

Executive Summary: July 2023 Customer Experience Survey Results and Recommendations

Purpose

The Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) Outreach and Customer Experience Unit (OCXU) deployed a new customer experience survey that was sent out in July 2023 to **2,000 stakeholders who applied for oxygen equipment and/or accessories** between April 2022 and March 2023. OCXU designed the survey to align with the customer experience (CX) drivers outlined in OMB Circular A-11 Section 280 (Managing Customer Service and Improving Service Delivery), and also included specific questions related to this customer touchpoint. This survey package included an optional Equity Assessment. This report details the scores and analysis obtained from this survey and associated recommendations from the team's analysis of the results.

Results

The Team received 614 responses (approximately 31% response rate) to this survey. The survey included seven questions that related to the OMB Circular A-11 Section 280 customer experience drivers. The questions were scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The question that received the **highest average score** was related to overall **satisfaction** (Q: I am satisfied with the service I received from the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) related to my **oxygen equipment and/or accessories** request). The **lowest average score** by question was received on the question related to **efficiency** (Q: It took a reasonable amount of time to receive a decision on my request for oxygen equipment and/or accessories).

Open response comment analysis (pain points and bright spots) aligned with the results from the driver questions. There were 164 bright spots and 122 pain points reported. The most-positive comment theme was satisfaction with the durable medical equipment, followed by satisfaction with the overall experience. The most-negative comment theme was related to efficiency/timeliness followed by issues with the durable medical equipment.

Recommendations

OCXU developed four recommendations as a result of this survey and its analysis. These include developing and/or disseminating existing educational materials for both the medical benefit claims process and the OWP Fee Schedule, monitoring processing timeframes for medical benefits claims, and sharing information/survey results with the OWCP Division of Administrative Operations.

Report: July 2023 Customer Experience Survey Results and Recommendations

Purpose

To present the analysis of the July 2023 Customer Experience (CX) Survey, discuss results, and propose recommendations for programmatic improvement.

Background

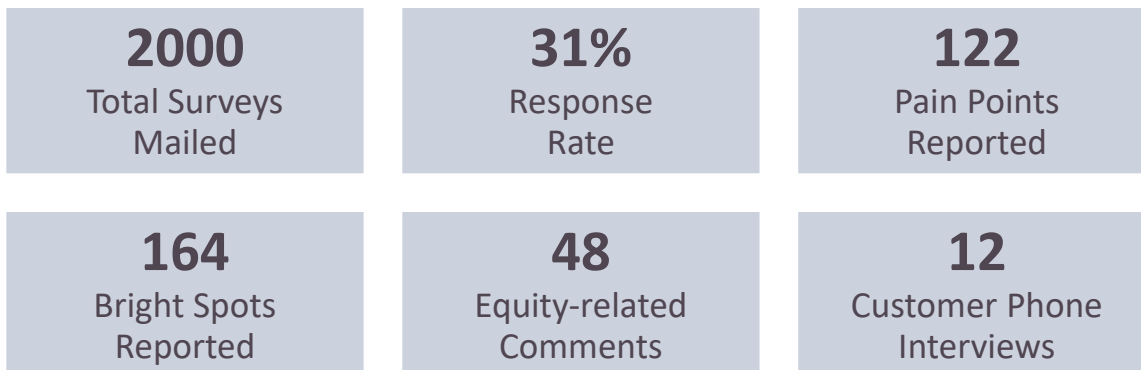
In Fiscal Year 2019, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) designated the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) to report on OWCP's behalf as a High Impact Service Provider (HISP) due to the importance of the services that DEEOIC provides. HISPs are required to adhere to OMB Circular A-11 Section 280, "Managing Customer Experience and Service Delivery," incorporating the principles of customer experience into their organizations and ensuring that customer experience practices are integrated into program delivery.

