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# HANC Collaborator Survey: Spring 2009

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## Introduction

The Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC) conducted an online survey of its 600 collaborators in April 2009. We had over 200 respondents. This survey is part of an ongoing evaluation process at HANC to assess the efficacy of our efforts to facilitate cross-network and trans-institute coordination and communication to achieve a more efficient research enterprise. The following is an executive summary of this survey and the detailed results.

## Executive Summary

HANC collaborators are members of HANC-facilitated work groups and other people who have access to certain areas of the HANC portal. HANC collaborators include individuals within the network leadership, core or operations centers, laboratories and statistical and data management centers. Additionally, some site investigators and other staff are members of some of the HANC work groups. Members of DAIDS and other institutes that sponsor network research activities are also HANC collaborators.

About a third of HANC collaborators responded to a survey designed to gather data concerning HANC’s cross-network coordination and collaboration activities and the performance of the HANC staff and portal to facilitate those activities. A broad spectrum of members of HANC work groups and other collaborators responded to the survey. Respondents identified their primary network affiliation as the ACTG 24%, IMPAACT 24%, HPTN 17%, HVTN 16%, MTN 13% and INSIGHT 6% (Figure 1). A wide range of primary role was identified by the participants (Figure 2) and 65% were members of a HANC-facilitated work group (Figure3). Some members of all of the HANC work groups responded to the survey (Figure 4).

The HANC survey collected information concerning cross-network communication and social networking. The purpose of these questions was to learn more about how people learned of HANC, how they interact with their counterparts at other networks, how often they contact them, HANC’s role in facilitating those interactions and how people would like to obtain information from and about HANC. Prior to becoming involved in a HANC work group, 27% of respondents contacted their counterparts at other networks one or more times per month compared to 38% after joining a HANC work group, and 29% never contacted a counterpart prior to joining a HANC work group versus 16% after joining a HANC work group (Figure 5,6). About half of work group members learned about HANC by a direct invitation to join a work group, 22% through conversation with colleagues, and 25% at a network meeting (Figure 7).

Reasons that counterparts at other networks were contacted included a balanced range of responses including sharing tools, discussing best practices, requesting assistance and collaboration (Figure 8). While only 21% of respondents knew all their counterparts at all the networks, an additional 45% know their counterparts at some of the other networks (Figure 9).

Cross-network information was acquired through a variety of sources including conversations with colleagues, the HANC portal and network communications (Figure 10). However, half of the respondents indicated they did not know enough about HANC activities taking place outside of their work group (Figure 11). People indicated that they preferred to learn about HANC activities from a wide variety of sources (Figure 12). The majority of people, 80%, indicated that general information about cross-network activities would be of use to them (Figure 13) and 84% indicated that information about another network’s experience with a project would be useful information (Figure 14). HANC will inform the work groups of these findings and determine which work groups would like to receive information about ongoing HANC activities in other work groups and how they would like to receive that information. HANC has also increased its presence at network meetings and been presenting at most of the annual network meetings.

The HANC survey also gauged the performance of HANC staff in facilitating the work of the HANC work groups as well as preferred methods for meeting and sharing of information. The following are the percentage ratings by area of performance of HANC, not including those who did not respond to the question or responded not applicable (Figure 15):

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
HANC has facilitated cross-network communication	0.5	2	10.8	38.7	17.2
HANC has facilitated cross-network harmonization of policies and procedures	1.5	3.4	24.5	26.5	9.8
HANC has facilitated cross-network sharing of information/materials	0.5	2	15.2	33.3	17.2

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
HANC has facilitated network communication with DAIDS representatives	0.5	3.9	20.1	29.4	9.8
HANC has facilitated trans-NIH institutes/centers communication	1.5	5.4	24.5	18.6	5.9
HANC has been responsive to requests to assist with cross-network and/or NIH cross-institute or center collaboration, communication or coordination efforts	0.5	2.9	18.6	26	13.2

The highest performance ratings were for HANC’s efforts to facilitate cross-network communication and sharing of information and materials; 56% agree or strongly agree, and 50% agree or strongly agree, respectively. Rated next highest were HANC’s efforts to facilitate network’s communication with DAIDS and responsiveness to requests to assist with coordination or collaboration. Cross-network harmonization of policies and facilitation of trans-institute/centers communication were rated the lowest; 36.3% agree or strongly agree, and 24.5% agree or strongly agree, respectively. We evaluated HANC’s performance ratings based on whether a person was affiliated with one or multiple networks and by HANC work group and no significant differences were noted (Figures 16, 17). However, members of HANC work groups consistently gave higher performance ratings than non-work group collaborators (Figure 18). HANC has increased its efforts to engage representatives from other NIH institutes/centers on work groups such as the newly formed Behavioral Sciences work group. HANC will continue to reach out to the other NIH institutes/centers and review work group membership.

The HANC survey asked people to rate HANC’s performance related to their facilitation of the HANC work group calls (Figure 19). All domains queried received ratings between 4 and 5, on a 5 point scale, for all the work groups. Members of HANC work groups rated HANC’s facilitation of work group calls between 4.48 and 4.55 in the various domains (Figure 20).

