



Department of Veterans' Affairs

2021-2022 Client Satisfaction Pulse Survey:
Summary of Results and Future Steps

October 2022

Background

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has been conducting a Client Satisfaction Survey, periodically since 1995. The survey has been conducted annually since 2018 and captures the performance of the department's service delivery efforts from the perspective of the client, asking for feedback on their experiences interacting with DVA over the past 12 months.

The Survey was conducted against a backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, natural disaster events and recovery efforts.

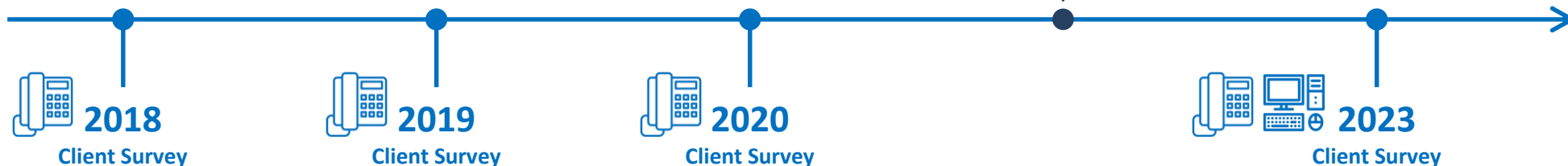
This report provides the results of the pulse survey conducted in 2021-2022.



2021-2022

Pulse Survey

- DVA commissioned a pulse survey of its clients for 2021
- 2,001 clients participated in 20 minute interviews, conducted between December 2021 and January 2022
- The Pulse Survey has been used as an interim measure of DVA's performance before transitioning to a new survey program in 2023
- Similar topics to previous surveys, including service usage, general impressions of DVA, transition and wellbeing
- Proportional sampling—quotas set by age, state/territory, gender, and currency of contact with DVA (with subsequent weighting to ensure representativeness)
- Results accurate to within 2 percentage points, at 95% confidence



Previous survey approach – telephone based interviews only

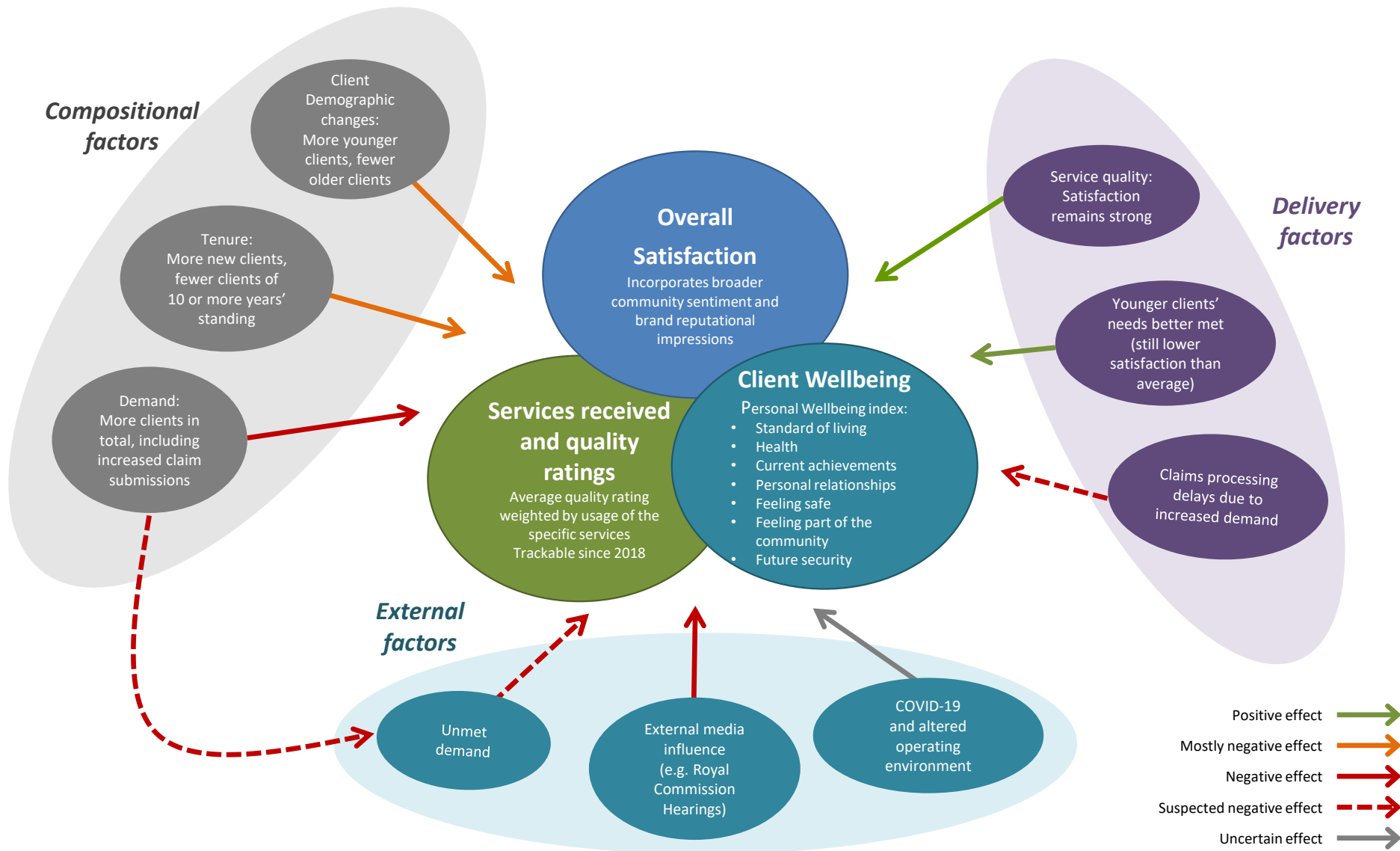
- Adoption of revised survey program, with a greater focus on service delivery
- Other topics include: use of services, general impressions of DVA, transition from the Australian Defence Force, and client wellbeing (introduced in 2019)
- 3,000+ interviews per year
- 20-minute telephone survey
- Quotas set by age, state/territory, gender, and currency of contact with DVA
- Heavy sampling of younger clients (a segment anticipated to grow in future), with subsequent weighting of overall results to reflect DVA's full client base

