

**Protective Factors Questionnaire:
October 2014 – July 2015**

**Submitted to
The Nebraska Department of Health and
Human Services
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**Submitted by
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Executive Summary

At the request of the Nebraska Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the evaluators assisted the Alternative Response (AR) leadership with the development of an adapted version of the Protective Factors Survey, entitled the *Nebraska DCFS Protective Factors Questionnaire*. During this period of review, the Protective Factors Questionnaire (PFQ) was to be administered to AR families during the initial assessment process. Workers documented the family's rating of each item on a 5-point scale of agreement (*1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree*) or frequency (*1 = Never, 5 = Always*). This was to be completed at the beginning and end of the case. Documentation of the family's responses was then to be scanned and uploaded into N-FOCUS. These data were then shared with the evaluators to examine changes in families' perceptions of their protective factors over the life of the AR case.

New AR guidelines were released in an AR program manual on July 1, 2015 along with an updated version of the PFQ, now titled the *Nebraska DCFS Protective Factors and Well-Being Questionnaire*. In partnership with DCFS, the PFQ was expanded to include the measurement of well-being. However, the data included in this report only reference the original PFQ. Future reports will examine the usage of this new form.

For this review, DCFS provided the evaluators with all PFQ data on closed AR cases from October 2014 through July 2015. The main conclusions of these analyses are as follows:

- About half (46%) of these cases have completed PFQ data, while the other half (46%) are missing PFQ data. In the remaining 8% of cases, families refused to complete the PFQ. Further analyses of PFQ completion rates are summarized in the full report, including comparisons over the last three quarters and between the pilot counties.
- Of the completed PFQs, the following issues were observed:
 - Families are continuing to refuse to complete the PFQ. Moreover, this appears to be on the rise when looking at these data over the last three quarters.
 - Only 8 cases (6%) have more than one PFQ attached.
 - There were 8 PFQs with incomplete information or blank headers.

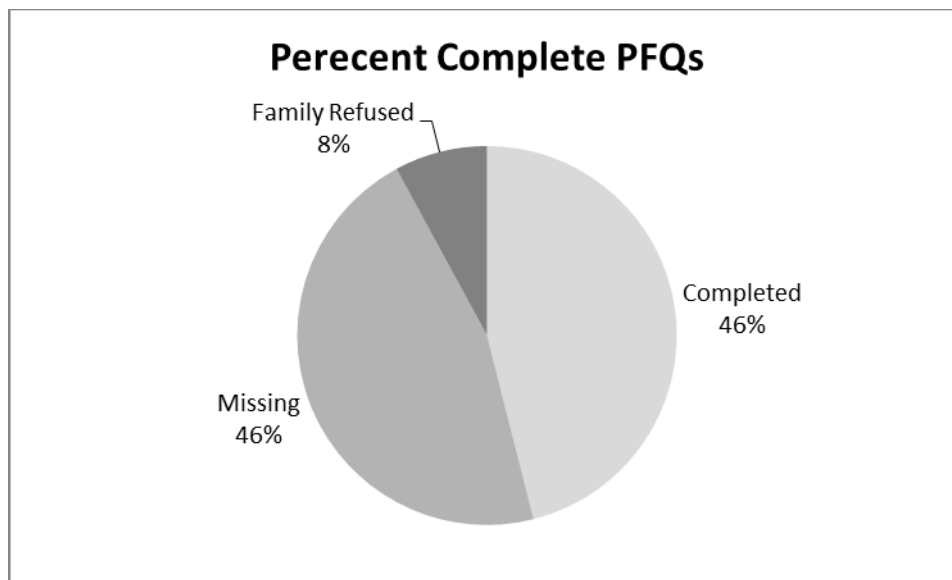
Summary of PFQ Completion

Statewide PFQ completion

The preliminary report of PFQ data included active and closed cases between October and December of 2014. In May 2015 the decision was made to only draw down data for closed cases. Therefore, this report will only include information from closed AR assigned cases. The overall data presented in this report includes PFQs completed between October 2014 and July 2015.