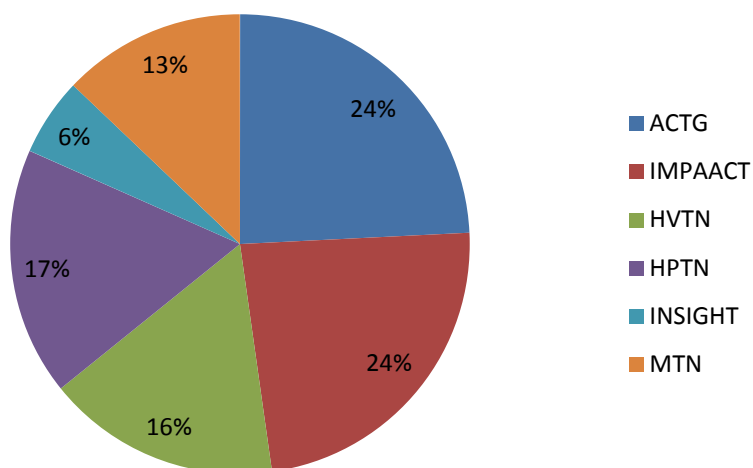
People were asked if they would prefer more frequent webinars for the work group calls (Figure 21). While only 13% said yes, 46% were not sure and only 25% said no. HANC has been using webinars more frequently in the past 6 months to share documents while on calls and will continue to explore their utility based on these responses. Significantly, 38% of people indicated that they would be able to more efficiently achieve their work group objectives if there were more opportunities for face-face meetings, 34% were not sure and only 12% said no (Figure 22). HANC will explore this possibility in more detail with the HANC work groups. Funding would have to be indentified though to support more frequent face-face meetings to achieve work group objectives.

Lastly, HANC asked people questions about their usage and features of the HANC public website and user portal. Only 5% of people visited the HANC website weekly or more often (Figure 23) and 27% of portal users visited the HANC portal weekly or more often (Figure 24). Most work groups have calls scheduled on a monthly basis. However, 65% of respondents felt that the HANC portal was a useful collaborative tool (Figure 25). The most useful features of the HANC portal included the announcements, call notices and minutes, document sharing and the calendars (Figure 26).

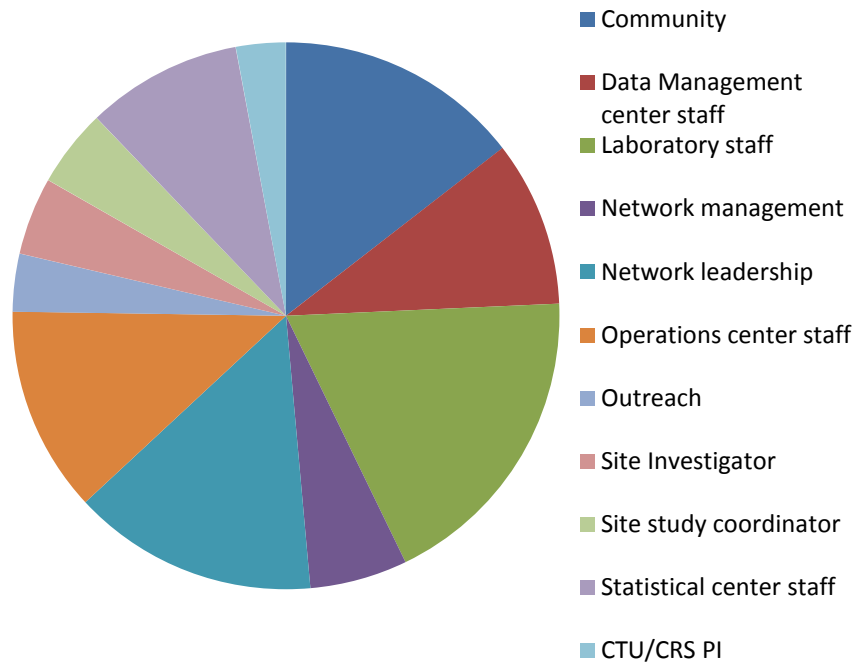
In summary, about a third of HANC’s collaborators responded to this detailed survey to provide HANC with valuable information. Respondents represented the diverse collaborators that work with HANC. Participation in a HANC work group resulted in more frequent contact with counterparts in other networks for a variety of reasons. People indicated that they would like to learn more about HANC’s coordination efforts in areas outside of the work group that they participate in and they preferred a variety of communications methods to learn about HANC’s other activities. HANC has not been as effective in facilitating trans-institute/center collaboration as it has in cross-network activities. There remain opportunities for improved collaboration and harmonization of policies in both domains. HANC collaborators stated that they could better achieve their work group objectives if there were more opportunities for face-face meetings. HANC will pursue this point and will investigate the feasibility of face-face meetings where appropriate, particularly when there are overlapping network meetings, as they did at May’s joint HPTN/IMPAACT meeting. HANC staff received very good ratings for their performance in their facilitation of work group calls and projects. While the usage of HANC’s portal and website was relatively infrequent, people did report it to be a useful collaborative tool and found a variety of portal features to be useful.

## Respondents to the HANC Collaborators Survey

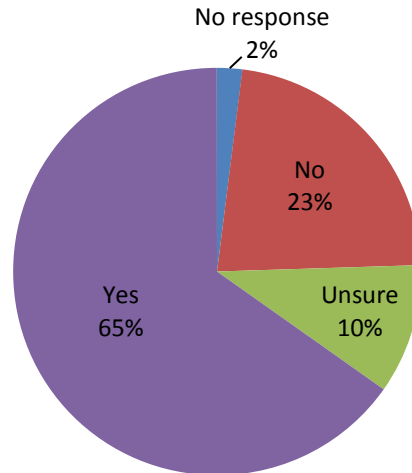
**Figure 1: Primary Network Affiliation**



