

ACA Member Feedback on using AUSkey and the Inclusion Support (IS) Portal

Based on December 2016 survey



Australian Childcare Alliance

Dear members,

The following report presents the findings of our December 2016 member survey on ACA member experiences using the AUSkey log in and the Inclusion Support (IS) Portal.

Prior to the survey, anecdotal feedback from some members had indicated that the process for accessing the IS Program funding was problematic and laborious.

The purpose of the survey was to seek **quantifiable** feedback from those members who take part in the Inclusion Support (IS) Program to include children with additional needs, and identify any issues that may need addressing with the Department of Education, and/or the Australian Tax Office.

We asked you about your experiences using this online tool, the amount of time you spend using it and whether you have any issues or concerns about the online process.

ACA would like to express our gratitude to those of you who completed the survey and shared your experiences with us. Your observations have been extremely valuable in informing our engagement with the Department of Education and Training (DET), to address any identified problems.

The survey responses revealed large dissatisfaction with the entire process of interacting with the IS Program, from the requirement to use an AUSkey, to the application process and the use of the IS Portal.

When asked about the process of setting up a standard AUSkey for key staff, over 84% of respondents said they found the process difficult or extremely difficult. Similarly, when asked about the process of using the IS Portal, over 88% of respondents said they found the process difficult or extremely difficult.

Furthermore, some members found the process so time consuming and difficult that they were not able to access the funding they were seeking.

As a result of these findings, ACA has contacted the Inclusion Support team within the Department of Education & Training, along with Jackie Wilson, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care. The Department has agreed to an ongoing dialogue with ACA to ensure that identified issues are addressed at the technical end as well as via their guidance materials.

In terms of the AUSkey issues, we are told the Inclusion Support Program was one of the first to trial the application of AUSkey, and it is to be rolled out across a number of other government programs. As such, the Department will work closely with the Australian Tax Office, which manages AUSkey, in order to address any identified issues. We are told they plan to improve the guidance materials and support services regarding the use of AUSkey, and the queries around privacy issues.

Regarding the broader IS Portal problems, since we approached the Department with the survey findings, they have provided some updates about their progress in addressing these issues:

- the Inclusion Support Portal Team has undertaken considerable work to fix the technical issues around the IS Portal. They have assured us that the problem of losing strategies and action item data mid applications has been resolved since December 2016
- the ISP Team has observed a marked decline in the number of IS Portal related queries from ECEC services since January 2017
- the ISP team is developing a strategy to further strength communications with services/providers and connections with the ATO (which manages AUSkey), undertake more work with our Inclusion Agencies on the issues you have raised such as more training for Inclusion Professionals as well as looking at ways to be more responsive to services making contact with IS Portal HelpDesk.

Against this background, ACA remains committed to ensuring that the IS Portal is adequately meeting the needs of ECEC services when making and renewing applications for funding.

To this end we continue to welcome your feedback about your experiences with the online process, along with the Inclusion Support Program's guidance materials and the support services/agencies.

If you have any further issues with the IS Portal, we encourage you to share with us via the [Contact Us form](#) on the ACA website. The online form allows you to upload documents, so you may wish to produce a summary of issues in a Word document and upload it via the form.

Thanks again to those members who took the time to share your experiences with us.

Regards,



Paul Mondo
National President

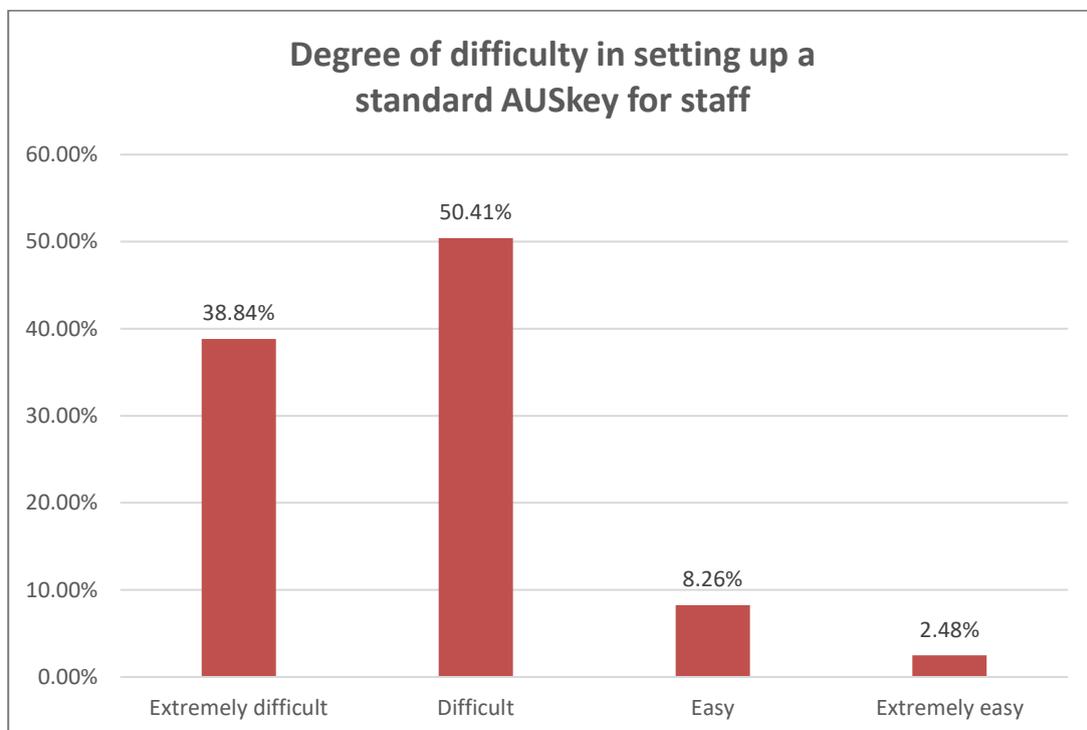
Research Methodology

The survey was set up on SurveyMonkey featuring over twenty questions. The majority of questions were multiple choice, to allow for quantifiable reporting.