To reinforce its commitment to its stakeholders, DEEOIC employs an Outreach and Customer Experience Unit (OCXU) within the Branch of Outreach and Technical Assistance (BOTA). This team has dedicated customer experience staff that work to solicit feedback from stakeholders, conduct analyses of data, and make data-driven recommendations for programmatic and procedural improvements. The CX staff regularly develop surveys and methodologies for collecting relevant customer feedback at different points in time ("touchpoints") throughout the customer's journey with DEEOIC. As part of its paper survey initiative, the current survey was developed to gather feedback on claimants' experiences when requesting approval for oxygen and/or accessories. Similar to the previous collections, this survey package included an Equity Assessment in response to the January 2021 "Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government." The data gathered from the Equity Assessment helps identify potential areas for improvement and better understand the unique challenges that DEEOIC stakeholders may face.

Survey Population

The survey was mailed to 2,000 DEEOIC claimants who filed a claim for durable medical equipment, specifically oxygen equipment and/or accessories between April 2022 and March 2023.

Survey Results



Survey Instrument

U.S. Department of Labor
**DEEOIC CUSTOMER
 EXPERIENCE SURVEY**

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
 Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation
 200 Constitution Ave, NW, Room C-3510
 Washington, D.C. 20210



Over

The OMB control number for this collection is 1225-0093 and expires on 02/29/2024. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person is required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. We estimate it takes about 5 minutes to complete this collection of information, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the collection of information. Please send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information to the U.S. Department of Labor, DEEOIC, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room C-3510, Washington, D.C. 20210 and reference OMB Control Number 1225-0093. **Note: Please do not return the completed form to this address.**

Please agree or disagree with the following statements by circling a response:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
I am satisfied with the service I received from the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) related to my oxygen equipment and/or accessories request.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
The process leading up to receiving a decision on my oxygen equipment and/or accessories request increased my trust in DEEOIC.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
I have been able to get my questions about oxygen equipment and/or accessories requests answered.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
It was easy to complete what I needed to do to receive a decision on my request for oxygen equipment and/or accessories.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
It took a reasonable amount of time to receive a decision on my request for oxygen equipment and/or accessories.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
I understood what was being asked of me throughout the process of requesting oxygen equipment and/or accessories	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
The DEEOIC employees I interacted with during my oxygen equipment and/or accessories request were helpful.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
I feel comfortable talking with DEEOIC representatives about the unique issues I face.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
I am treated fairly by DEEOIC representatives.	5	4	3	2	1	n/a
All medical expenses are subject to the OWCP Fee Schedule, including those out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred by you. Were you aware of the OWCP Fee Schedule before taking this survey?	Yes	No	Open the camera application on your mobile device, and then bring this QR code into view. You will have the option to click the link which will bring you to the DEEOIC CX website.			
Would you like the option to access educational materials and handouts by scanning a QR (Quick Response) code on your mobile device? (Scan the code on the right to be directed to the Customer Experience page of the DEEOIC website)	Yes	No				

Would you like to speak with our Customer Experience Team regarding your experience filing your request for oxygen equipment and/or accessories? Yes No

If yes, please provide your name and telephone number. Please note that you will be receiving a call from a representative who will ask for your feedback on the process but cannot speak to specific details about your case.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

OMB Control Number: 1225-0093
 Expiration Date: 02/29/2024

U.S. Department of Labor

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
 Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation
 200 Constitution Ave, NW, Room C-3510
 Washington, D.C. 20210



When considering your oxygen equipment and/or accessories request experience from start to finish, please list or describe the "pain points" and "bright spots" of your experience. (A *pain point* is interaction or step in the process that caused a problem, frustration, or resulted in a negative experience. A *bright spot* is an interaction or step in the process that went smoothly, or resulted in a positive experience.)

Pain Points: _____

Bright Spots: _____

EQUITY ASSESSMENT

Creating equity in our program means recognizing that different people have different circumstances. Some people face conditions and circumstances that make it more difficult to achieve the same goals.

"Equity data" describes aspects of your personal identity. DEEOIC does not collect this type of data, however we want to know if you feel like your own personal circumstances have made it difficult for you to navigate this program.