New Survey Program

- Proposed for early 2023
- Similar scale telephone interviewing to previous client surveys—augmented with an online survey pilot
- Core questions will allow tracking with key previous results
- Additional questions will follow up on concerns raised by previous research

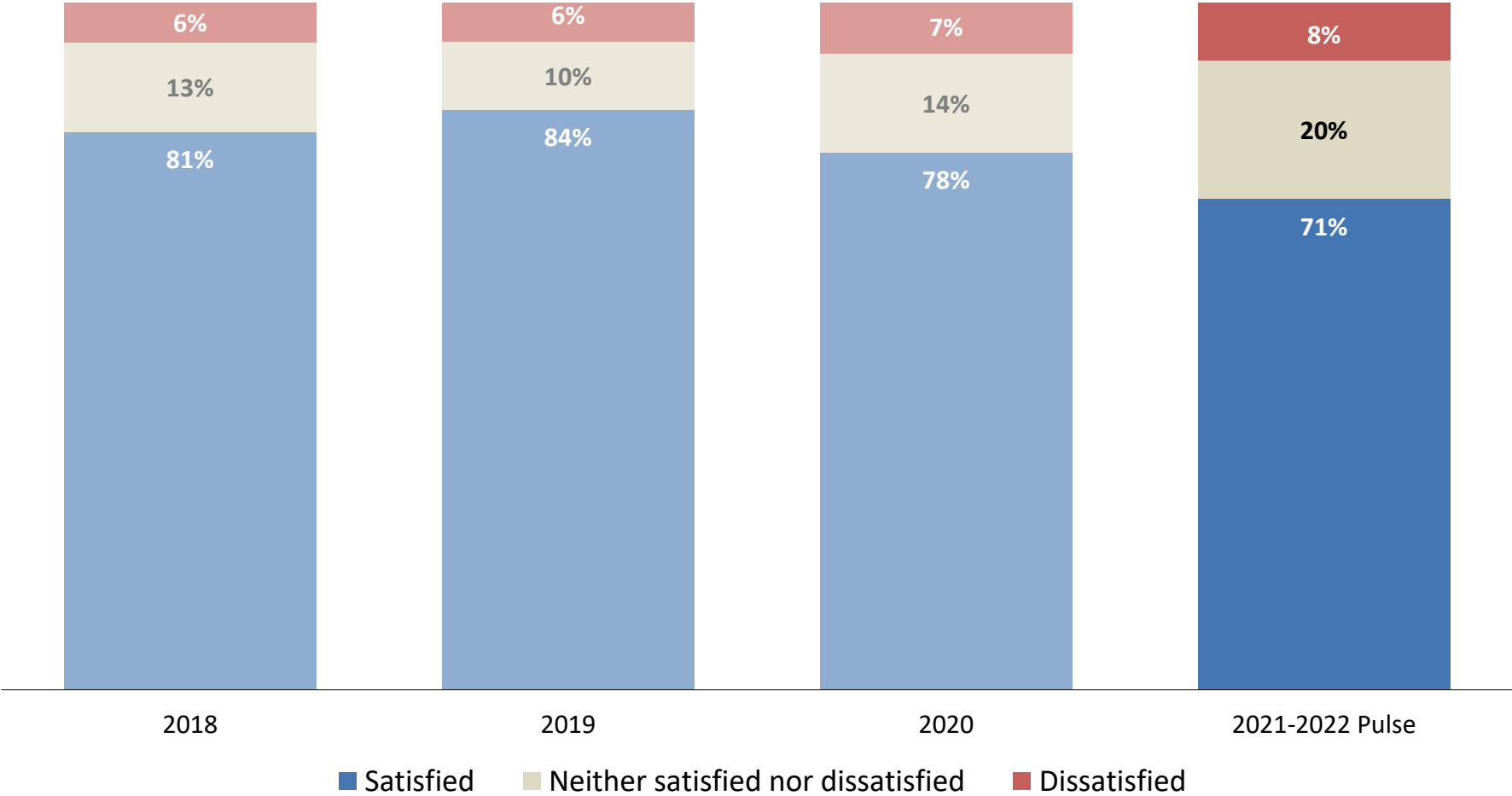
Background

It is important to acknowledge that overall client satisfaction is influenced by a range of factors – some of which DVA has a level of control and can measure, others, outside both DVAs control and the scope of the survey.