Key Findings

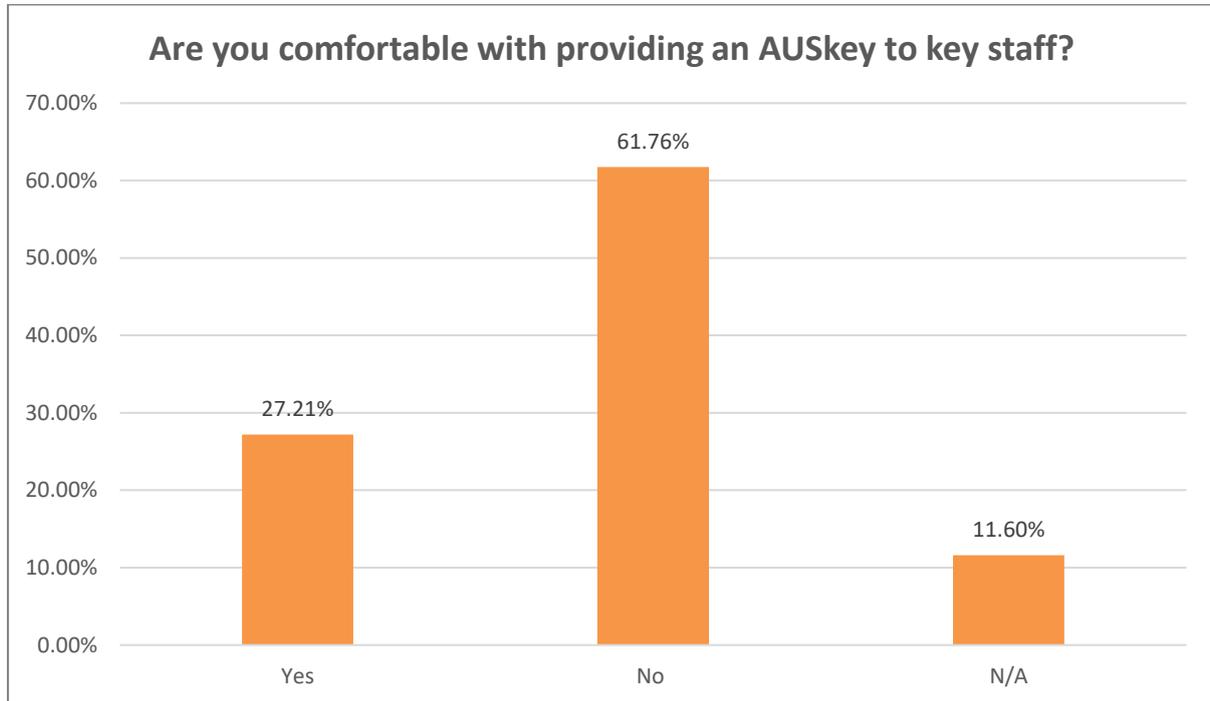
The following graphs below provide a summary of the collated survey responses. Responses.

Degree of difficulty setting up a standard AUSkey for staff

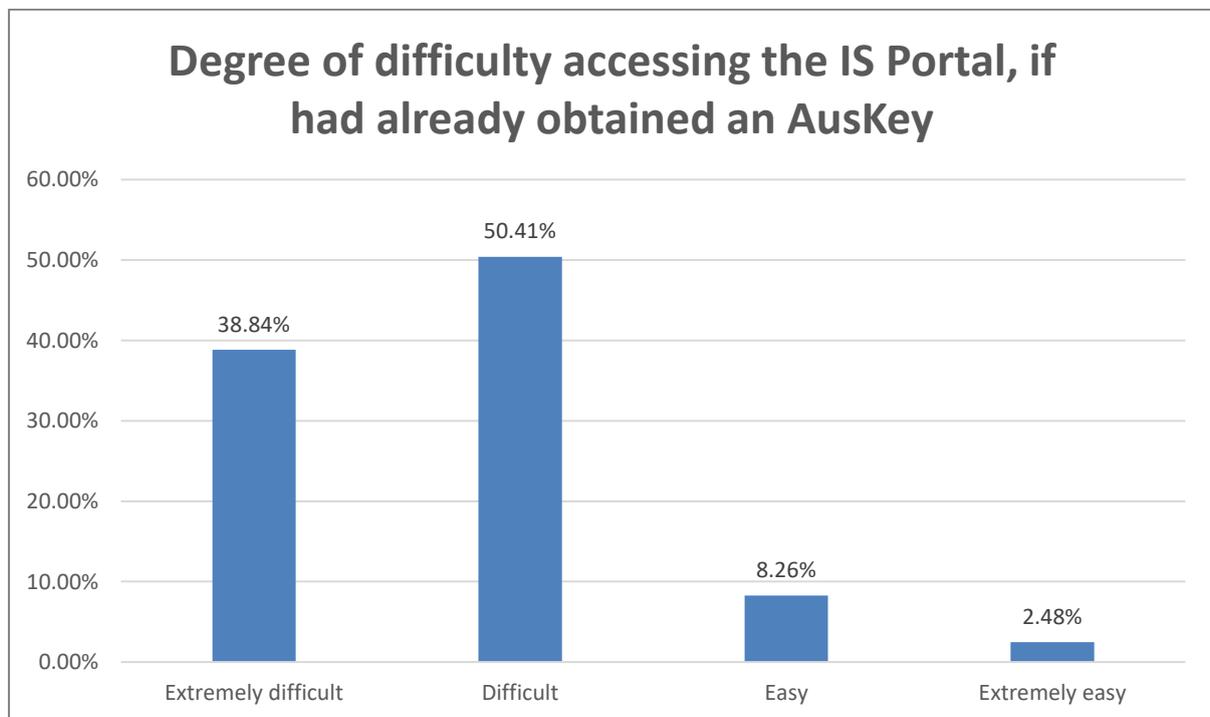


Over 84% of those surveyed said they found the process of setting up an AUSkey for staff extremely difficult/difficult.