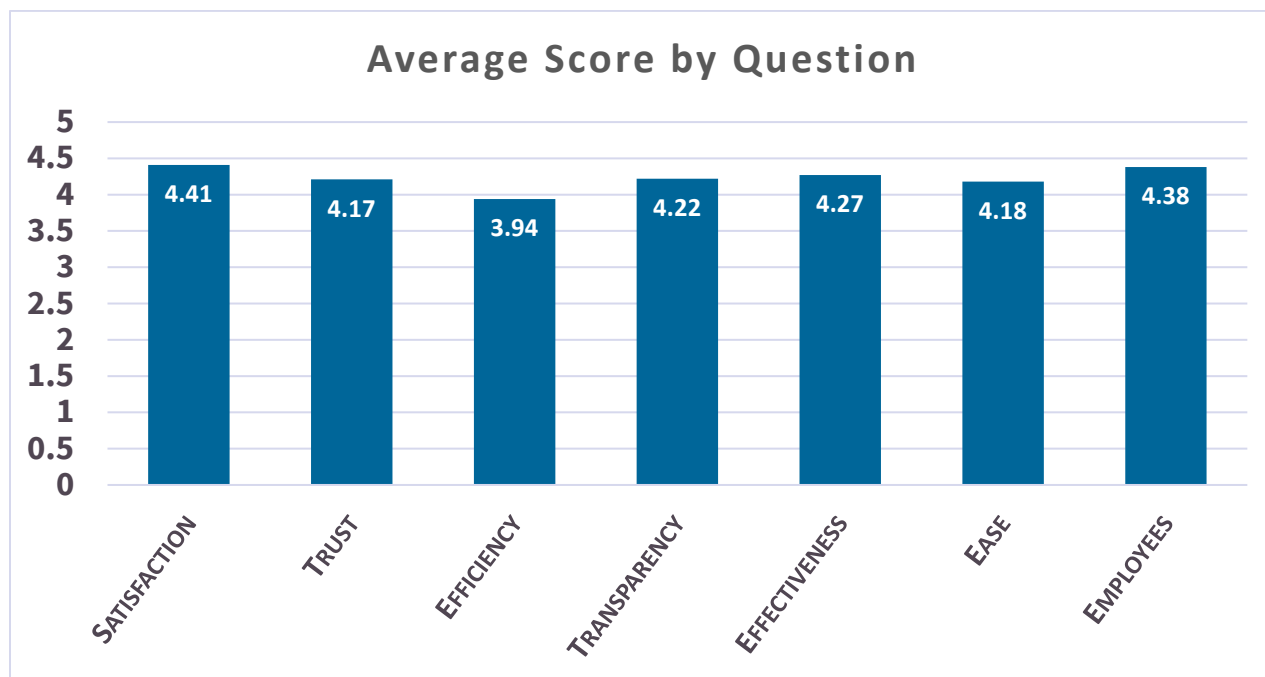
OWCP/DEEOIC is committed to finding ways to focus on equity for all, including people who have been historically marginalized or adversely affected by inequality. We strive to best serve all our customers, including racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, rural communities, and other underserved populations. We want to improve program accessibility and inclusion.

Keeping the above information in mind, please indicate if you've experienced challenges with our program because of your:

Ability or disability status	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racial or ethnic identity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex/Gender identity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Veteran status	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social class	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geographic location (rural/remote)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Based on your selection(s) to the left, how can DEEOIC better address your specific needs?

OMB Control Number: 1225-0093
 Expiration Date: 02/29/2024



The survey included seven questions that related to the Customer Experience Drivers outlined in A-11 Section 280. The questions were scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scores were analyzed and averages are presented in the chart to the right.

The question that received the **highest average score**, 4.41 out of 5, was related to overall **satisfaction** (Q: I am satisfied with the service I received from the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) related to my **oxygen equipment and/or accessories** request). The question that received the second highest average score, 4.38 out of 5, was related to **employees** (Q: The DEEOIC employees I interacted with during my oxygen and/or accessories request were helpful).