Overall satisfaction

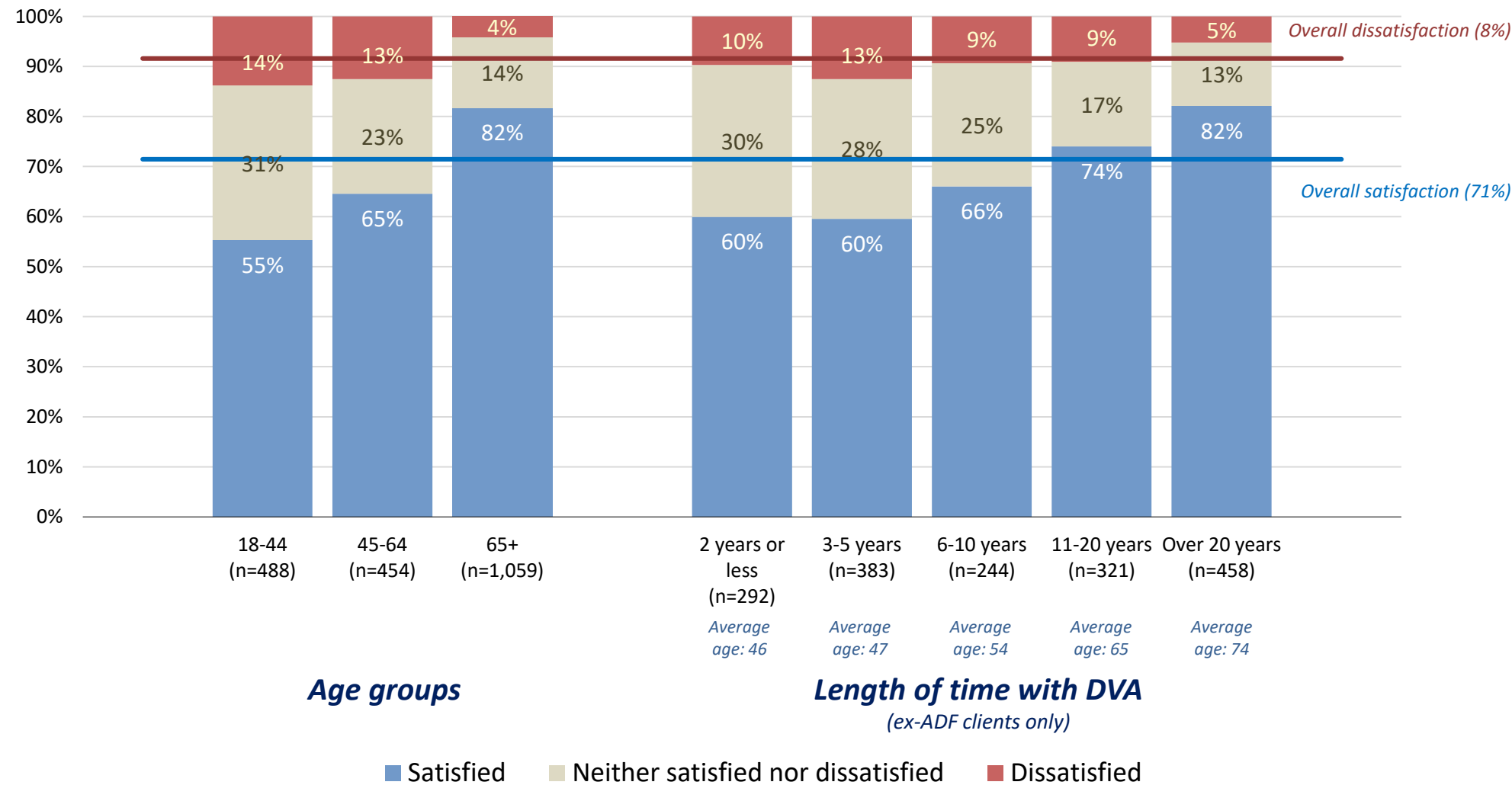
Towards the end of the survey, clients were asked to provide an overall rating of satisfaction with the services provided to them by DVA in the last 12 months. Overall, 71% of clients were satisfied (lower than in previous years), with 8% dissatisfied.



Overall satisfaction - By age and length of time with DVA




Satisfaction with DVA tended to be higher among older clients. For the cohort aged 18-44, just over half expressed overall satisfaction, with around one in seven dissatisfied. Overall satisfaction also tended to increase with the length of time a client had been with DVA, particularly for those who have been clients for over 10 years.




Overall impressions of DVA


Using a series of 13 customer service attributes, clients were asked to rate their experience interacting with DVA over the previous 12 months. Clients were most likely to agree that DVA is honest and ethical in its interactions (70% agreed, 8% disagreed), and least likely to agree that DVA listens and responds to feedback (56% agreed, 13% disagreed).


By analysing how these attributes related to overall satisfaction with DVA, six attributes were identified as likely to be the strongest contributors to overall positive sentiment—these are shown to the right of the diagram below.