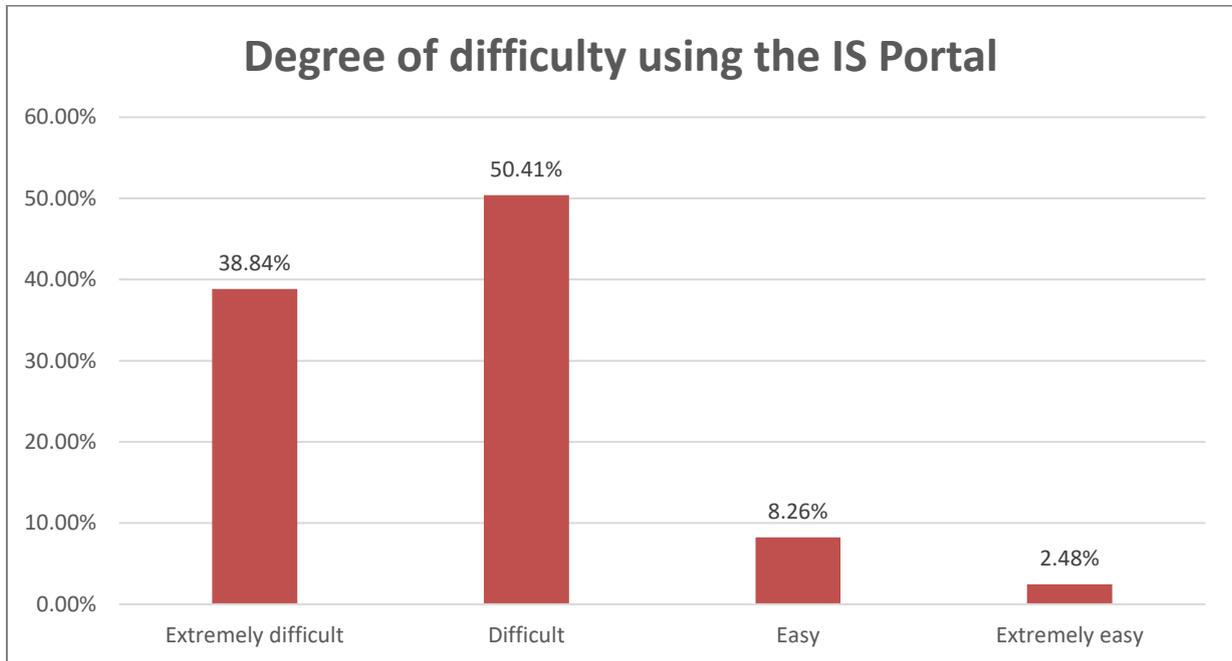
Level of comfort providing AUSKey to key staff



