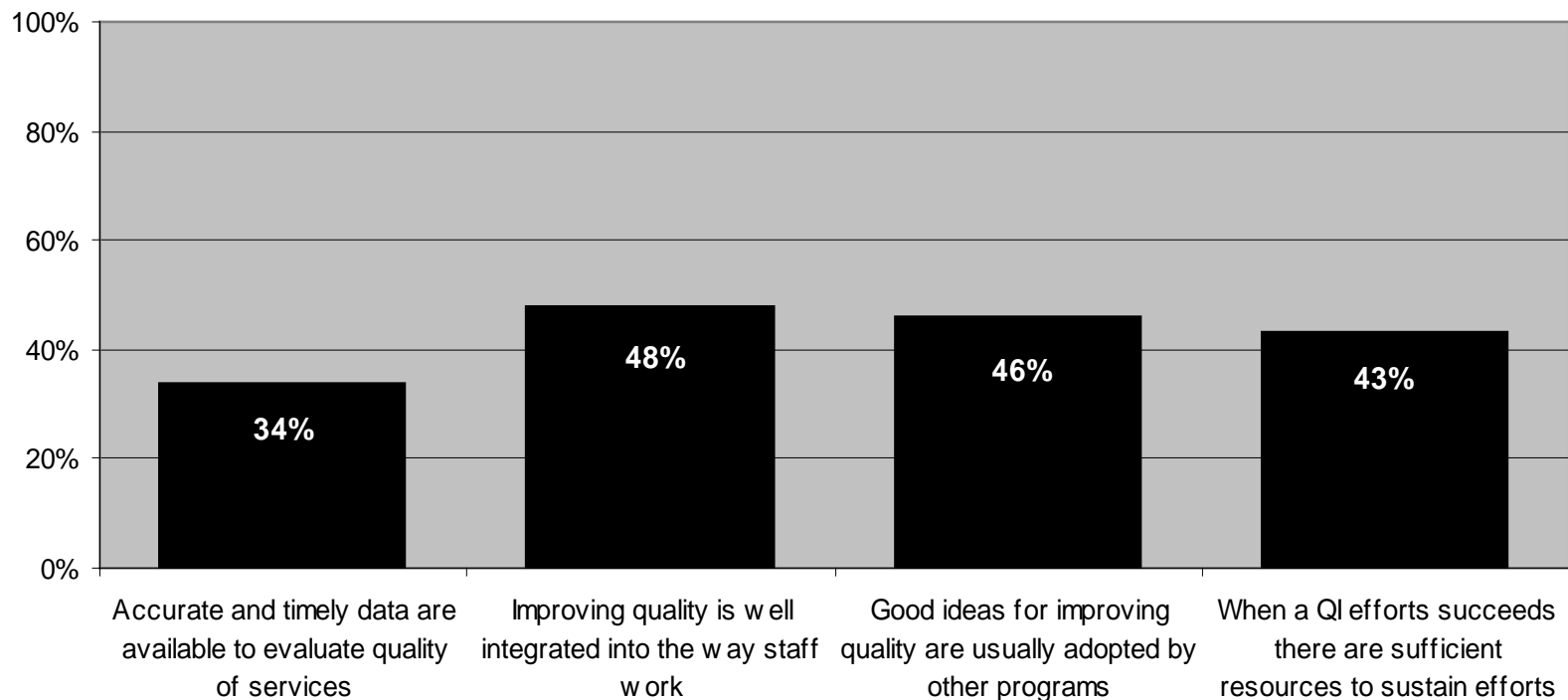
QI Culture: Selected Items



Preliminary Findings

Alignment and Spread: Selected Items

Percent of Respondents who Reported "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
(n=632)



Reliability Statistics

- **Cronbach's Alpha**

- Organizational culture = .826

- 9 items

- QI capacity and competencies = .904

- 12 items

- Alignment and spread = .820

- 10 items

Next Steps

- **Additional analyses:**
 - Factor analysis
 - Cluster analysis
- **Use year one results to...**
 - Develop cohorts
 - Identify themes
 - Test and finalize scoring methodology
 - Test and finalize classifications
 - Capture baseline data in MLC-states

Questions?