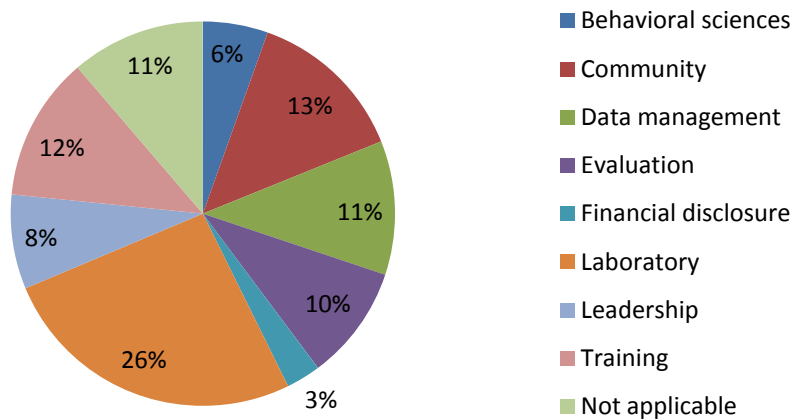
**Figure 2: Role of Respondent**



**Figure 3: Are you a member of a working group or committee coordinated by a HANC staff member?**

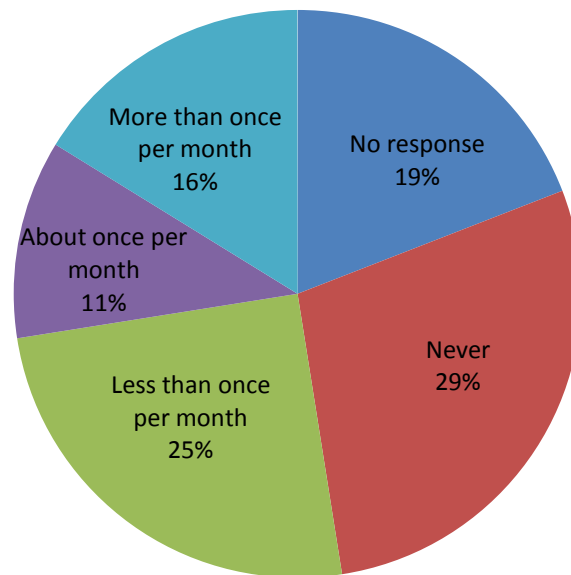


**Figure 4: Area of HANC-Facilitated Activity**

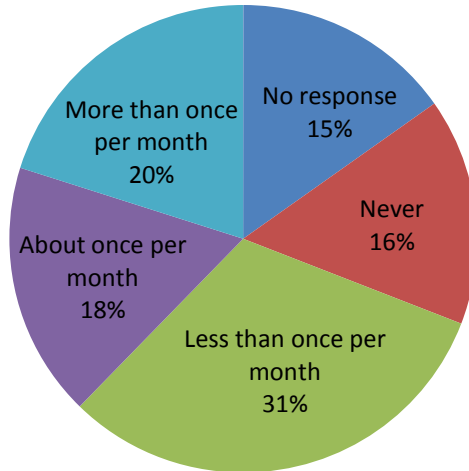


**Social Networking/Connections and Communications**

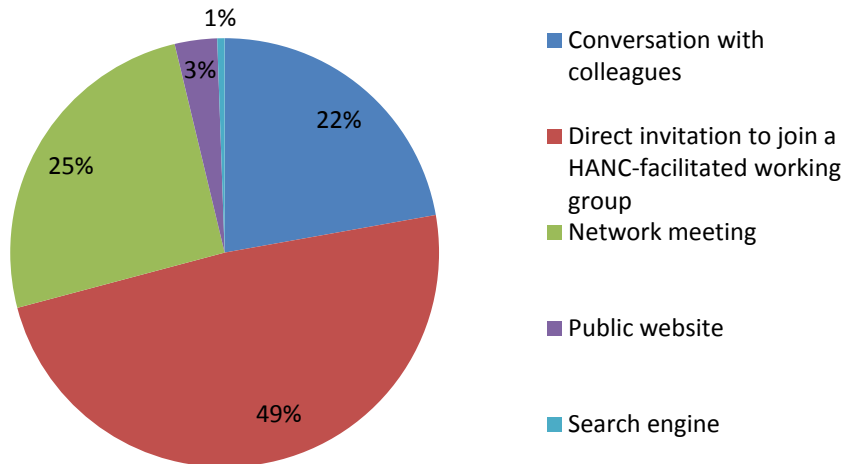
**Figure 5: How frequently did you contact your counterparts or work together prior to becoming involved in a HANC-facilitated cross-network activity?**