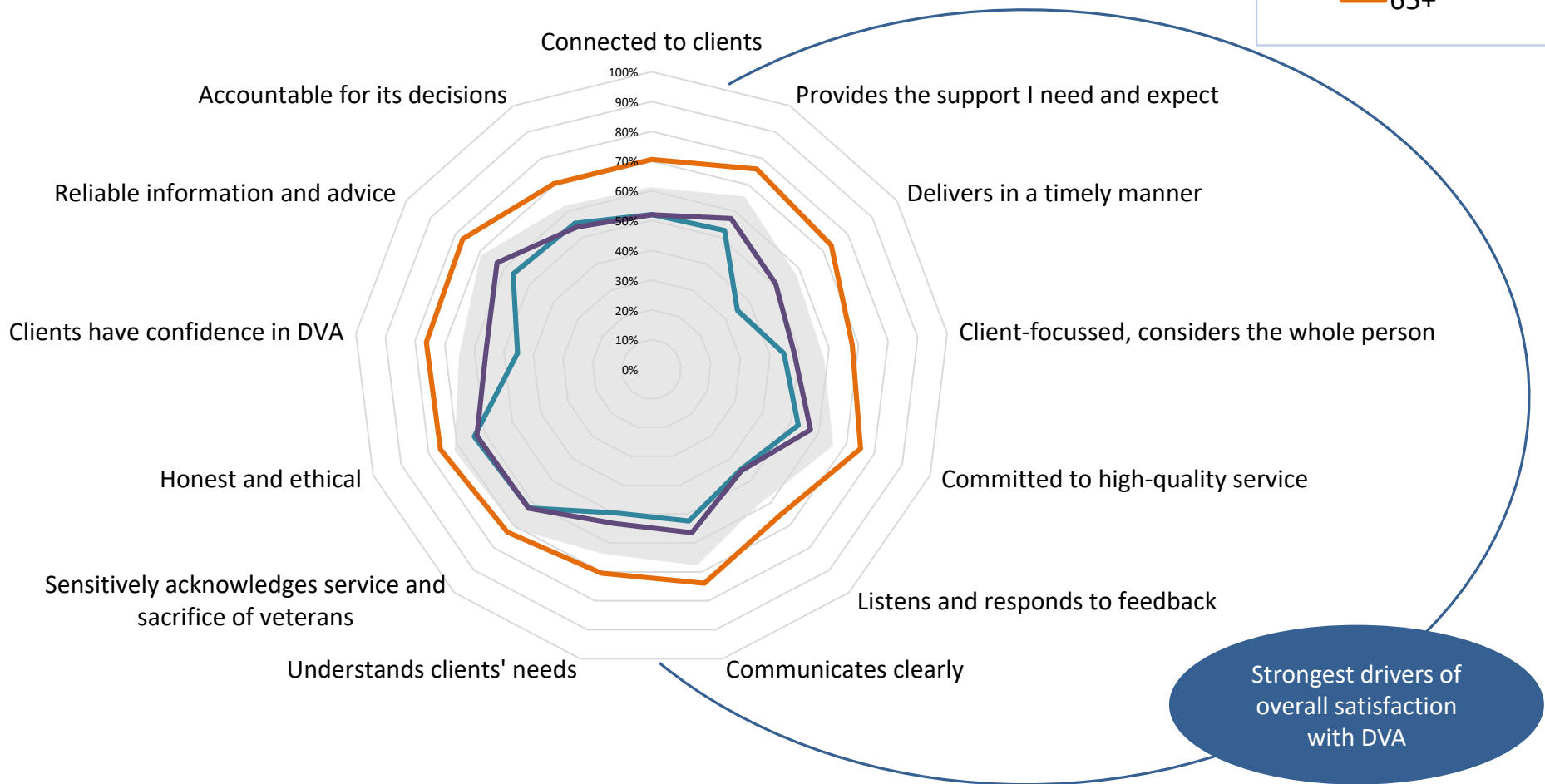
 DVA clients overall

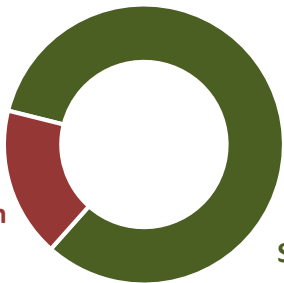
Age groups:

 18-44

 45-64

 65+





Of clients who had contacted DVA in the past 12 months, 83% were satisfied, and 17% less than satisfied (10% dissatisfied, and 7% ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’). The figure below compares the different reasons given for these two reactions. Clients who were satisfied were most likely to attribute this to an aspect of DVA’s customer service provided by DVA staff, while those less than satisfied were most likely to attribute this to an aspect of DVA’s processes.

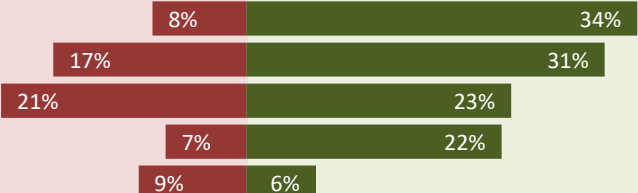
15% of survey respondents who had contacted DVA—or 4% of all survey respondents—indicated they needed to contact DVA more than once due to a service issue on DVA’s part.

Reasons for less than satisfactory experiences: (multiple response)



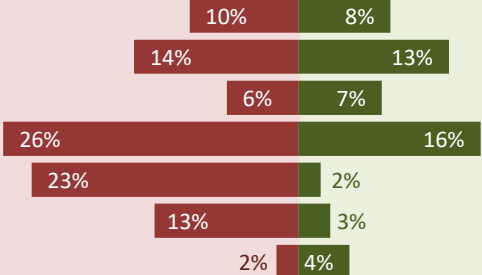
People
43%
(57% in 2020)

Staff not understanding of DVA services
Staff not understanding of your requirements
Staff not providing sufficient information
Unprofessionalism
Staff inflexible



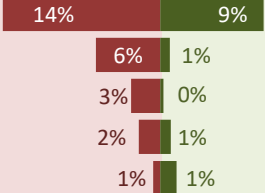
Process
63%
(67% in 2020)

Hard to contact staff
Unable to find relevant information easily
Unclear expectations
No prompt and timely response
Not informed about the progress, delays
Staff don't get back to me when promised
Online forms/tools not easy to use



Product
21%
(10% in 2020)