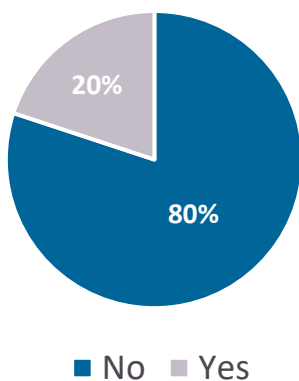
Only one question received an average score under 4. The **lowest average score** by question, 3.94 out of 5, was received on the question related to **efficiency** (Q: It took a reasonable amount of time to receive a decision on my request for oxygen equipment and/or accessories). The second lowest average score, 4.17 out of 5, was received on the question related to **Trust** (Q: The process leading up to receiving a decision on my oxygen equipment and/or accessories request increased my trust in DEEOIC).

Following the 7 questions related to Customer Experience drivers, there were 4 additional questions on the first page of the survey. Two of these questions related to equity and are discussed in the equity section of this report. The last two questions were yes/no and results are shown in the pie charts on the next page.

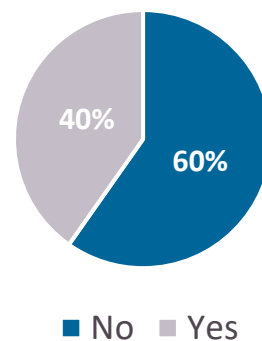
The first question was developed in collaboration with the DEEOIC Branch of Medical Benefits to determine whether DEEOIC stakeholders are aware that all medical expenses are subject to the OWCP Fee Schedule, including out-of-pocket medical expenses, which is pertinent to the topic of this survey. The Fee Schedule is set and managed by OWCP and applies to a number of programs, and DEEOIC was interested in finding out whether claimants were aware of this. 60% of respondents indicated they were not aware of this fact prior to completing this survey.

The second question was developed to determine whether DEEOIC stakeholders would like the option to access educational materials and handouts on a mobile device by using a (QR) Quick Response code. A sample QR code was included on the survey with instructions on how to use it. 80% of respondents indicated that they are not interested in this option.

Would you like the option to access educational materials and handouts by scanning a QR (Quick Response) Code on your mobile device?



All medical expenses are subject to the OWCP Fee Schedule, including those out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred by you. Were you aware of the OWCP Fee Schedule before taking this survey?



Pain Points and Bright Spots

The second page of this survey provided space for customers to list and/or describe “**pain points**” and “**bright spots**” related to their experience applying for oxygen equipment and/or accessories. The CX Team read each pain point, bright spot, and comment and tagged and grouped all responses by theme. Some comments were categorized into more than one theme if the respondent mentioned several different topics.

96 people provided pain points, with 122 total pain points mentioned. The table below shows the numbers of pain points related to each category as well as the percentage of overall commenters. The most frequently mentioned pain point was related to **timeliness/slow process (48%)**. Timeliness and efficiency have been frequently mentioned as pain points or in the open comments sections on several previous surveys. These issues are also reflected in the CX driver question scores, as the Efficiency driver question received the lowest score (3.94) on this survey. Other common pain points included **issues with equipment (24%)** and the **process being too complicated (20%)**.

Pain Point	Count	% Commenters
Timeliness/Slow Process	46	48%
Issues with equipment	23	24%
Process too complicated	19	20%
Unhappy with benefits/inadequate coverage	14	15%
DEEOIC employees/customer service/communication	10	10%
Difficulties due to illness	7	7%
Program comprehension	2	2%
Lack of access to computer/smartphone	1	1%

Notably, more survey respondents provided feedback on bright spots that they encountered during this process. 150 people provided bright spots, with 164 total bright spots mentioned. The table below shows the numbers of comments related to each category as well as the percentage of overall commenters. Commenters most frequently mentioned being **happy with the equipment and/or the equipment arriving quickly (49%)**. Other popular bright spots included a **generally positive experience/being happy with approval (31%)**, and a **positive experience with DEEOIC employees/good customer service (16%)**.