**Figure 6: How frequently do you contact or work together with your counterparts at the other networks/organizations?**

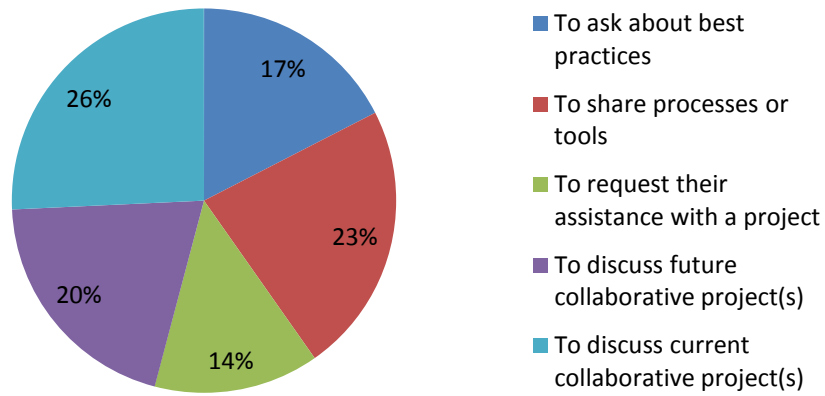


**Figure 7: How Collaborators Learned About HANC**

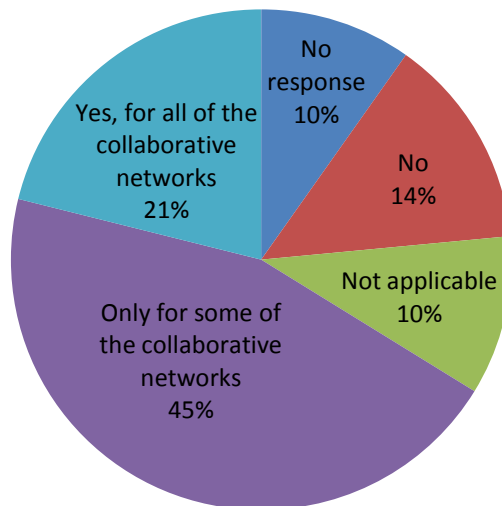




**Figure 8: Reasons for Contacting Counterparts**

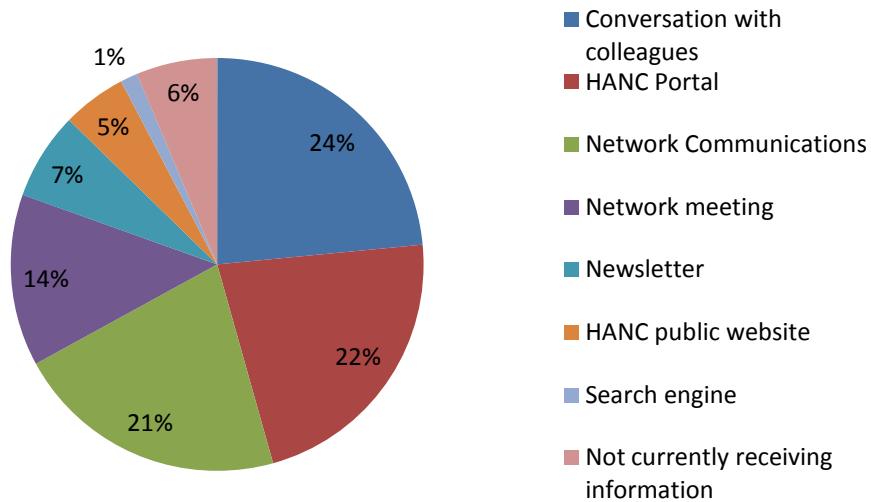


**Figure 9: Do you know who your counterparts are in each of the other networks/organizations?**

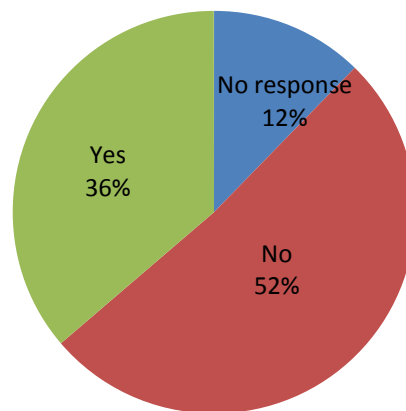


Sources of Cross-Network Information

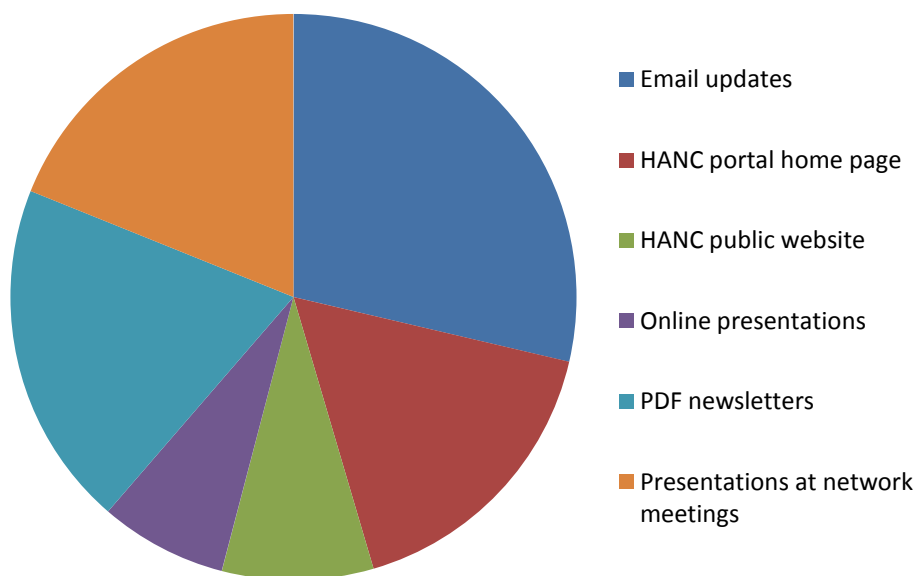
**Figure 10: Current Sources of Cross-Network Information**



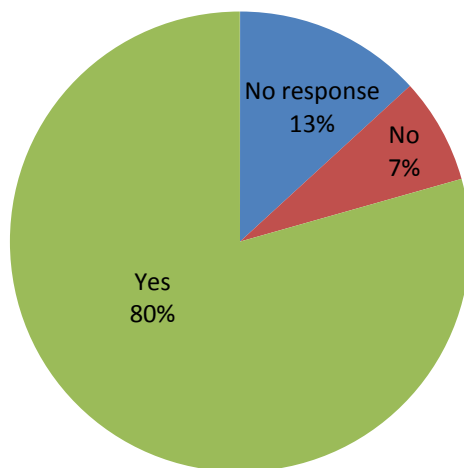
**Figure 11: Do you feel like you know enough about HANC activities taking place outside of your working group projects?**



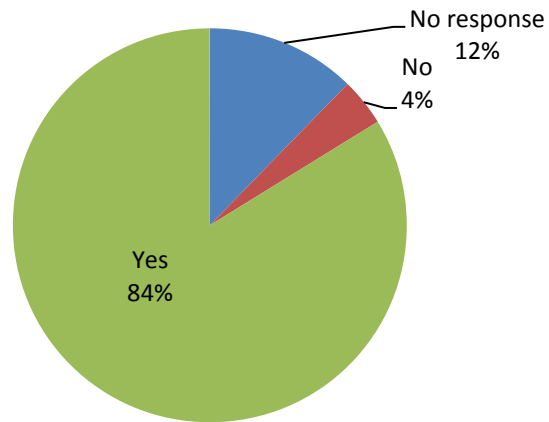
**Figure 12: How would you like to learn about other HANC activities?**