Did not receive the outcome I was after
Unclear language
Incomplete information
Inaccurate information
Irrelevant information

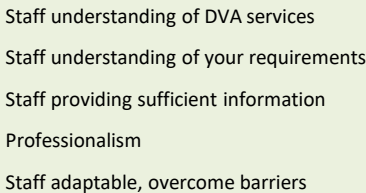


Reasons for satisfactory experiences: (multiple response)



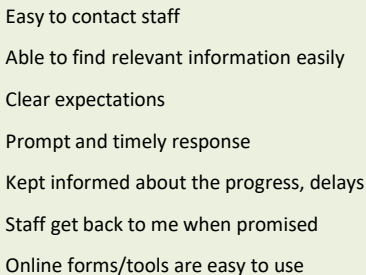
People
73%
(81% in 2020)

Staff understanding of DVA services
Staff understanding of your requirements
Staff providing sufficient information
Professionalism
Staff adaptable, overcome barriers



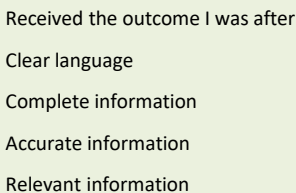
Process
42%
(42% in 2020)

Easy to contact staff
Able to find relevant information easily
Clear expectations
Prompt and timely response
Kept informed about the progress, delays
Staff get back to me when promised
Online forms/tools are easy to use

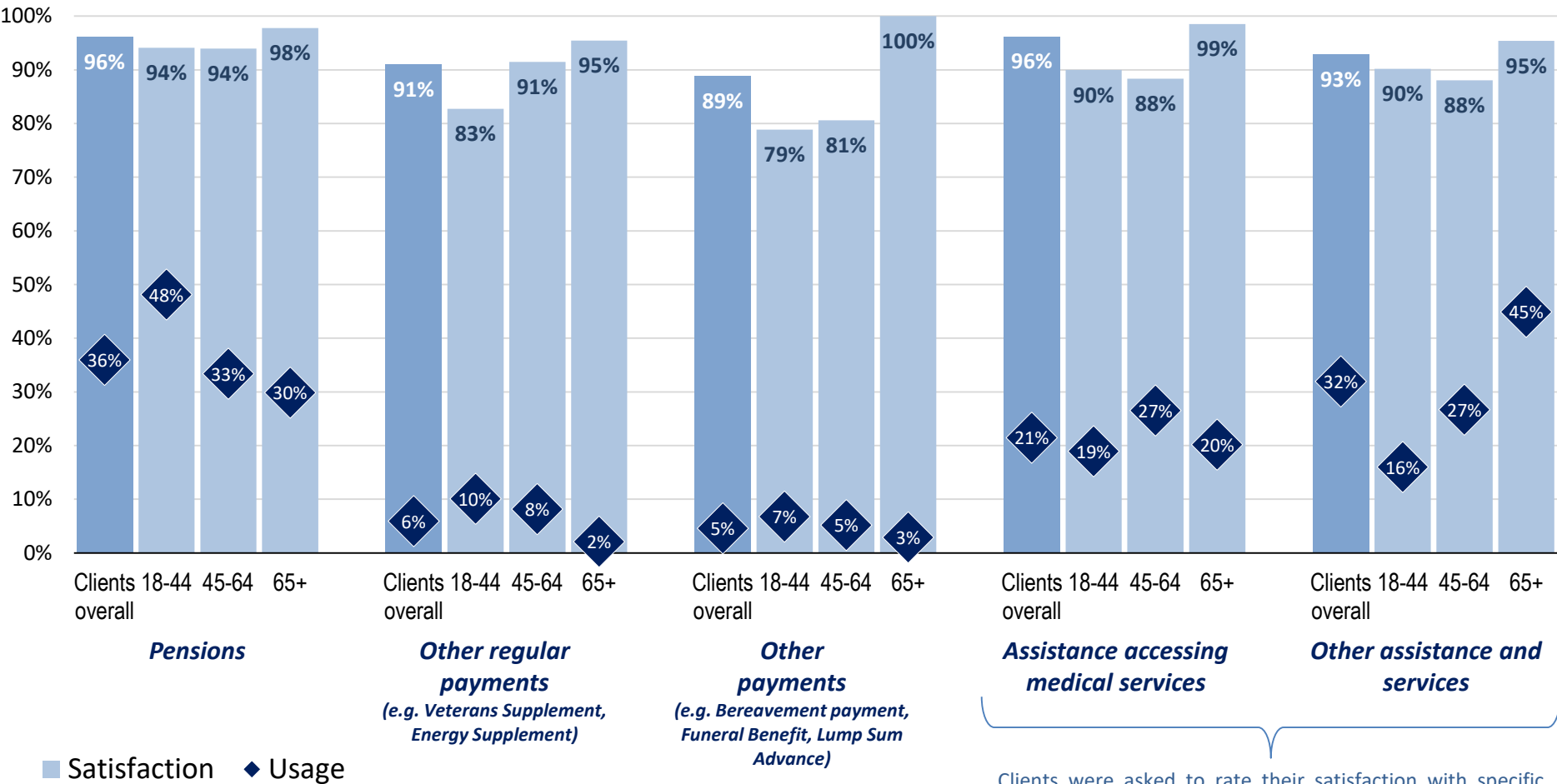


Product
12%
(3% in 2020)

Received the outcome I was after
Clear language
Complete information
Accurate information
Relevant information



The majority of clients (91%) had accessed at least one service or payment through DVA in the past 12 months, including 36% who had received a regular pension, and 21% who received assistance accessing medical services. When asked about the specific services they had accessed through DVA, most were satisfied, particularly among older clients.