Bright Spot	Count	% Commenters
Happy with equipment and/or equipment arrived quickly	73	49%
Generally positive experience/happy with approval	46	31%
DEEOIC employees/customer service	24	16%
Easy/smooth/efficient process	21	14%

While survey recipients were asked to describe pain points and bright spots specifically about the experience with DEEOIC with requesting oxygen equipment and/or accessories, many respondents instead commented on the actual equipment, which is outside the purview of DEEOIC. In the future, OXCU will specify that bright spots and pain points should focus on the DEEOIC process and not the equipment, in order to garner more actionable feedback.

Phone Interview Analysis

As part of the survey, claimants had the opportunity to provide their name if they wanted to share additional feedback on the process of filing a claim for oxygen equipment and/or accessories and their personal experience with the CX staff. 32 survey respondents requested a call. The CX staff called all 32, connecting with 12 of those and leaving voicemails or callback information for the rest.

The conversations were primarily focused on the claimant identifying bright spots or pain points throughout the process of filing for oxygen equipment and/or accessories. Comments were grouped together by category which is shown in the table below.

Pain Points	Number	Percentage
Need better benefits/equipment	4	33%
Difficult process	3	25%
Lack of Communication	3	25%
Inefficiency/timeliness	2	17%

Bright Spots	Number	Percentage
Efficiency/timeliness	6	50%
Gratitude for benefits	2	17%
Good communication	2	17%

Pain Points:

- The most common pain point was the ***need for better benefits/equipment*** during the DME claims process. During the interviews, 33% of the respondents expressed concern about what they identified being a problem with their equipment and/or the benefits they received were not sufficient to adequately treat their condition.
- In addition, claimants were frustrated by the lack of communication and difficulty of the process. Three claimants noted that they experienced extended delays during the process, stating there were months of silence between communications.

Bright Spots:

- The most common bright spot that was identified was the ***efficiency*** of the process for filing for oxygen equipment and/or accessories. Six of the twelve respondents believed the claims process was speedy and that they received their benefits in a timely manner.

