

Maine Newborn Hearing Screening Needs Assessment

Rosie Hoffman



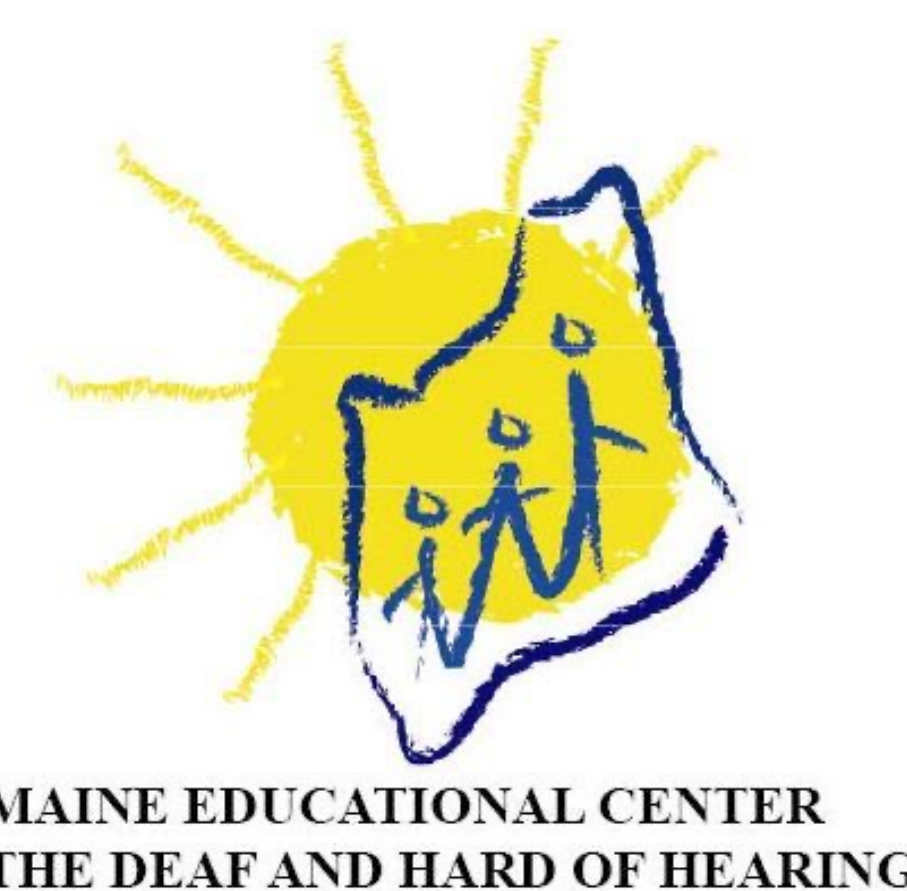
NH-ME LEND
PROGRAM

Introductions

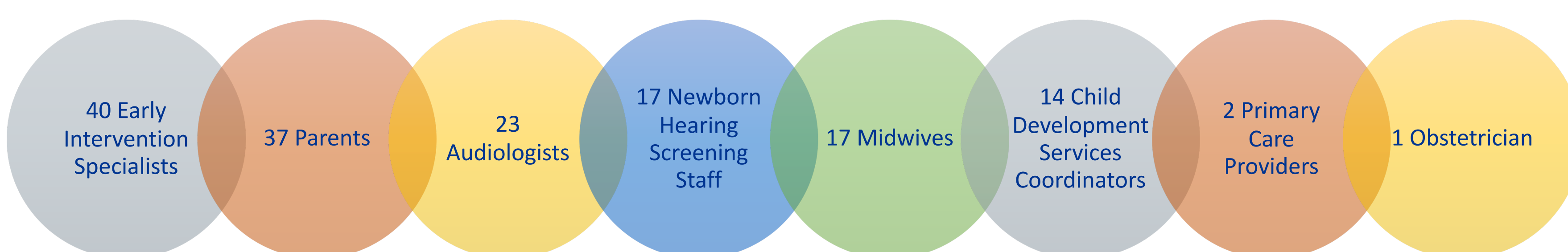
Ideally, children's hearing should be screened in their first month of life, diagnosed as deaf or hard of hearing by three months of age, and enrolled in Early Intervention by six months. In 2018, one third of newborns who referred for further testing never received follow up testing or care.¹ To assess the potential gaps in reaching these goals, the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH) with assistance from Crescendo Consulting Group embarked on an assessment of needs related to the newborn hearing screening and Early Intervention for deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. This process was funded by a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant in support of Maine's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program.