Degree of difficulty accessing the IS Portal, if had already obtained an AusKey

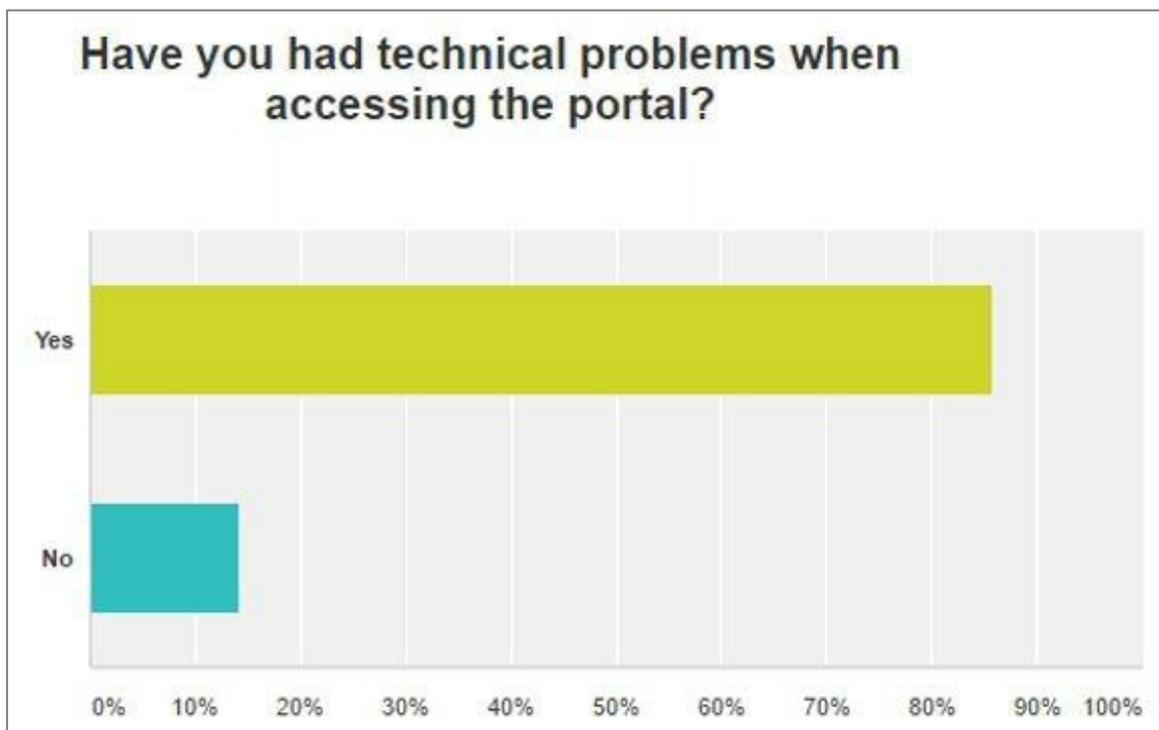


Level of difficulty using the IS Portal

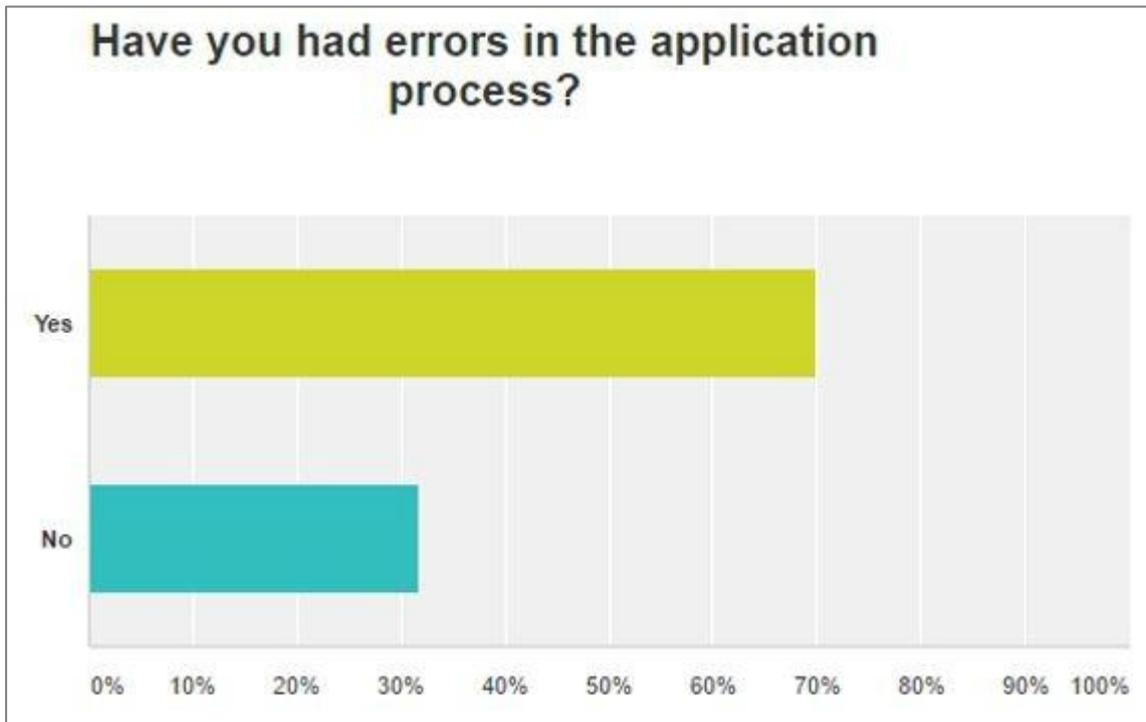


Over 89% of respondents said they found the process difficult or extremely difficult.

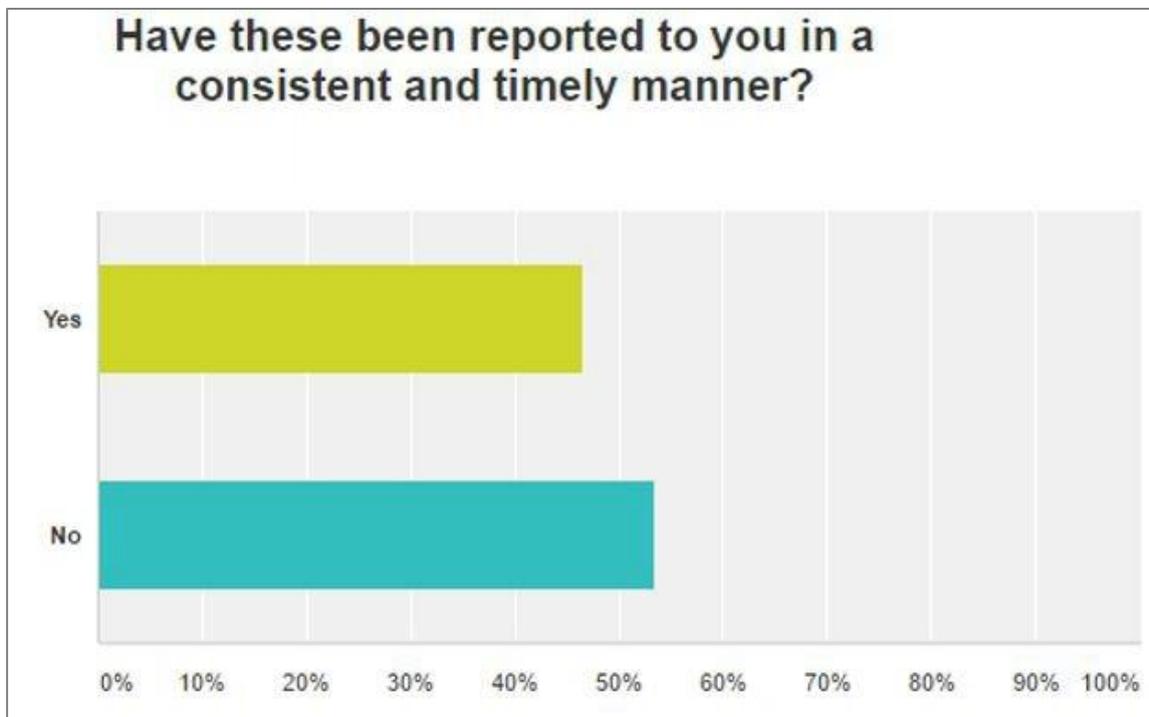
Technical problems when accessing the portal