**Figure 13: Do you feel that general information about cross-network activities is useful to you?**

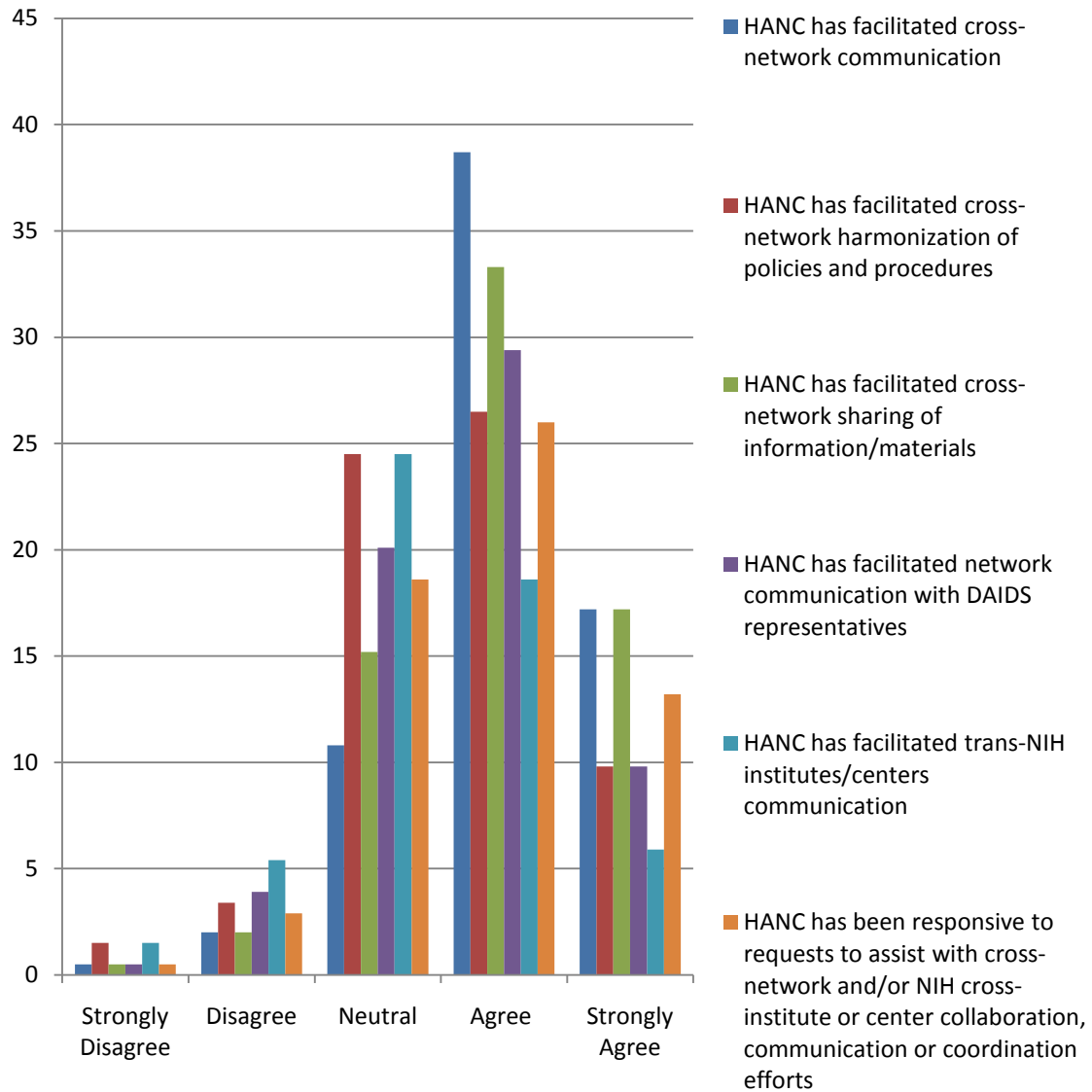


**Figure 14: Do you feel that information about another network's experience with a project is useful to you?