

“The Experience:” A Pilot Summer Work Experience Program for High School Students

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OVERVIEW

- ▶ Partnership of Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) and Building 21, an Allentown, PA school district high school, in collaboration with – and with support from – The Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust
- ▶ Summer work program pilot in 2018
- ▶ Participants worked in select clinical and non-clinical areas

PURPOSE

- ▶ To provide real-world, mentored work experience to rising high school seniors
- ▶ To prepare participants to enter the workforce with exposure to a variety of health care careers
- ▶ To connect participants with mentors who could guide them
- ▶ To increase participants’ overall confidence in a professional work environment
- ▶ To evaluate program model for replication

KEY STATISTICS

- ▶ 16 rising high school juniors participated
- ▶ 6 week program; participants worked 22 hours/week at work sites + 4 hours/week professional development group sessions on Wednesdays
- ▶ Program Coordinator identified interested LVHN Mentors and facilitated Professional Development Seminars
- ▶ Program Coordinator assisted Building 21 Partnerships Coordinator to screen participant applications and conduct interviews to identify participants

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

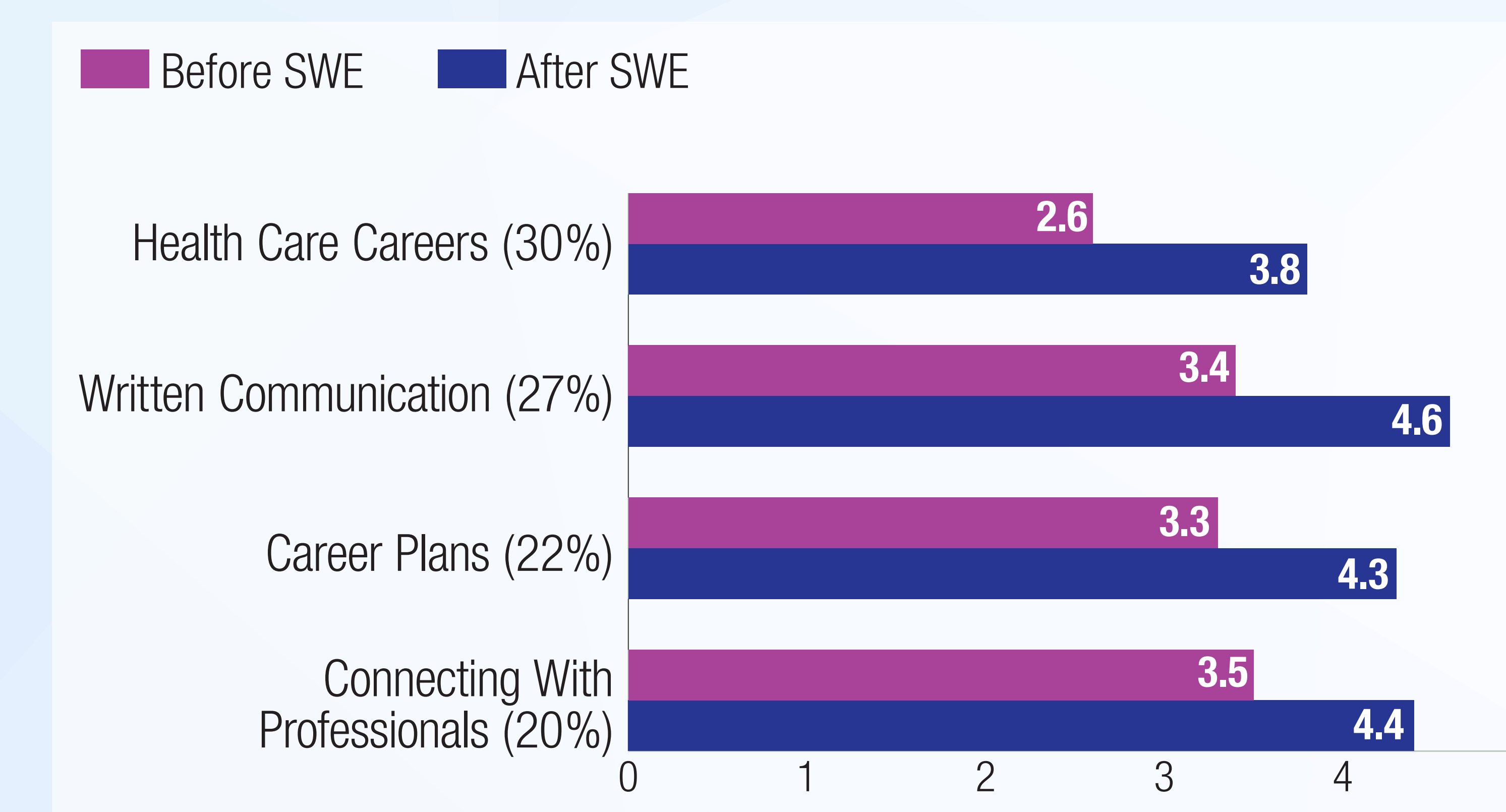
- ▶ Participant Orientation and Mentor Workshop
- ▶ Weekly 4 hour Professional Development Seminars
- ▶ Hands-on work experiences throughout LVHN worksites alongside LVHN Mentors
- ▶ A guided ‘Dress for Success’ shopping experience through a program clothing stipend
- ▶ A closing ‘Celebration’ to showcase participants’ individual projects
- ▶ Program incentives included competitive hourly wage, daily lunch and transportation stipends, free gym membership, completion ‘bonus’
- ▶ Program staff included: Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, and 2 Work-Site Supervisors, in addition to Work Site Mentors

PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

- ▶ Increase in participant self-confidence in own written communication skills
- ▶ Increase in participant self-confidence in own networking skills
- ▶ Increase in participant knowledge of health care careers

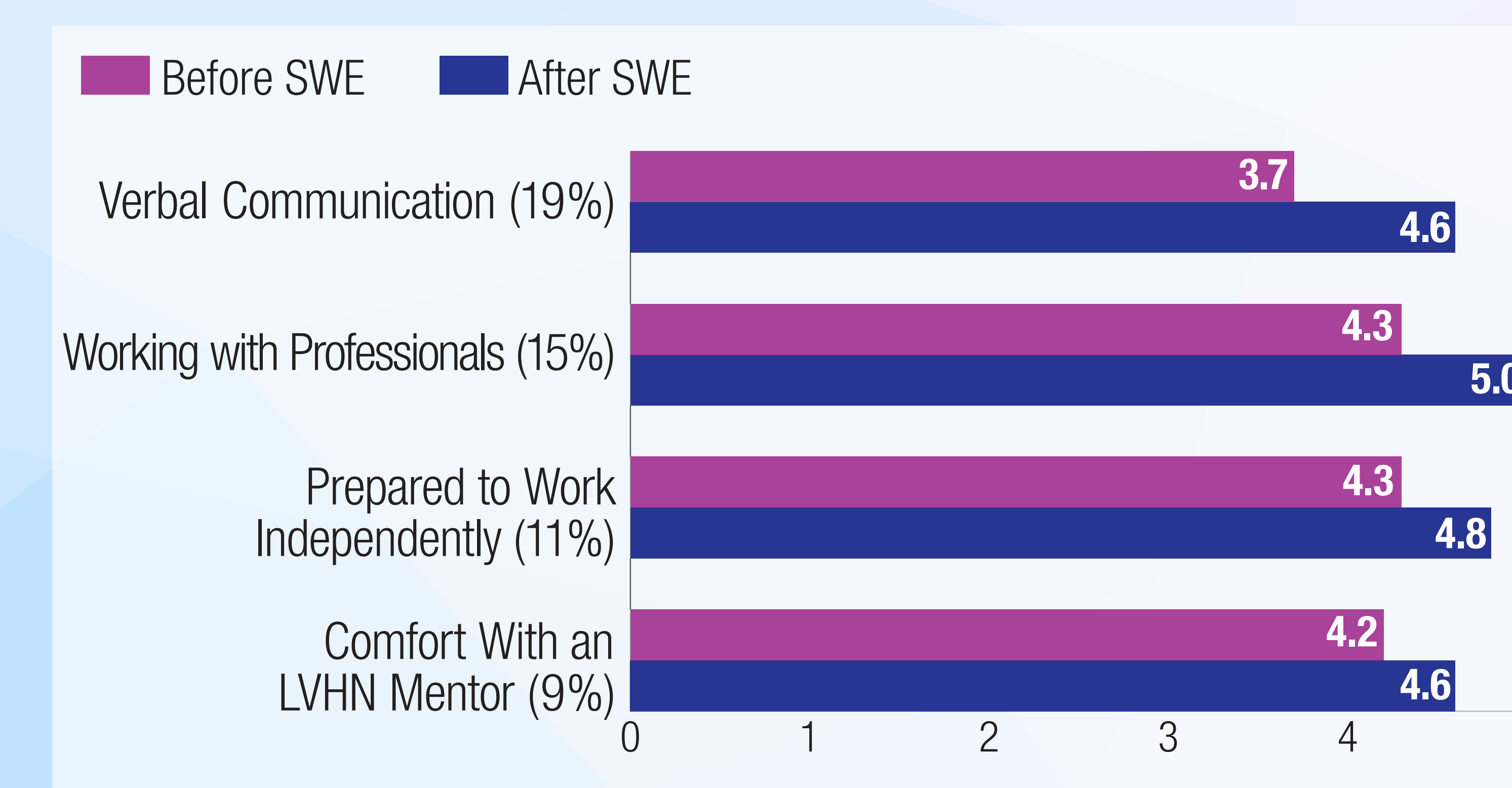
KEY GAINS

Pre/post, participants showed 20–30 percent increases in their knowledge and confidence.



ADDITIONAL GAINS

Noteable improvements were also made in these areas.



TRANSFERABILITY

Program model highly transferable and replicable elsewhere. Critical program supports/elements include:

- ▶ Funding source, either internal or external to host hospital or regional campus site
- ▶ Dedicated, passionate, committed, flexible partners and leadership at home high school and at host hospital or regional campus site
- ▶ Participants demonstrating early career readiness knowledge and skills

LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ Begin planning with at least a 6-month lead time for successful implementation
- ▶ Short-term gains easy to measure. Tracking long-term impact needs to be built
- ▶ Staff hired specifically to the support program is key

NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Funding extended for second year 2019
- ▶ Consider extending to additional high schools
- ▶ Consider adding year-long elements to program
- ▶ Ripple effect mapping and long-term participant tracking underway to map unintended and long-term impacts of program