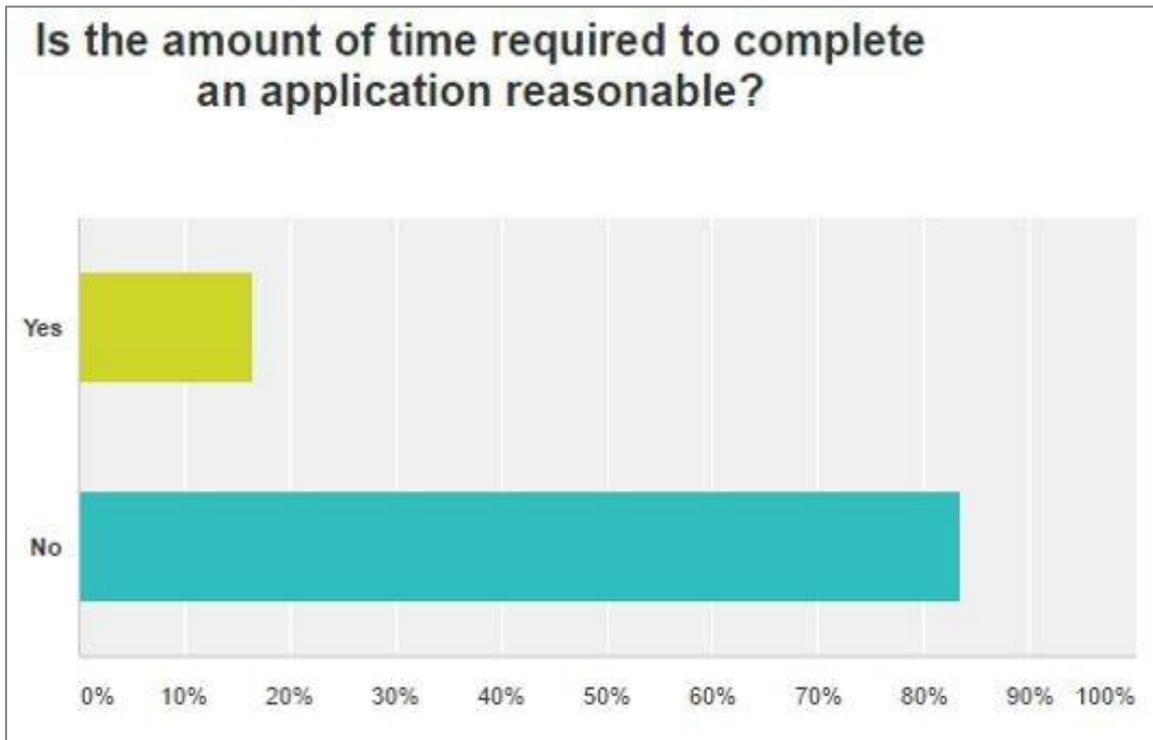
Errors in the application process



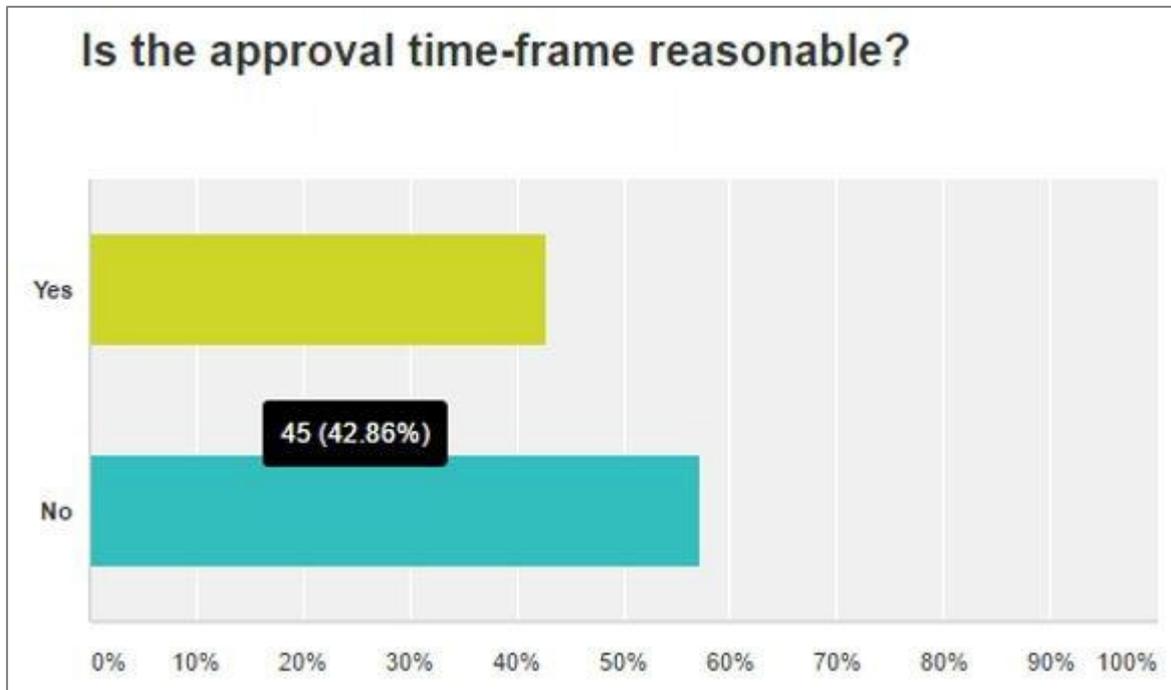
Timeliness of reporting of errors