The original dataset provided by DCFS included 262 closed AR cases between October 2014 and July 2015. However, 11 of those cases were screened out, 8 cases changed track to a Traditional Response (TR) and were later screened out, and 70 cases changed tracks in less than 5 days. None of these cases would require the PFQ to be completed with the family; hence these cases were excluded from analyses. Additionally, 33 cases changed tracks from AR to TR after 5 or more days of the intake being accepted. Some of these cases were open long enough to require a PFQ be completed; however, because the ultimate measurement purpose of the PFQ is to examine changes in protective factors through repeated measures, this will only be possible in those cases that remain AR. Therefore, for clarity and the purposes of this report, these cases were also excluded from these analyses. Future reports could look at the completion rates and resultant data from these PFQs, if requested.

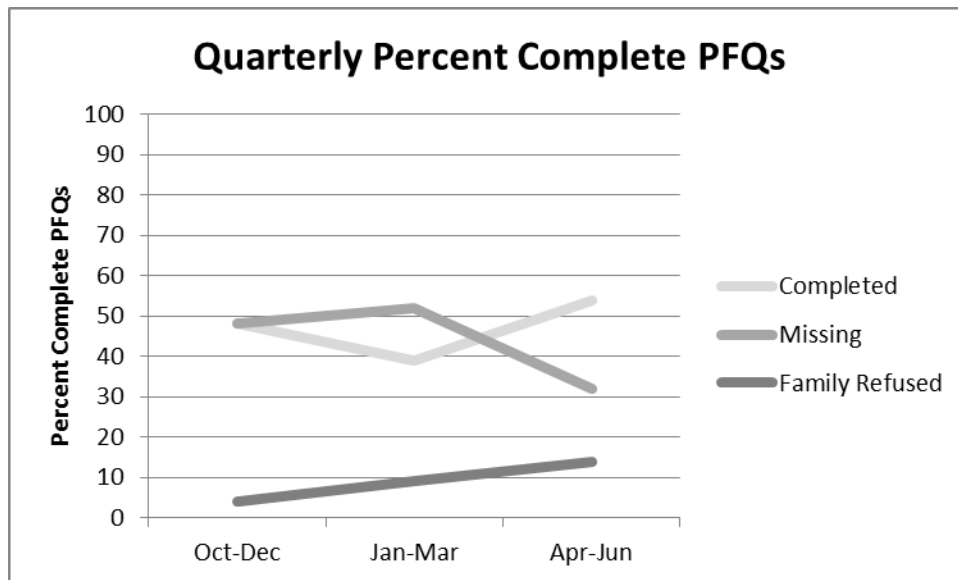
Ultimately, a total of 139 AR cases remained AR and were closed between October 2014 and July 2015. Of those 139 cases, 64 cases (46%) had completed PFQ data, 11 families refused to provide responses (8%), and 64 (46%) did not have a PFQ attached to the case. This distribution is illustrated in the chart below.



In order to examine the fluctuation in completion rates since implementation, the data were split into quarters based on the acceptance date: October through December 2014, January through March 2015,

and April through June 2015. July data was not included in these comparisons so that the quarters were equal; however, this only excluded one case.

In October through December 2014, 27 cases (48%) had completed PFQ data, 27 cases (48%) did not have a PFQ attached, and 2 cases (4%) had families refuse to complete the PFQ. In January through March 2015, 21 cases (39%) had completed PFQ data, 28 cases (52%) had missing PFQ data, and 5 cases (9%) had families refuse to complete the PFQ. In April through June 2015, there were 15 cases (54%) with completed PFQ data, 9 cases (32%) without PFQ data, and 4 cases (14%) had families refuse to complete the PFQ. Because these quarters were defined by when the case was accepted, as cases continue to close, the percentages represented for each quarter will continue to fluctuate. However, on average it appears about half of AR cases have a PFQ attached and the other half is not completed. Additionally, the percentage of families refusing to complete the PFQ appears to be on the rise. The following graph and table summarize the PFQ completion rates over the last three quarters.