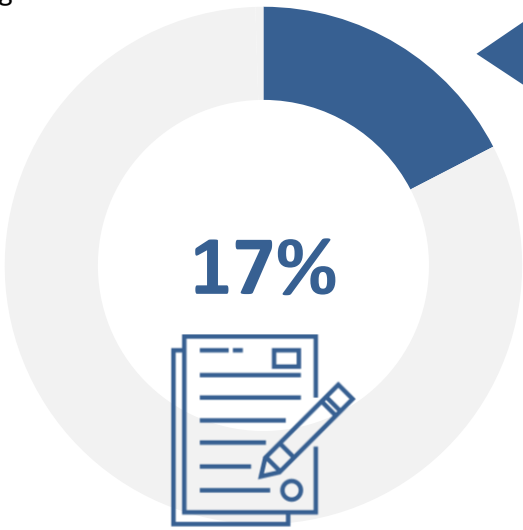


Clients were asked to rate their satisfaction with specific services they had accessed through DVA. The columns above show average ratings (one average across 9 medical services, another across 15 ‘other’ services).

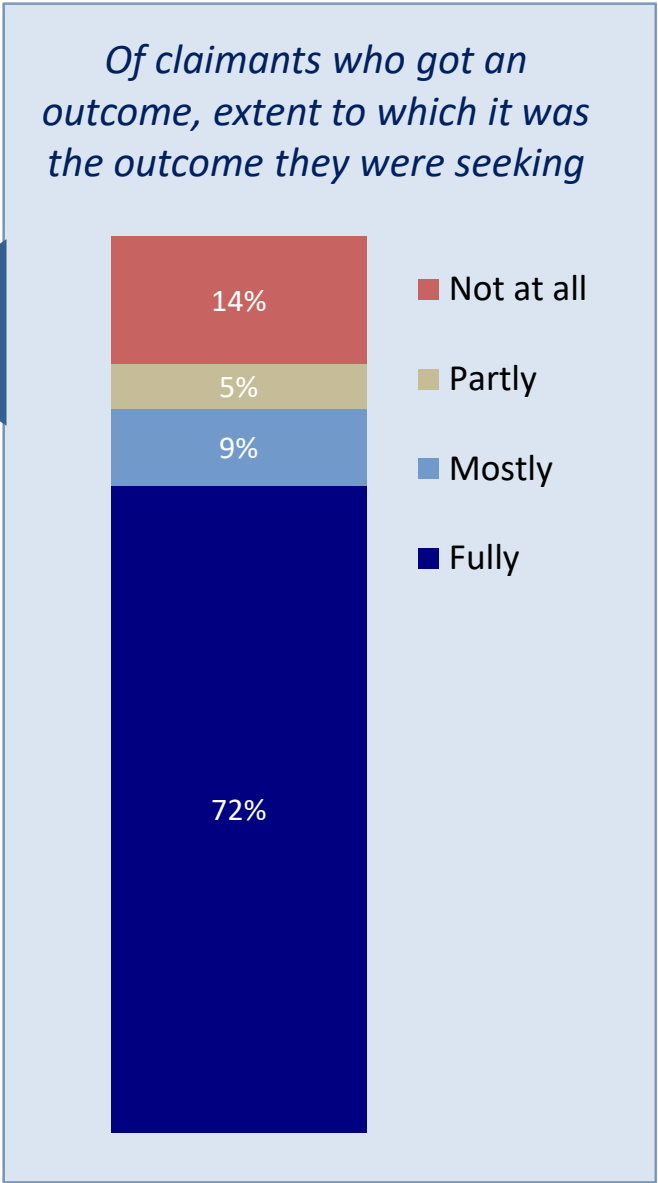
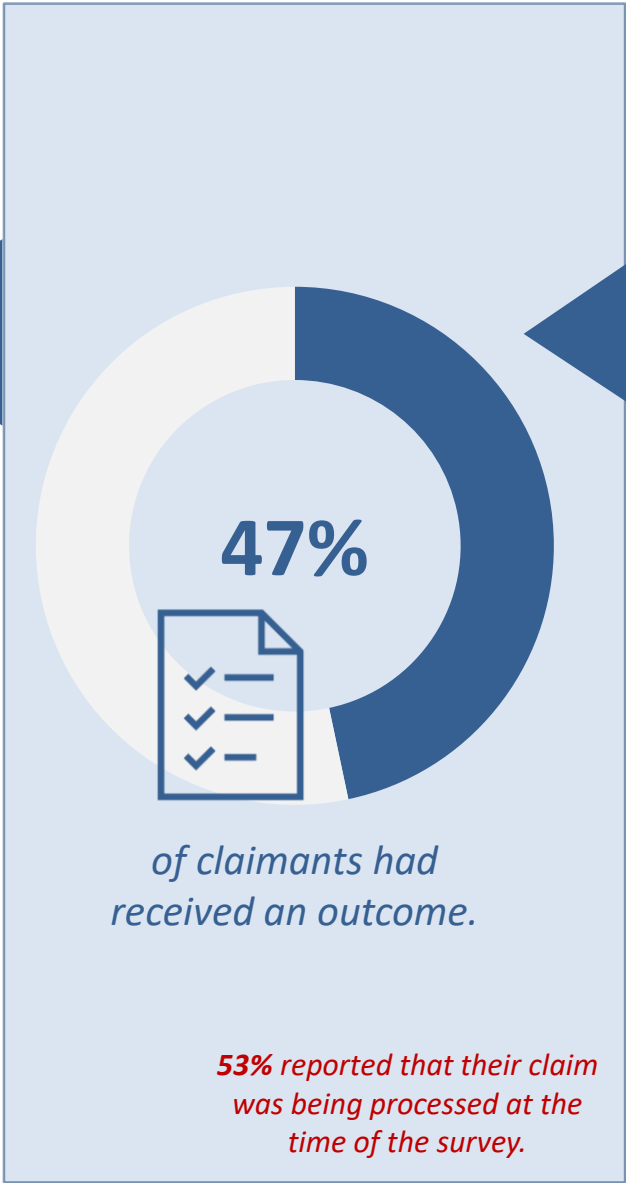
Claims experience