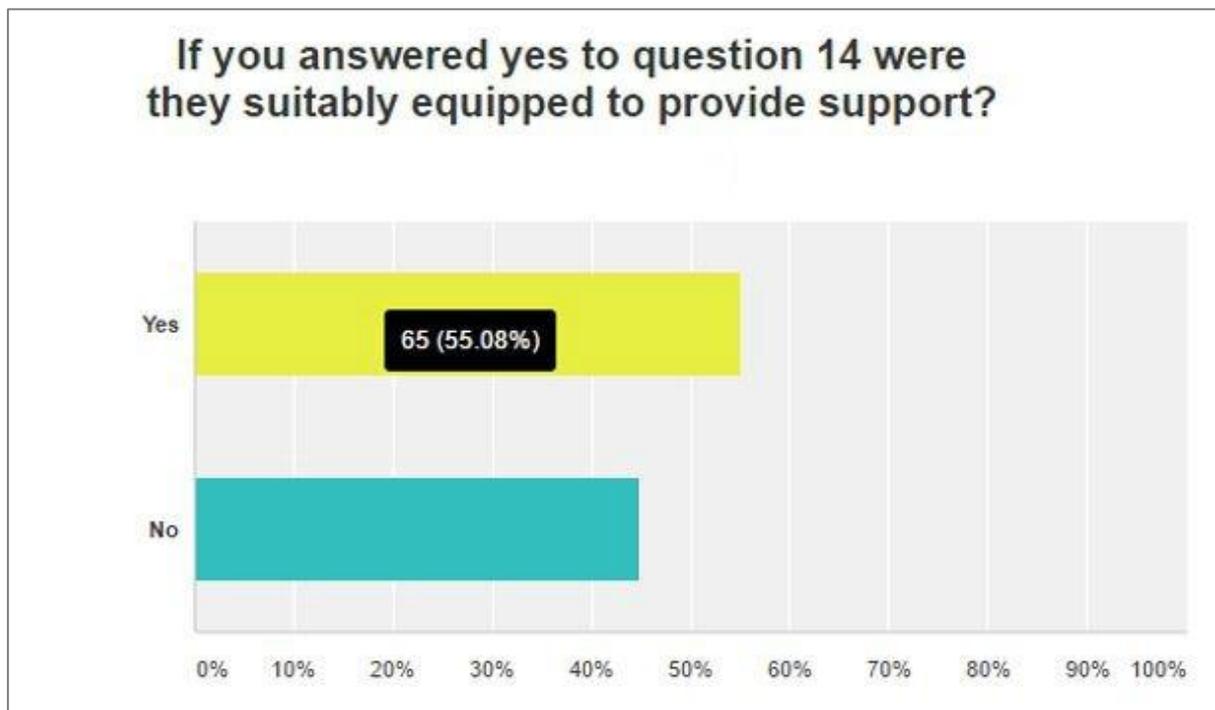
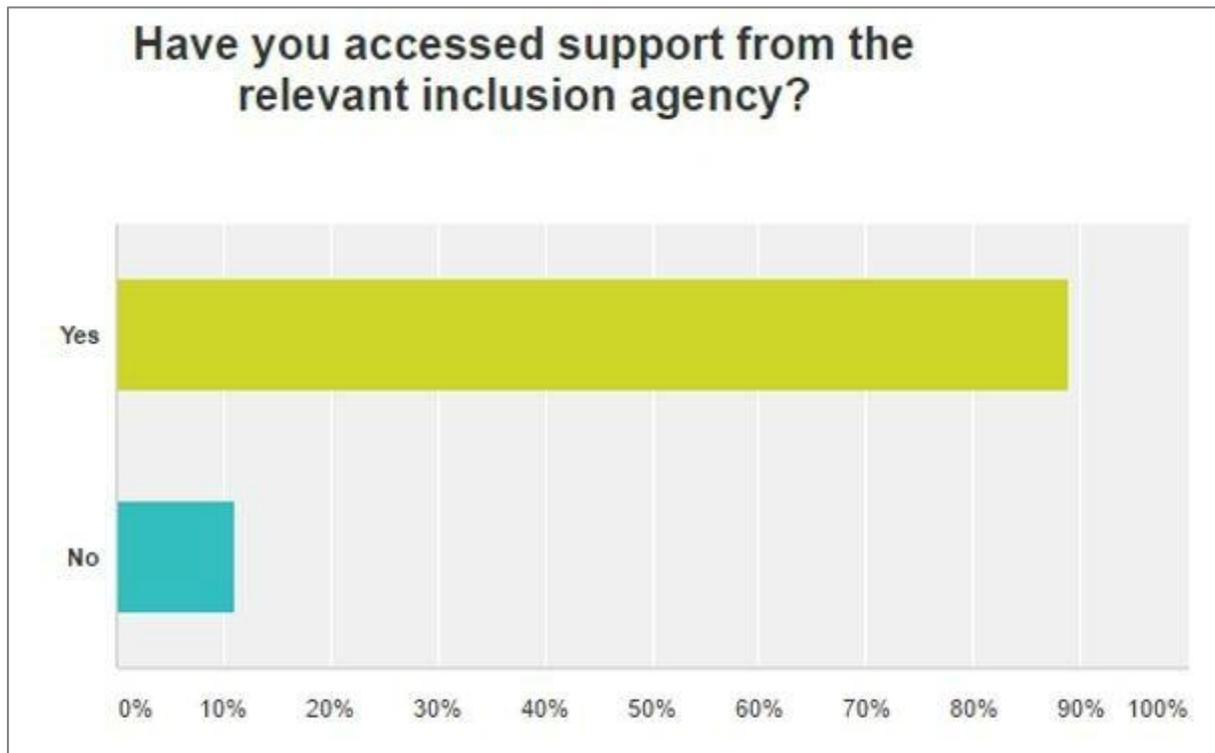
Amount of time required to complete an application