Methods

- Survey development and distribution
- 18 qualitative interviews
- 195 surveys returned and analyzed²
- 6 discussion groups
- Needs prioritization with stakeholder group



Community Survey Participants³

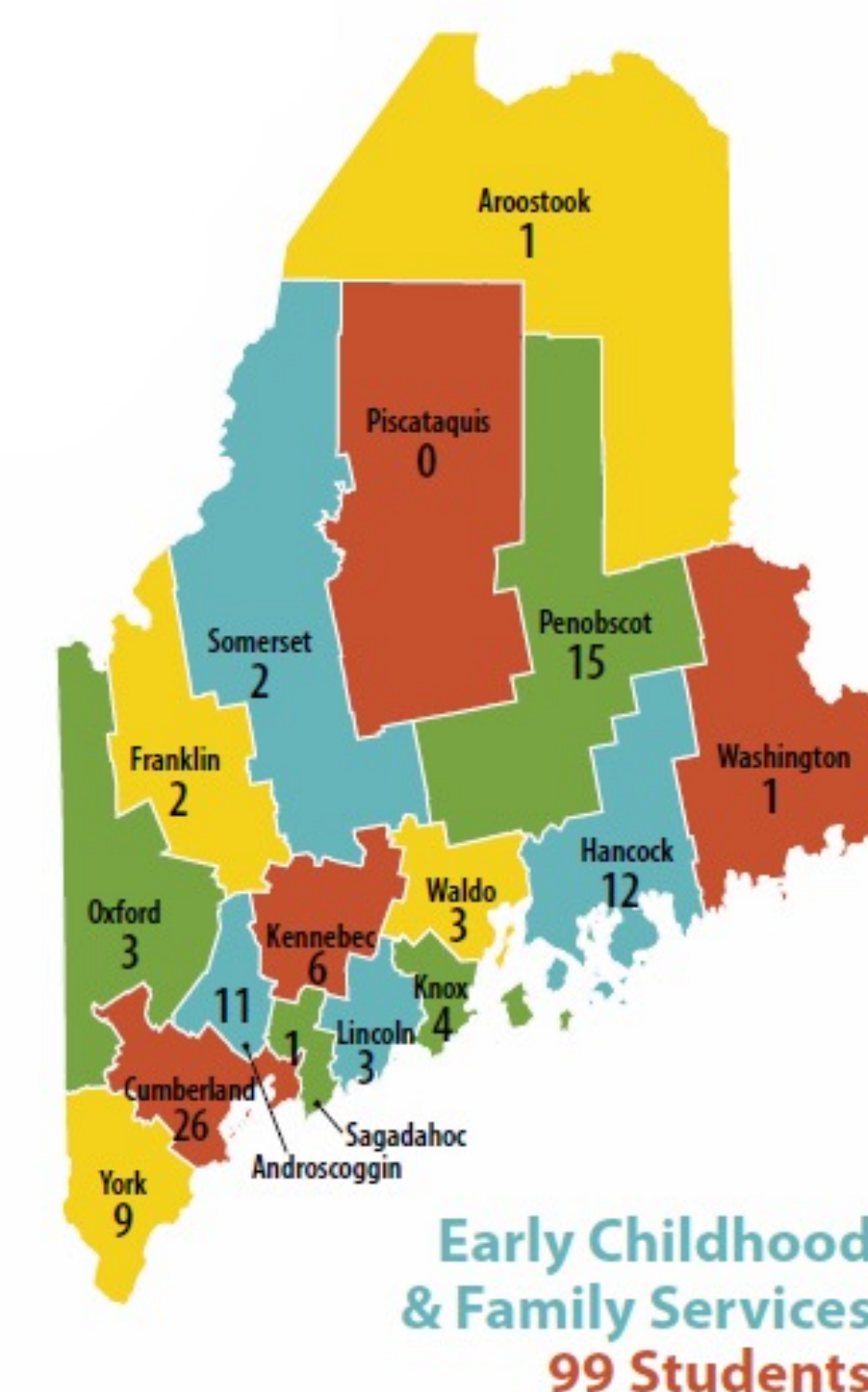


Stakeholder Geographic Distribution⁴

Aroostook	Bangor	Augusta	Portland	York
3	6	6	6	3

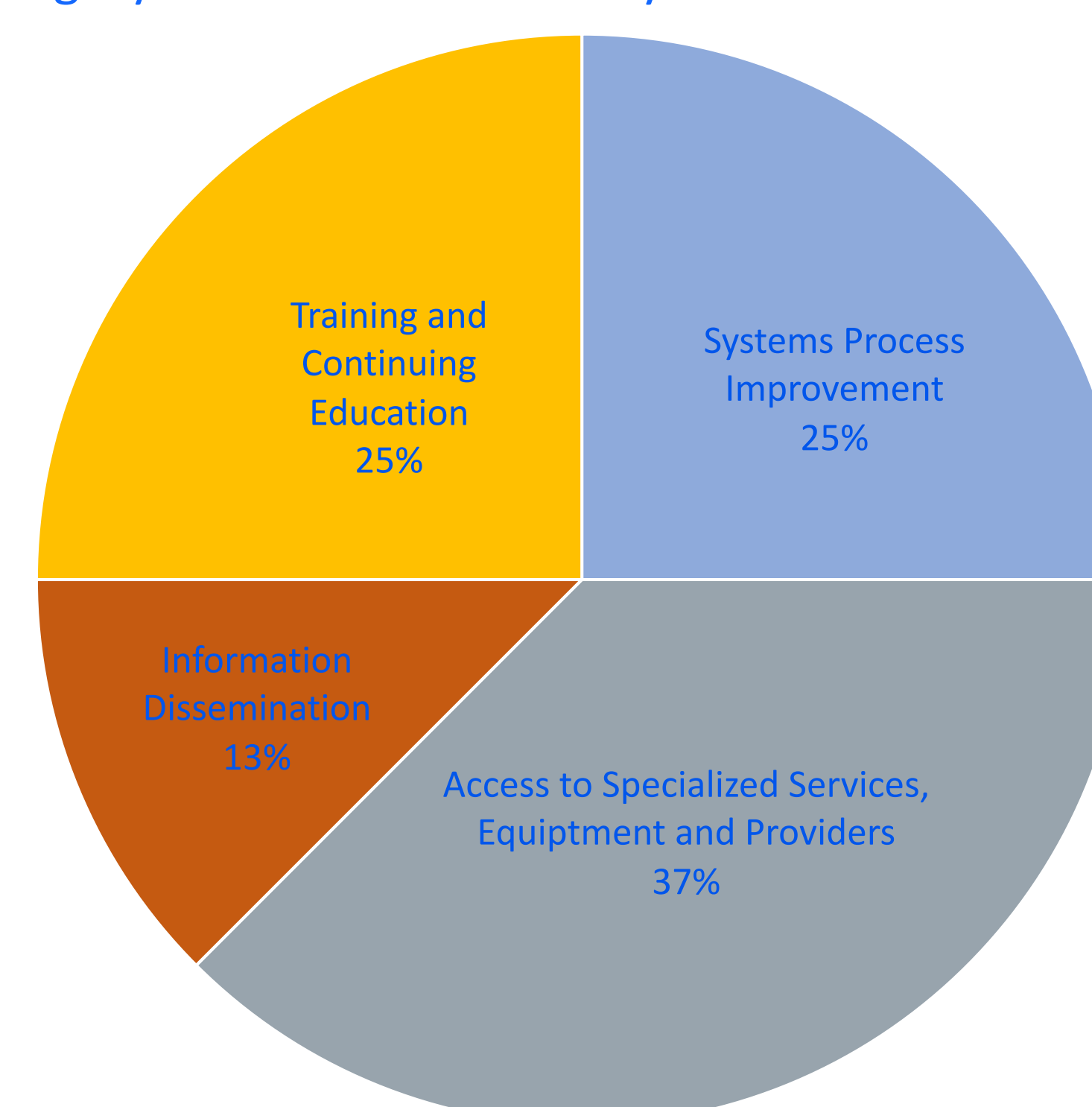
Data Analysis

Children served by MECDHH in Early Childhood and Family Services 2019⁵

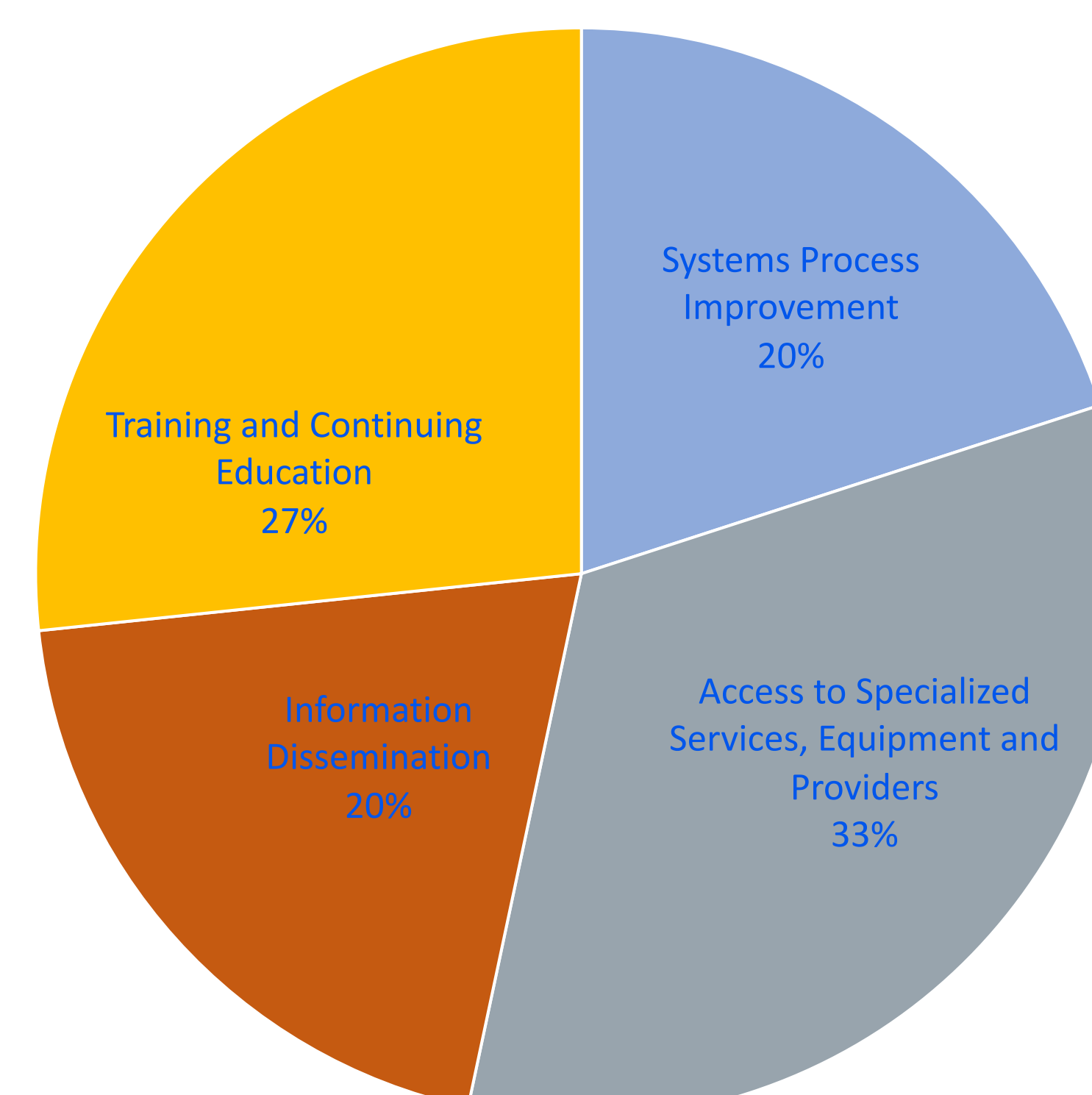


Results

Category of Needs Identified by Stakeholder Interviews⁶



Category of Needs Identified in Community Survey⁷



Conclusions

Fifteen distinct needs were identified by the community survey, discussion groups and one-on-one interviews. Four categories of needs emerged: access to specialized service, equipment & providers, information dissemination, training & continuing education, and systems process improvement. Some needs can be met through government programs, others fall under the purview of community organizations, and a few were already in the process of being addressed by MECDHH and its partners. The data collected will help guide policy moving forward.