**

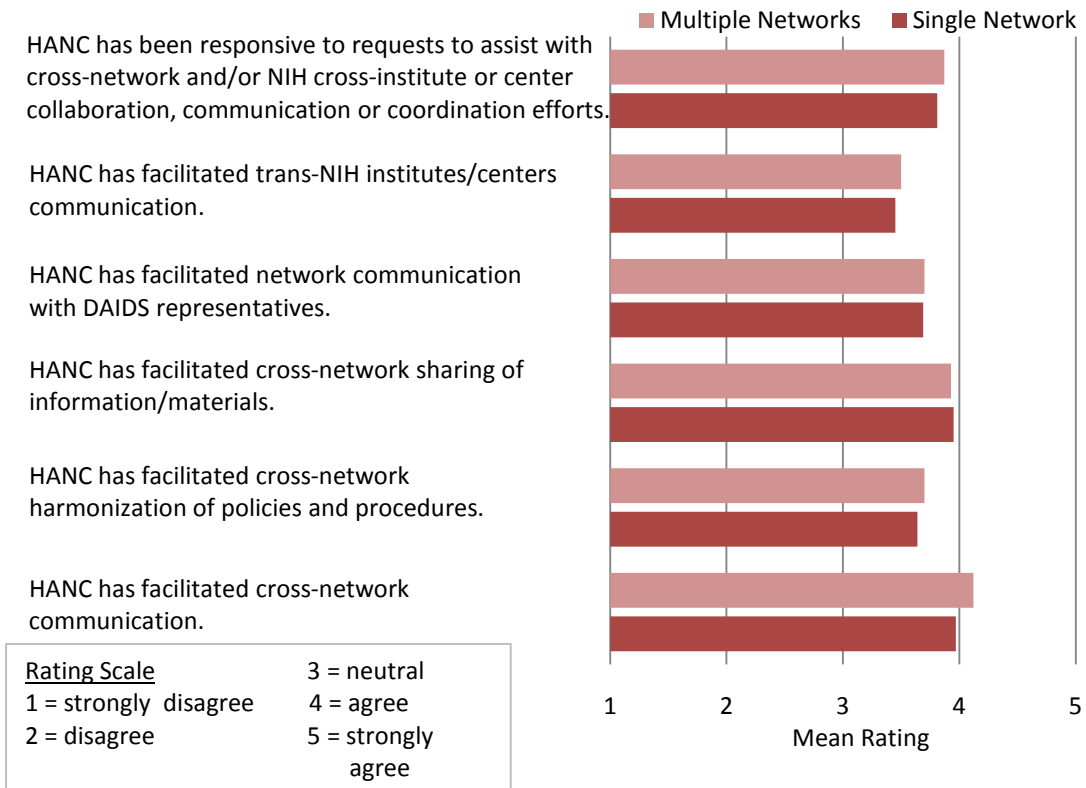


## HANC's Facilitation of Work Group Activities

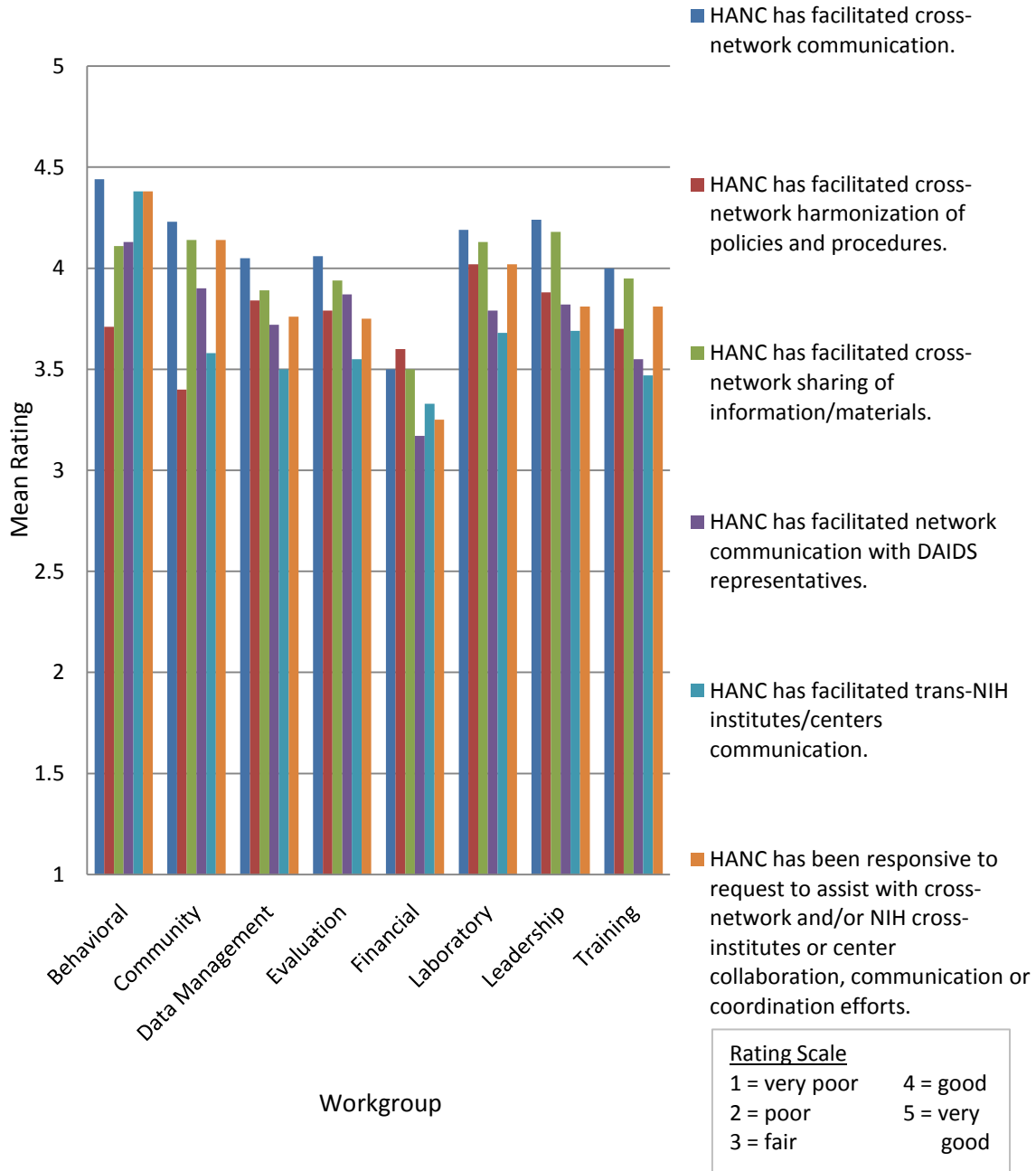
**Figure 15: HANC Performance Ratings by Percentage**