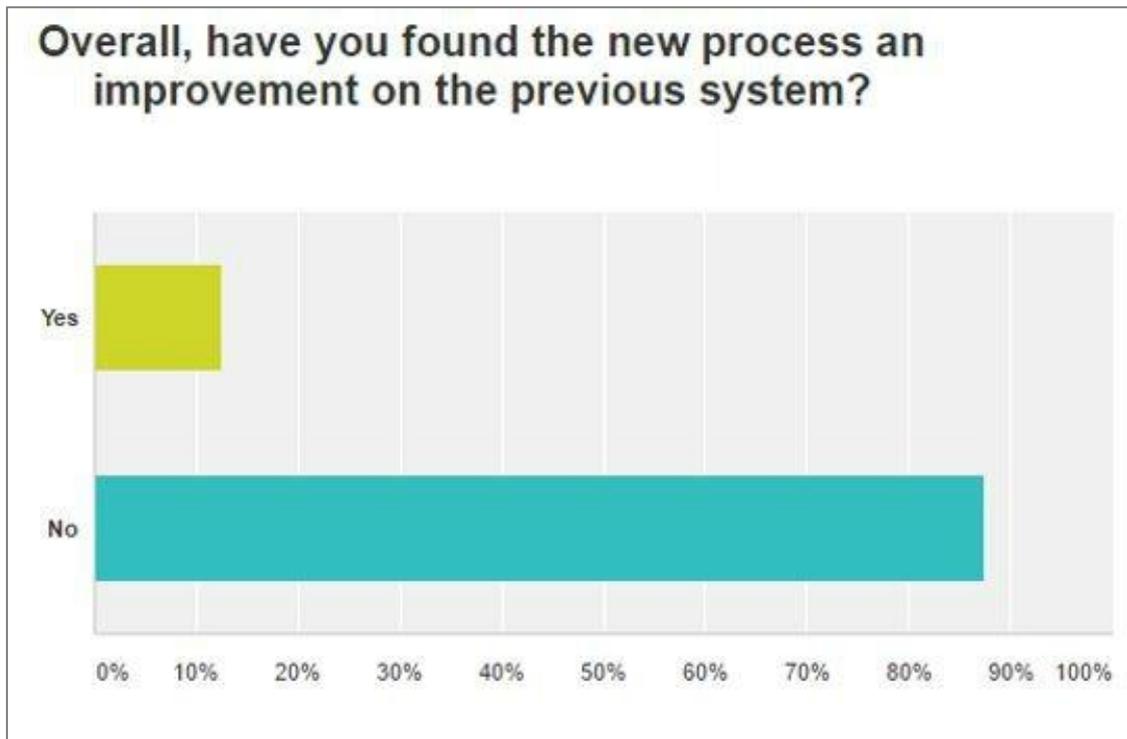
Approval time frame



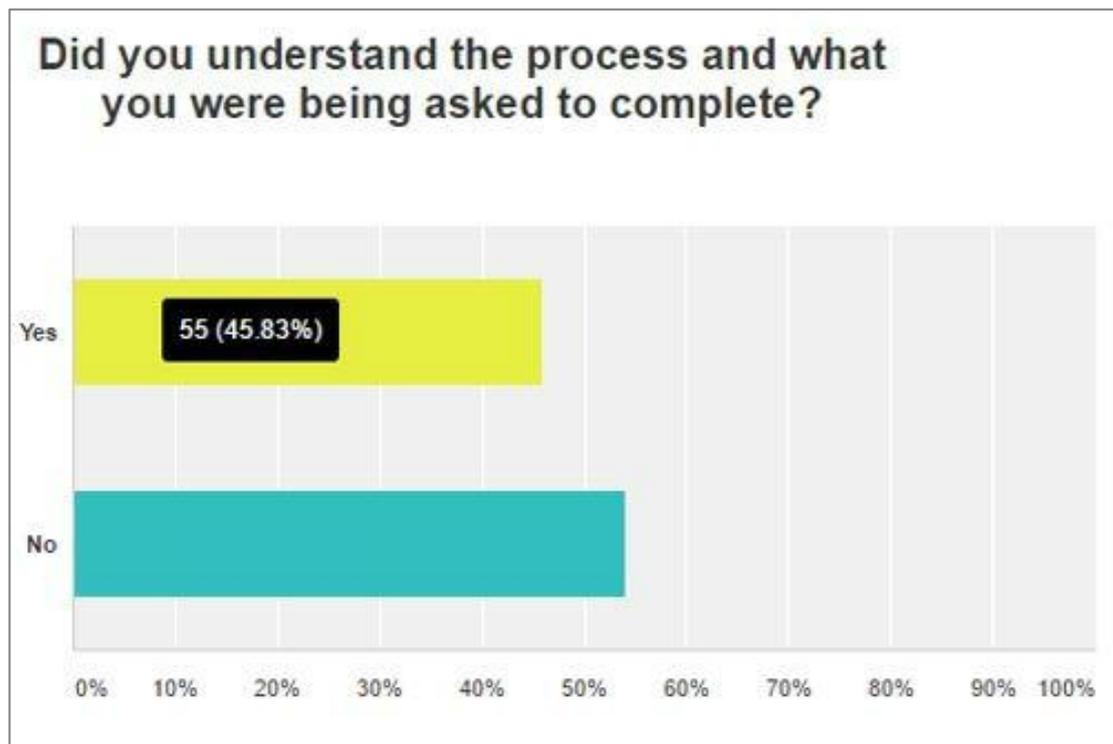
Support from relevant agency



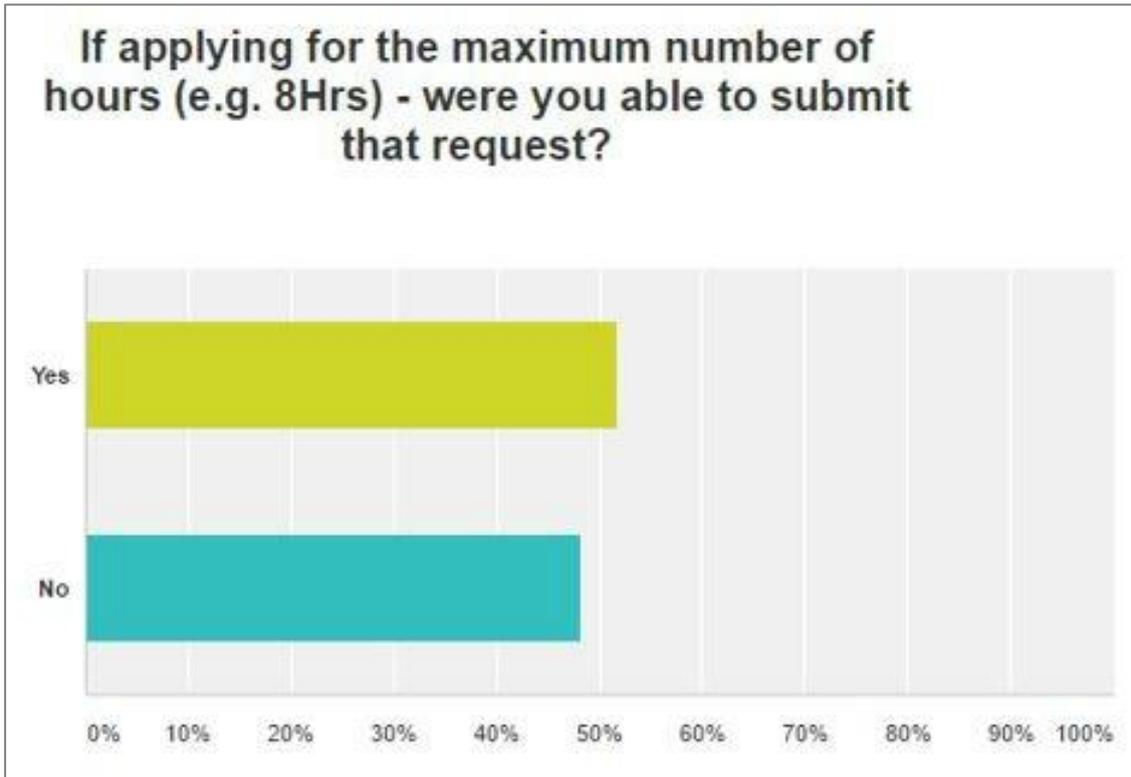
Overall assessment of new process



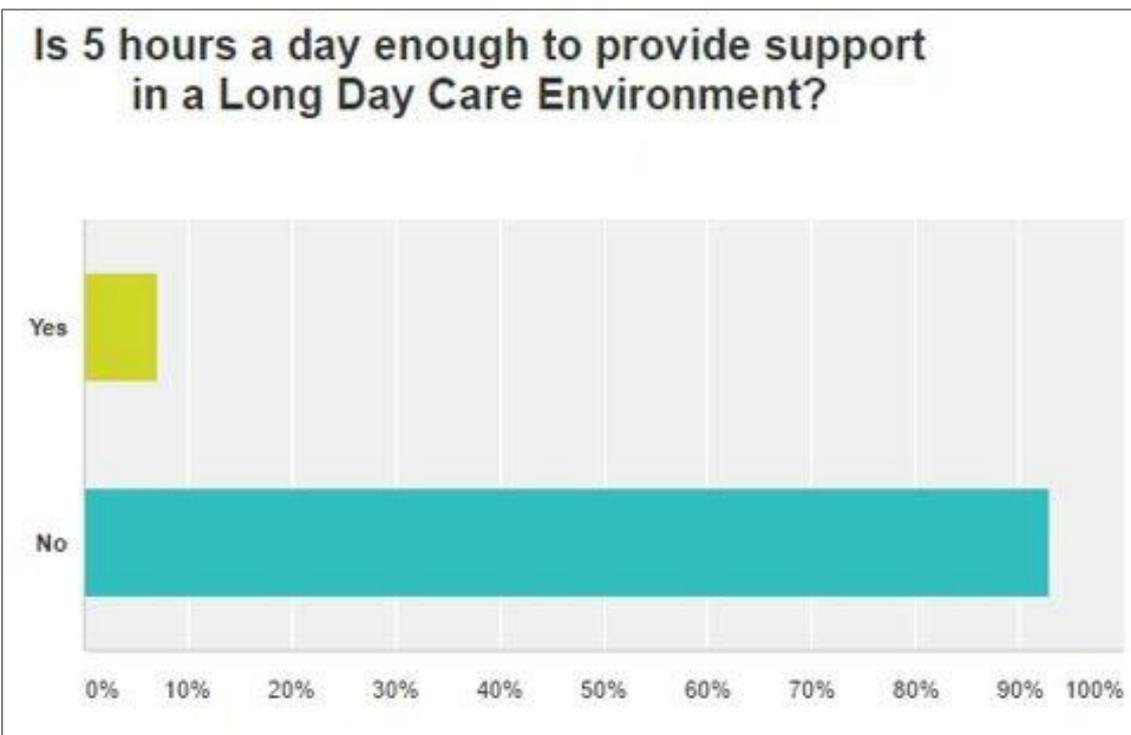