High Priority Needs Identified⁸

Access to Specialized Services, Equipment and Providers

- Increased access to newborn hearing screening equipment and/or secondary machine for small community hospitals
- Increased access to newborn hearing screening equipment for midwives
- Increased access to specialized services and providers in rural and urban areas
- Increased access to technology and internet for families

Information Dissemination

- Improved and updated information on all services and providers available for deaf and hard of hearing children for providers
- Improved and updated information on all services and providers available for deaf and hard of hearing children for families
- Improved socialization opportunities for families and deaf and hard of hearing children during the COVID-19 pandemic

Training and Continuing Education

- Increased access to continuing education on risk factors for hearing loss
- Standardized training for primary care providers and OB/GYNs on the newborn hearing screening process across the state
- Standardized training for newborn hearing screening providers on the newborn hearing screening across the state
- Improved cultural sensitivity training for state agencies and community organizations that work with families with a deaf or hard of hearing child(ren)

Systems Process Improvement

- Creation of a single point of contact for families during the newborn hearing screening through early intervention enrollment process (i.e., case management)
- Improved system for obtaining all records from audiologists and other providers for early intervention enrollment
- Improved follow-up system to ensure PCPs receive updates from CDS about early intervention enrollment status

References

- 1 Maine Department of Health and Human Services. (2020, February 1). *Newborn hearing screening in maine* [Press release]. <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/mch/cshn/documents/pdf/Maine-Newborn-Hearing-Data-Brief-2018.pdf>
- 2-8 Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, & Crescendo Consulting Group (2021). *Maine educational center for the deaf and hard of hearing 2021 community needs assessment*. Manuscript in preparation.