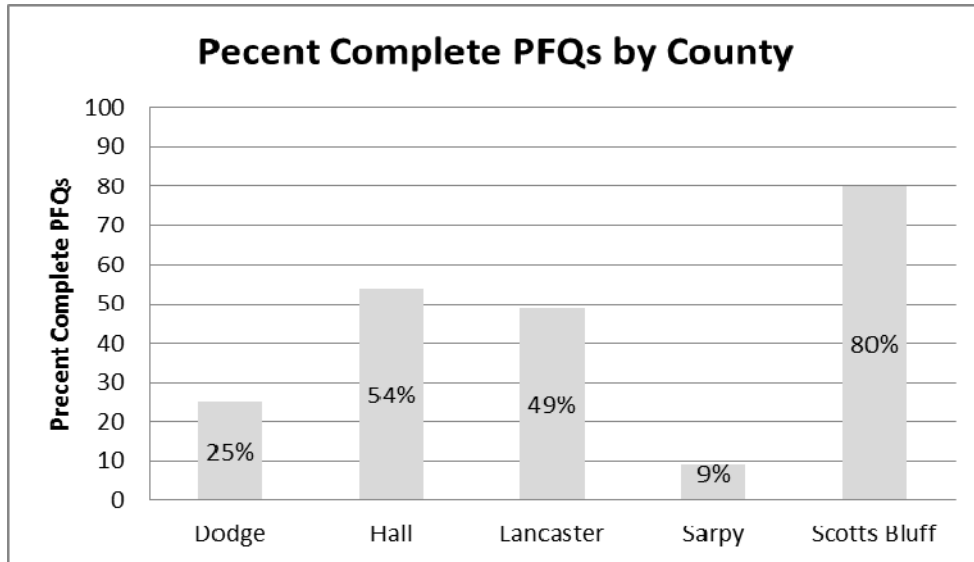


	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
Completed PFQs	27	21	15
Missing PFQs	27	28	9
Family Refused	2	5	4
Total Closed AR Cases	56	54	28

PFQ completion by pilot county

The percent of completed PFQs varies by pilot county. However, the populations and subsequent number of AR cases also varies meaningfully by county. Due to the small number of cases in the pilot counties

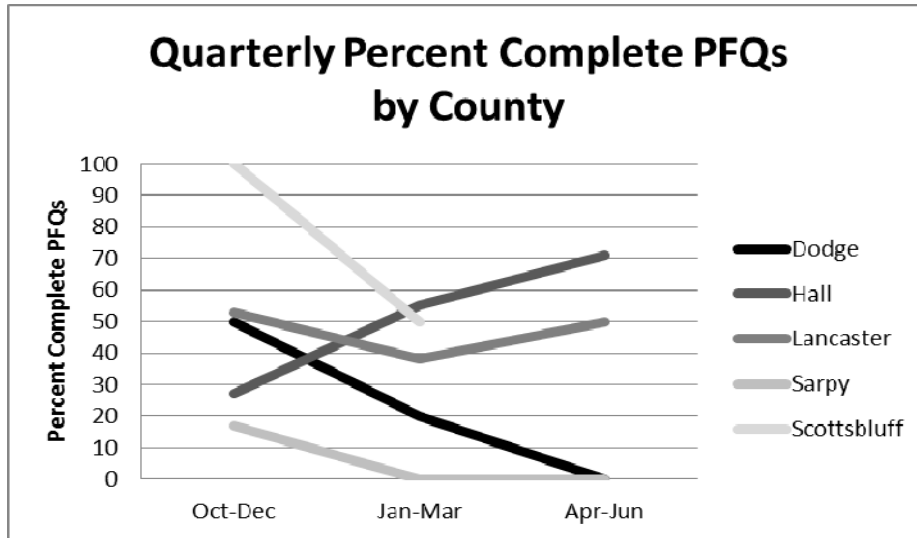
(except for Lancaster), it should be noted that completion rates are impacted heavily by a single PFQ being completed or not completed. Therefore, these percentages should be considered accordingly. The following graph and table summarize the overall PFQ completion rates for each pilot county from October 2014 through July 2015.