Understanding of the process



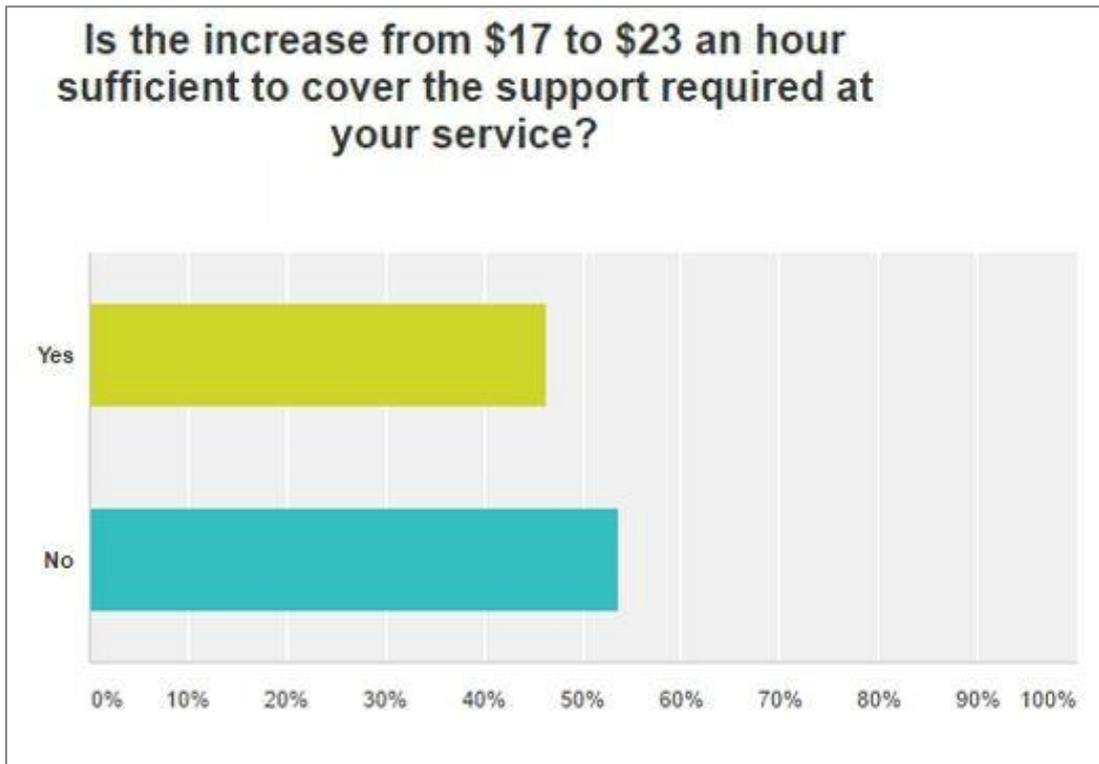
Applying for maximum hours



Views on 5 hours a day



Views on increase from \$17 to \$23 an hour



Further incentive for a service to apply for ISF