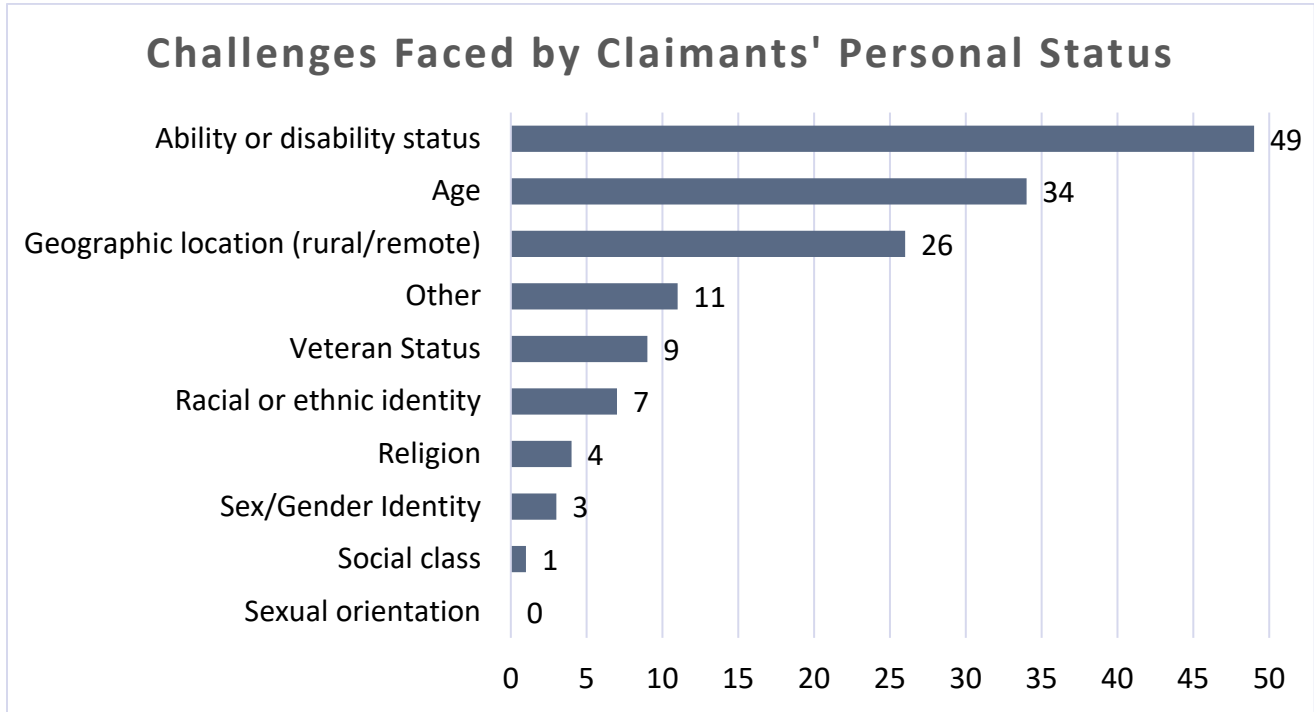
It is important to call attention to the fact that the most common bright spot identified through the phone interviews was the efficiency of the process for filing for oxygen equipment and/or accessories. Half of the respondents were pleased with the speed in which they received their benefits. The most common pain point identified through the phone calls was the need for better benefits/equipment. Claimants were dissatisfied with the equipment they received and/or with the amount of aid that was provided. While compensation and benefits are provided in accordance with the statute, it has been identified as an area of complaint in several of the interviews that DEEOIC has conducted. It is also worth noting that the phone interviews are only a small sample of the number of surveys responses that were received. On the returned paper surveys, 48% of respondents who identified a “pain point” indicated that they were dissatisfied with the timeliness of the process. While it may seem unusual, this shows that the experience filing for durable medical equipment can vary substantially from claimant to claimant (or the perception of the experience may vary from claimant to claimant) – especially when talking to such a small sample of respondents. When compared to the scores from the rest of the survey, 72 (11%) survey respondents scored the efficiency question as a 1 (strongly disagree) or a 2 (disagree) whereas 436 (71%) of survey respondents scored the efficiency question as a 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree). Additionally, it is important to note that the efficiency question did receive the highest number of 1 scores, 31, more than double the number of 1 scores for the transparency (12), ease (13), and effectiveness (15). Based on this, it does appear that efficiency, while scored highly by most, is one of the more common perceived pain points for claimants.