	Dodge	Hall	Lancaster	Sarpy	Scotts Bluff
Completed PFQs	3	14	42	1	4
Total AR Cases	12	26	85	11	5
Percent Complete	25	54	49	9	80

In order to examine the fluctuation in completion rates over time, data were split by county and then into quarters based on the acceptance date: October through December 2014, January through March 2015, and April through June 2015. July data was not included in these comparisons so that the quarters were equal; however, this only excluded one case from Lancaster County. Because these data were split into such small groupings, these percentages should be considered cautiously and not absolutely. For example, the numbers are so few in Scotts Bluff County that the completion rate appears to have fallen from 100% to 50%, and while numerically this is true, practically speaking, this is only one case. Furthermore, Scotts Bluff County didn't have a single AR case included in the third quarter data. However, these data still highlight some meaningful trends. For Dodge County, while the number of closed AR cases has remained relatively steady, the completion rate appears to be falling. Additionally, Sarpy County completed 1 PFQ during the first quarter, but no other closed cases have had PFQ data attached since. Bearing in mind that these numbers are low, it may still be advisable to communicate further with these specific counties to promote the completion of the PFQ. On the other hand, Hall County appears to continually be improving on their PFQ completion and Lancaster County is remaining relatively stable with nearly half of their

cases including PFQ data. Generally speaking, all counties need to improve their completion of the PFQ, especially if the goal is 100% completion, which no county is currently achieving. The following graph and table summarize the PFQ completion rates over the last three quarters.



	Oct-Dec					Jan-Mar					Apr-Jun				
	Dodge	Hall	Lancaster	Sarpy	Scotts Bluff	Dodge	Hall	Lancaster	Sarpy	Scotts Bluff	Dodge	Hall	Lancaster	Sarpy	Scotts Bluff
Completed PFQs	2	3	18	1	3	1	6	13	0	1	0	5	10	0	0
Total AR Cases	4	11	34	6	3	5	11	34	3	2	3	7	20	2	0
Percent Complete	50	27	53	17	100	20	55	38	0	50	0	71	50	0	-

Issues with Completed PFQ Data

Different forms

The preliminary PFQ report revealed that two versions of the PFQ form were being used. This issue appears to have been resolved; however, a new version of the PFQ was implemented on July 1, 2015. The new form includes well-being items and is titled the *Nebraska DCFS Protective Factors and Well-Being Questionnaire*. Future reports will examine the use of this new form.

Scanning issues

The preliminary PFQ report stated that three questionnaires had either only the first or only the second page of the PFQ form scanned into N-FOCUS. This issue appears to be resolved.

Noncompliance with AR policy

Family refusal

The preliminary PFQ report noted 1 family refusing to complete the PFQ. The current data includes 10 additional families refusing to fill out the PFQ, for a total of 11. As depicted above, the percentage of families refusing to fill out the PFQ appears to be on the rise. Per AR policy, the CFS Specialist is to ensure the completion of these questionnaires. Further clarity may be necessary to ensure this message is consistently understood by workers (i.e., this questionnaire is mandatory).

Lacking multiple PFQ measures

For the cases included in this report, AR policy stated that the PFQ was to be completed at the beginning of the case and at case closure. The preliminary PFQ report stated that only 1 case had 2 PFQs associated with it. The current data includes 7 additional cases with 2 PFQs, for a total of 8 out of 139 cases (6%). These cases with multiple measures were in Lancaster and Hall Counties. It appears greater communication is needed to ensure workers are completing these questionnaires according to the frequency outlined in policy.

Incomplete header information

There were 8 PFQs with incomplete information or blank headers. Some of the missing information included master case numbers (which were able to be provided by Sheralynn) and not providing the date the PFQ was completed. Omitting the date is a bigger concern, as this prohibits us from knowing when in the case the PFQ was completed. This is meant to be filled out multiple times to track changes in protective factors throughout an AR case. Therefore, it is important to be able to identify when each PFQ was completed.