

An Assessment of State Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Websites: Comparing Data from 2021 and 2023

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Abstract

- EHDI websites are top referral for parents by audiologists
 - 72% of mothers utilize the internet for medical information*
 - 94% of people utilize social media for medical information**
- Half of parents with children who are deaf or hard of hearing utilize hearing specific websites and search for additional information on communication once diagnosed
- In 2021, initial review of EHDI states and DC websites to determine if information provided aligns with Federal legislation and NCHAM recommendations
 - based on if information provided was thorough, unbiased, and answered basic questions for parents
 - Paper published in November 2022 *Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention*
 - Secondary review completed in 2023

Introduction

- 2021 review of websites found gaps in the amount of information provided.
- Recommendations made included HRSA developed content.
- EHDI 2022 Reauthorization includes GAO report language on addressing underserved populations and how parents receive information from websites
 - maintained 2017 language on unbiased technology requirement.
- 2023 Omnibus Appropriations encourages HRSA to work with partners on awareness of communication modalities and hearing technologies

Method

- Initial review took place Aug –Sept 2021 and second August 2023
- Hearing Loss Information, criteria included:
 - Comprehensive - types of hearing loss, causes of progressive hearing loss, what to expect during a hearing exam.
 - Having introductory videos and/or information on cCMV could result in a higher rating
 - Somewhat helpful - introductory information and/or only EHDI guidelines
 - Inadequate – No or biased information
- Communication criteria included:
 - Comprehensive - unbiased information on all options (ASL, spoken, Cued Speech etc.), details on more information,
 - Links to parent guides counted
 - Somewhat helpful - singular option was listed
 - Inadequate - No mention or biased
- Technology criteria included:
 - Comprehensive - included cochlear implants, hearing aids, and other information such as FM systems, tips on using technology, and/or noninsurance financing options
 - Somewhat helpful - a least one option (usually hearing aids)
 - Inadequate - no information or clear bias
- Resources criteria included:
 - Comprehensive - information on state and Federal departments of health and education, non-profit organizations, schools for the deaf and hard of hearing (private and public)
 - Somewhat Helpful - resources were focused on one option (communication or tech), hard to locate or outdated
 - Inadequate – No information or biased

Results

- Improvement in all four categories
- All 50 states and DC had operational websites
- In 2021, 12 states had no inadequate, number grew to 26 in 2023
- Hearing loss information – most improvement with three sites rated inadequate and no state dropped in rating
 - More states included videos and information on cCMV
- Communication – 11 states improved to comprehensive
 - 2 states downgraded to inadequate due to removal of material and preference for one language.
- Technology - most improvement, yet also most inadequate websites.
 - One state dropped from comprehensive to inadequate due to removal of technology references.
- Resources – more websites rated somewhat helpful compared than other categories.
 - One state dropped to somewhat helpful due to decrease in links.