Equity Assessment Results

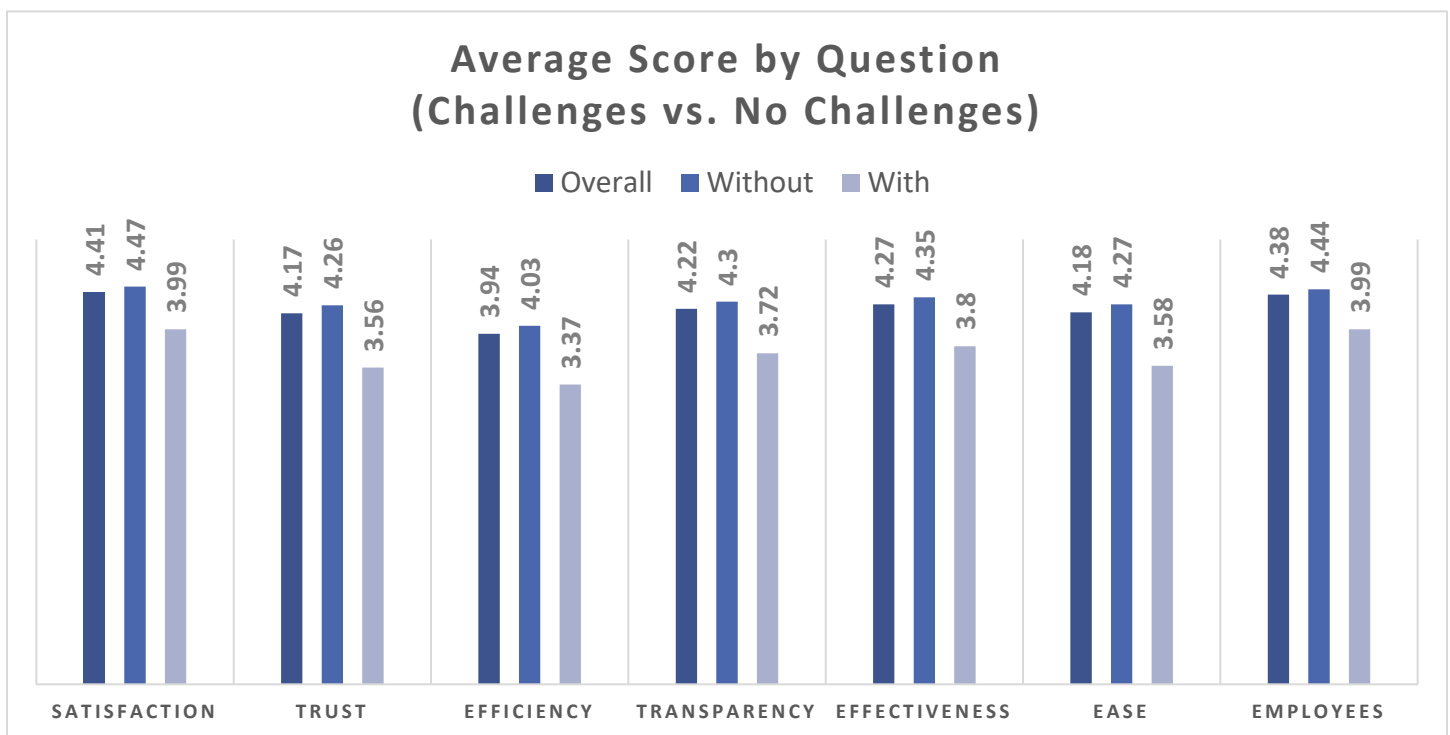
The Equity Assessment was comprised of three components. The first component asked the claimant to indicate whether they had experienced challenges in their interactions with DEEOIC because of their:

Ability or disability status, Racial or ethnic identity, Age, Sex/Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Veteran Status, Religion, Social class, Geographic location (remote/rural), Other

Of the 614 surveys received, 81 respondents (12%) checked one or more boxes in this section. The most identified categories were ***ability/disability status***, followed by ***age***, and ***geographic location***. Results are shown on the next page.



It is worth noting that when comparing the overall survey scores of respondents that marked at least one challenge checkbox versus respondents that did not feel that they encountered challenges due to any of these reasons, the scores were lower across the board for those that indicated they had experienced challenges. The largest disparities were identified among the questions related to **ease** with a .7 point difference.



The second component of the equity assessment was an open-ended question that allowed claimants who identified challenges in the previous section to provide suggestions for how DEEOIC can better address their specific needs. 48 respondents provided relevant feedback for this question. It is important to note that 161 respondents wrote comments in this section, but the large majority (113 of 161) indicated they were satisfied with their experience filing for oxygen equipment and/or accessories, they had no suggestions, or they made comments about their experience that were unrelated to equity.

Comment/Suggestion Theme	Count
Timeliness/Shorten processing times	19
More communication	11
Issues with being located in a rural area	9
Need more assistance	4
Help with navigating website	3
More compassion	3

The last component included the two questions shown on the table below. The average score for all these questions was high, over 4.0.