In total, 17% of respondents had submitted a claim in the 12 months prior to the survey. Of these, 47% had received an outcome of their claim, and 72% received the outcome they were after in full.

Respondents whose claims had been processed were more satisfied with DVA overall, including those who did not receive the outcome they were seeking.



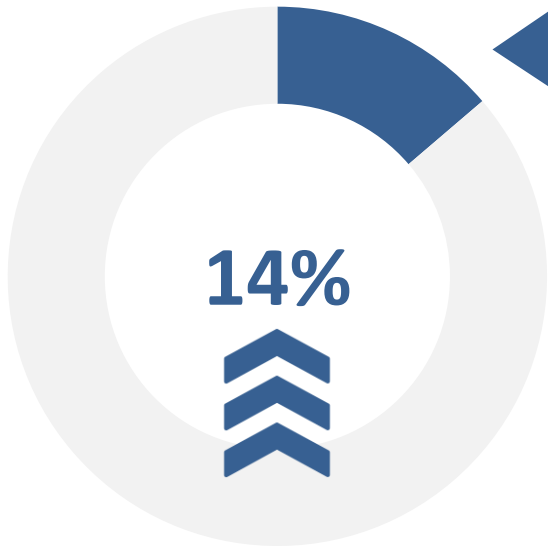
Had lodged a claim with DVA in the past 12 months



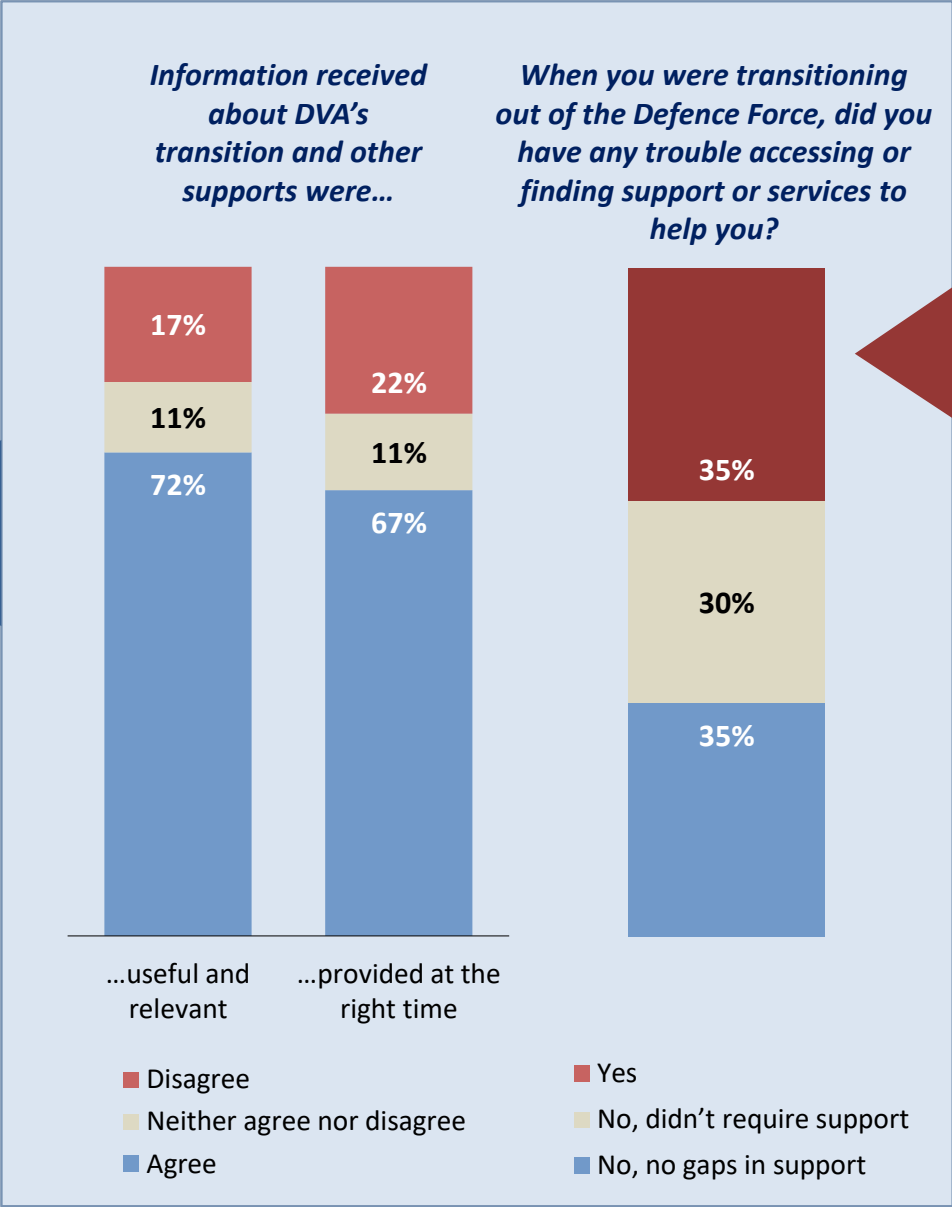
Clients transitioning from the ADF

Clients who had left the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in the past five years were asked about their experience transitioning to civilian life. At least two thirds agreed that the information they received about their transition and support was useful and relevant, and that that they were provided with the right information at the right time. Clients who transitioned within the past two years were most positive on these measures.