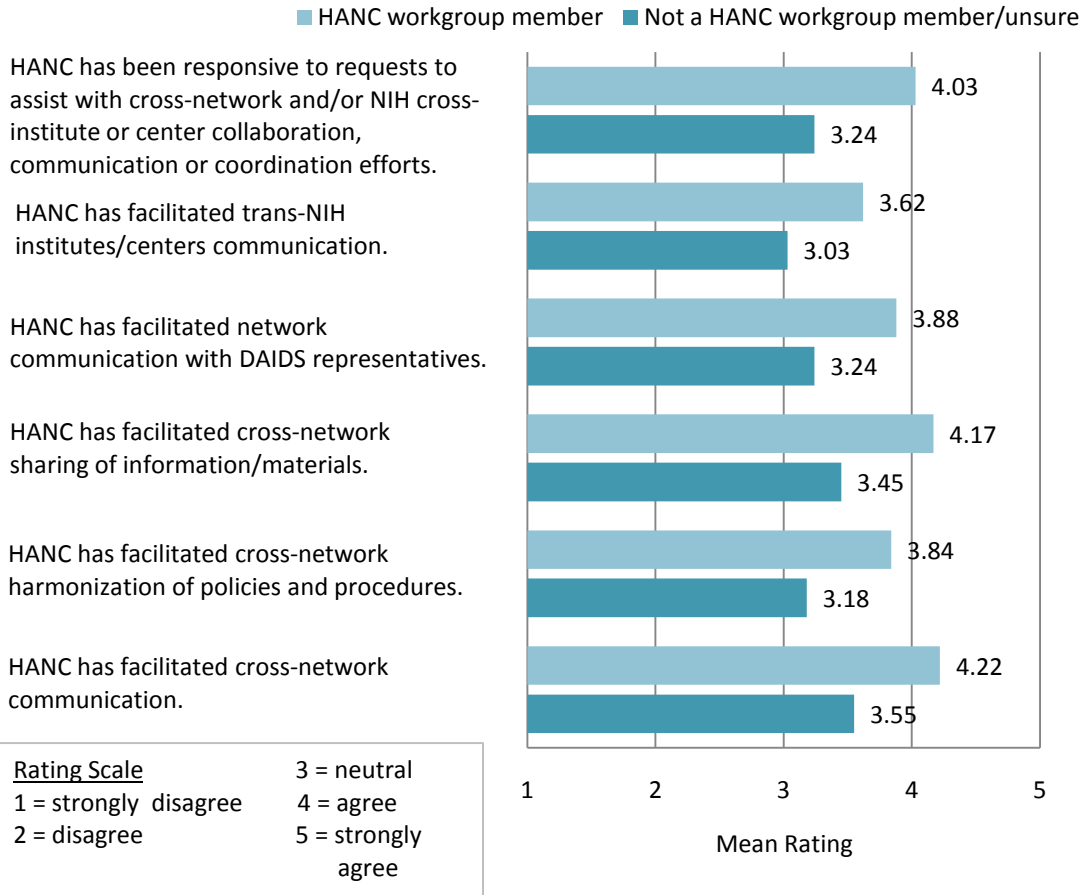
**Figure 16: HANC Performance by Network Affiliation**