Equity Assessment Questions	Average Score
I feel comfortable talking with DEEOIC representatives about the unique issues I face.	4.35
I am treated fairly by DEEOIC representatives.	4.40

Based on these results, there appear to be no widespread equity issues facing DEEOIC claimants. The largest equity-related challenge selected by respondents was ability/disability status, with 7% of survey respondents stating this was a concern. Given the nature of DEEOIC claimants, this result is consistent with the population that we serve since employee claimants receive benefits because of injury or illness on the job. The Team will continue to include an equity assessment on future surveys, reviewing and redesigning the questions periodically to ensure useful information is being collected. Other methods of obtaining equity information are being discussed for future use.

Recommendations

The responses from the survey did not highlight any areas of significant concern in the process for filing for approval for oxygen equipment and/or accessories. The primary concern was with efficiency and timeliness, as indicated by both the lowest score of the CX driver questions (3.94 on the question related to efficiency) and the top pain point (48% of commenters mentioning timeliness/slow process as a pain point). Additionally, 60% of respondents indicated they were not previously aware of the OWCP Fee Schedule.

There are three Customer Experience Drivers outlined in OMB Circular A-11 Section 280, each of which have associated sub-drivers, shown below. As mentioned above, the sub-driver in which DEEOIC received the lowest average rating was “Efficiency/Speed.” The Team has developed recommendations based on these ratings as well as the results of the comment and phone interview analysis.

CX Driver Sub-drivers

- Service Quality** • Service Effectiveness/Perception of Value
- Process** • Ease/Simplicity • Efficiency/Speed • Equity/Transparency
- People** • Employee Interaction/Warmth/Helpfulness/Competence

Process Driver, Efficiency/Speed Sub-driver

Lowest rating (3.94) on numerical score questions and 48% of commenters mention efficiency

1. Customer Education

We recommend developing additional materials (infographic or brochure) about the medical benefit claims process that explains the process, including the approximate length of time for each step. Additionally, OXU developed an Ancillary Medical Benefits Journey Map in FY23 (which was not released at the time of this survey). We recommend publicizing this Journey Map (which will be posted on the DEEOIC website) and consider including a printed version in mailed correspondence to claimants.

2. Monitor Timeframes

The DEEOIC Branch of Medical Benefits made several system and process improvements in FY23 and also hired additional staff including 2 new units and supervisory positions. These changes are expected to have a positive impact on timeliness. OXU recommends monitoring claims processing times and comparing processing times for FY23 to FY24, and then re-evaluating if improvements are not seen.

Process Driver, Easy/Simplicity and Equity/Transparency Sub-drivers

60% of respondents were previously unaware of the OWCP Fee Schedule

3. Customer Education

We recommend better educating DEEOIC stakeholders about the OWCP Fee Schedule. We recommend that the DEEOIC Branch of Medical Benefits include existing or newly developed educational materials in mailed correspondence to claimants.

4. Information sharing with OWCP Division of Administrative Operations

The OWCP Fee Schedule is maintained by the Division of Administrative Operations (DAO). OXU plans to share the survey responses related to the fee schedule with DAO since they are the owners of that information. OXU is willing to work with DAO to develop ideas to promote the fee schedule and make it more easily accessible to OWCP stakeholders.

Random Sample of Comments:

- Everything went smooth from start to finish
- Getting the process going was confusing and a little difficult
- It took a very long time to get approval
- Everything was explained to me in simple terms and I can use it ok. Thank you
- Poor communication several weeks to months return call after leaving several messages
- All my request were approved in a very timely manner. The whole process was a bright spot
- It seems the process took longer than before and for some reason the first request was denied
- I can now sleep all night without coughing and struggling to breath while laying down
- Claims examiners never seem to be available, I need oxygen to survive there should not be an ongoing process to constantly prove I need equipment
- I am doing better with the oxygen equipment I feel grateful and thankful
- Process takes forever & causes patient anxiety and physical problems
- Receiving all the oxygen equipment and accessories so quick and smooth. The representative was very helpful and very nice. I felt like she cared and again was very helpful.
- Tired of explaining and getting equipment that don't fit
- I was always taken care of