However, roughly one third of transitioning clients indicated they had trouble accessing services to help them.



Of ex-ADF clients had left the ADF in the past five years

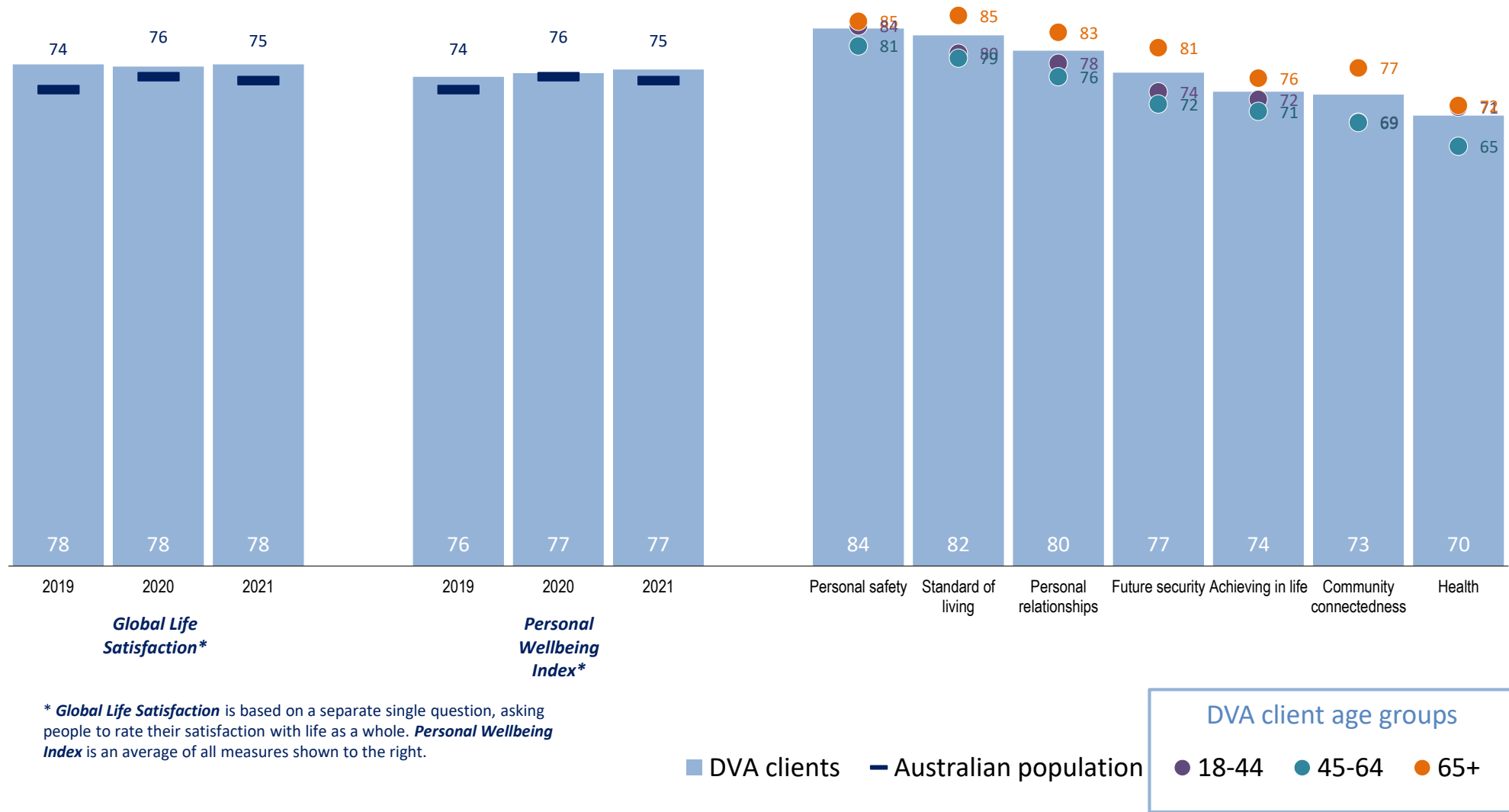


Of those having difficulties, these most commonly related to:










- Physical health, including finding a GP (49%)
- Mental health (29%)
- Employment (29%)

Client wellbeing

DVA clients were asked to rate their current wellbeing on a range of measures, shown below. Results were generally in line with, or above, wellbeing ratings provided by the Australian population as a whole—however, it is important to note that these figures are group averages, and include individuals who assessed themselves as having substantially lower wellbeing on some or all of these measures.



We would also like to acknowledge and thank all the participants who were involved in the research for their valuable contribution and input.

-  Communication, marketing and community research
-  Organisational, stakeholder and client research
-  Client and stakeholder research
-  Consultation and submissions
-  Portals
-  Data analytics and compliance
-  Online surveys and ballots
-  First Nations research
-  Disability services research