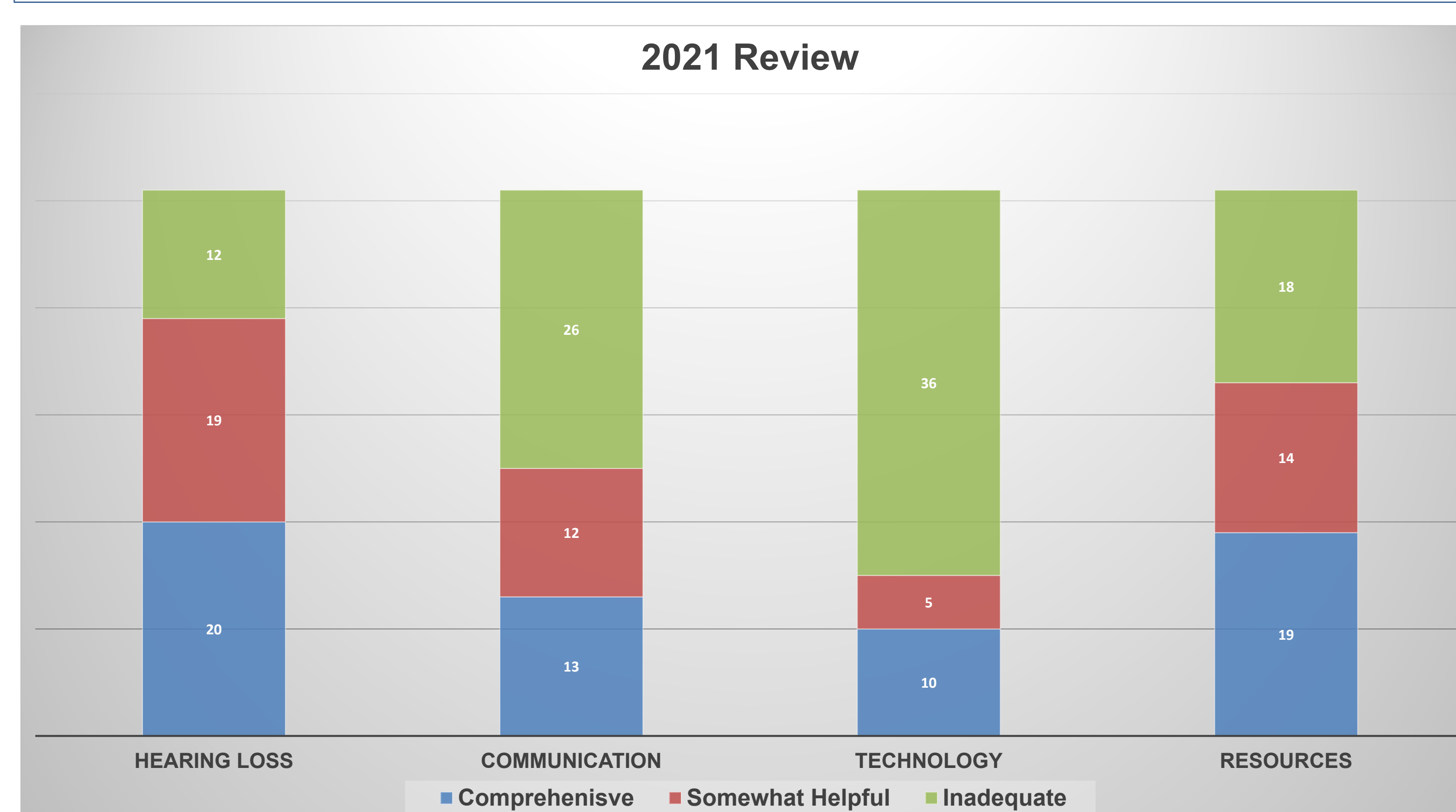


Chart 1. 2021 Review Results .

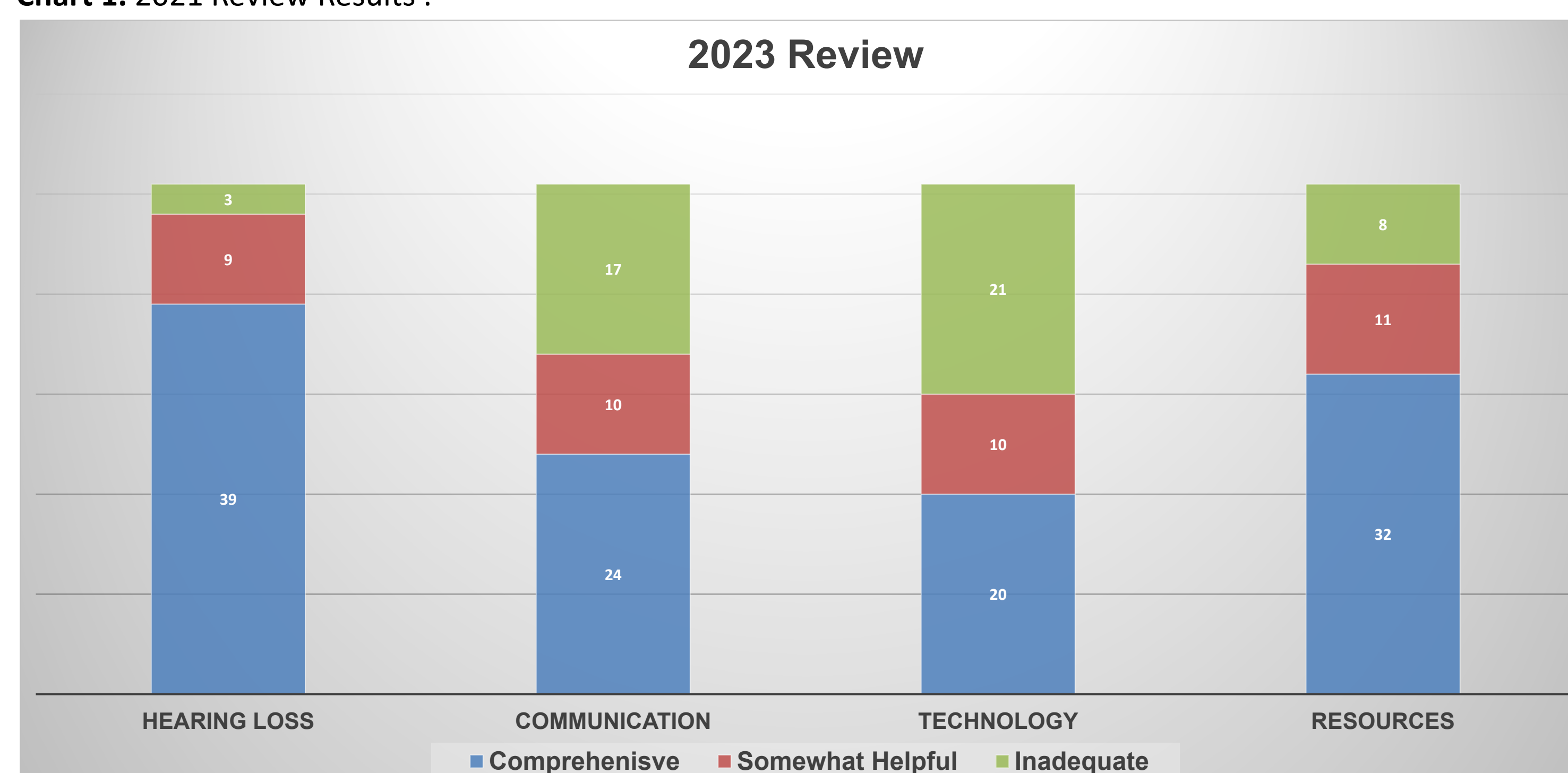


Chart 2. 2023 Review Results .

Discussion and Conclusions

- EHDI websites improved sharing unbiased, science-based information aligned with federal policies and laws
- Technology and communication need further work as 1/3 are inadequate
- Outside two states, all other comprehensive sites in 2021 remained so.
 - Helpful, informative websites can remain so long-term with strong established foundation
- EHDI staff highlighted lack of funds, conflicting priorities, impact of COVID-19 pandemic, and more as hinderances
- ACI Alliance recommends standardized content that can be edited to reflect state-specific areas
- Content could be provided by hearing health organizations, HRSA, NCHAM, etc.

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References

*Pew Research, 2002
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