**Figure 17: HANC Performance by Workgroup**

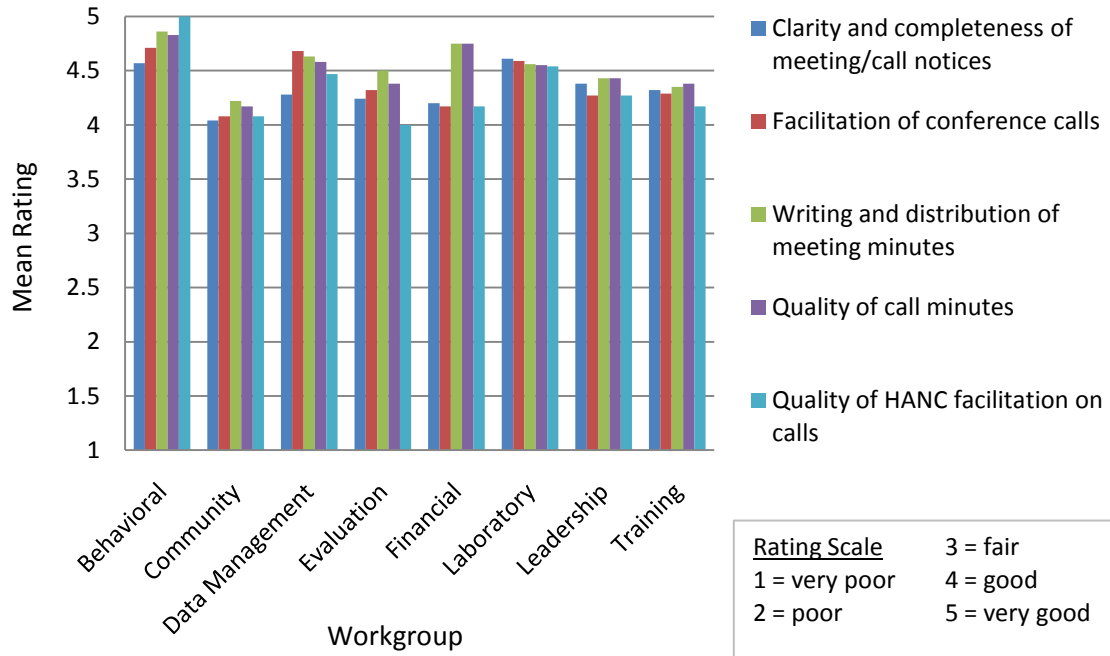


**Figure 18: HANC Performance by Workgroup Membership**

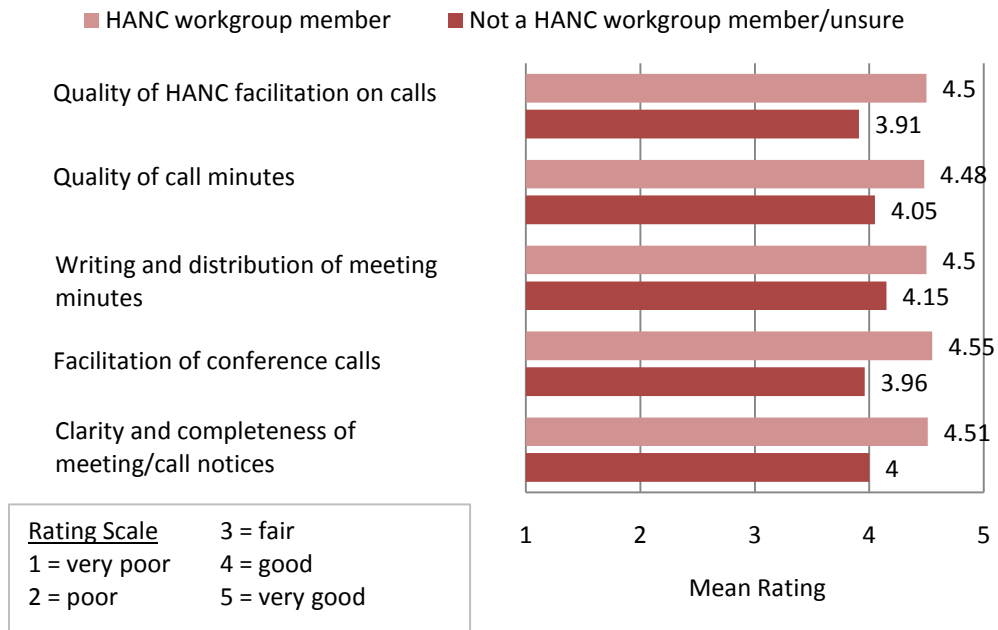




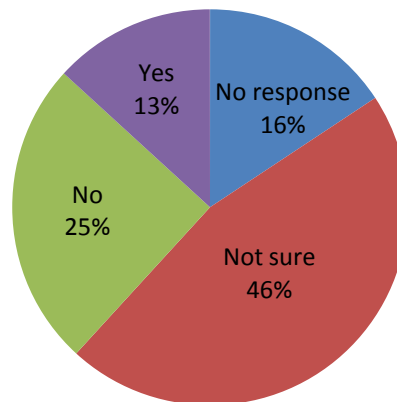
**Figure 19: HANC Performance on Calls  
 by Workgroup**



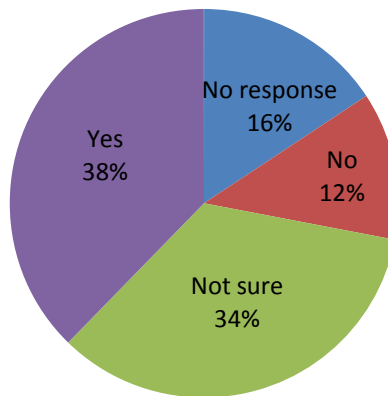
**Figure 20: HANC Call Logistics and Facilitation  
 by Workgroup Membership**



**Figure 21: Would you be able to achieve your working group objectives more efficiently if you had more frequent webinars?**

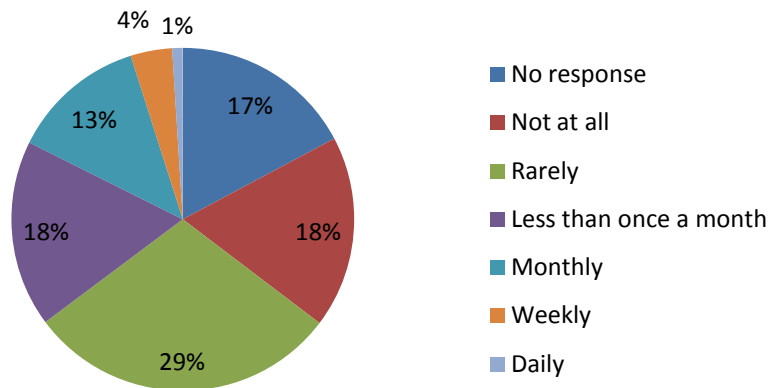


**Figure 22: Would you be able to achieve your working group objectives more efficiently if you had opportunity for face-to-face meetings?**

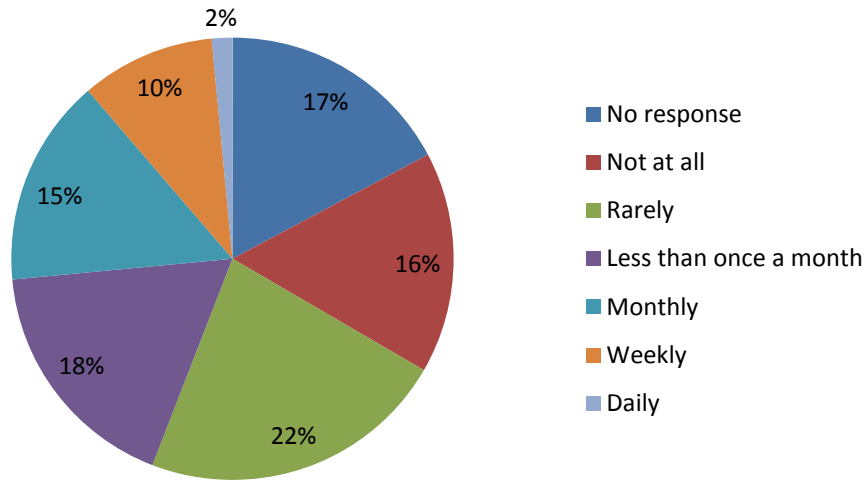


## HANC Website and Portal Usage

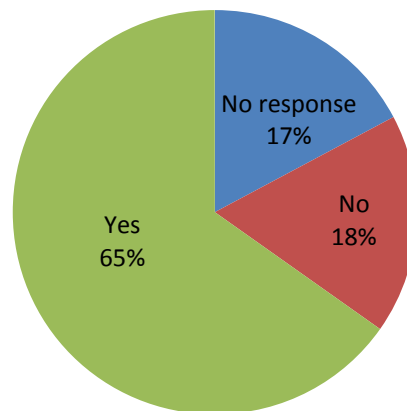
**Figure 23: Frequency of Use of the HANC Public Website**



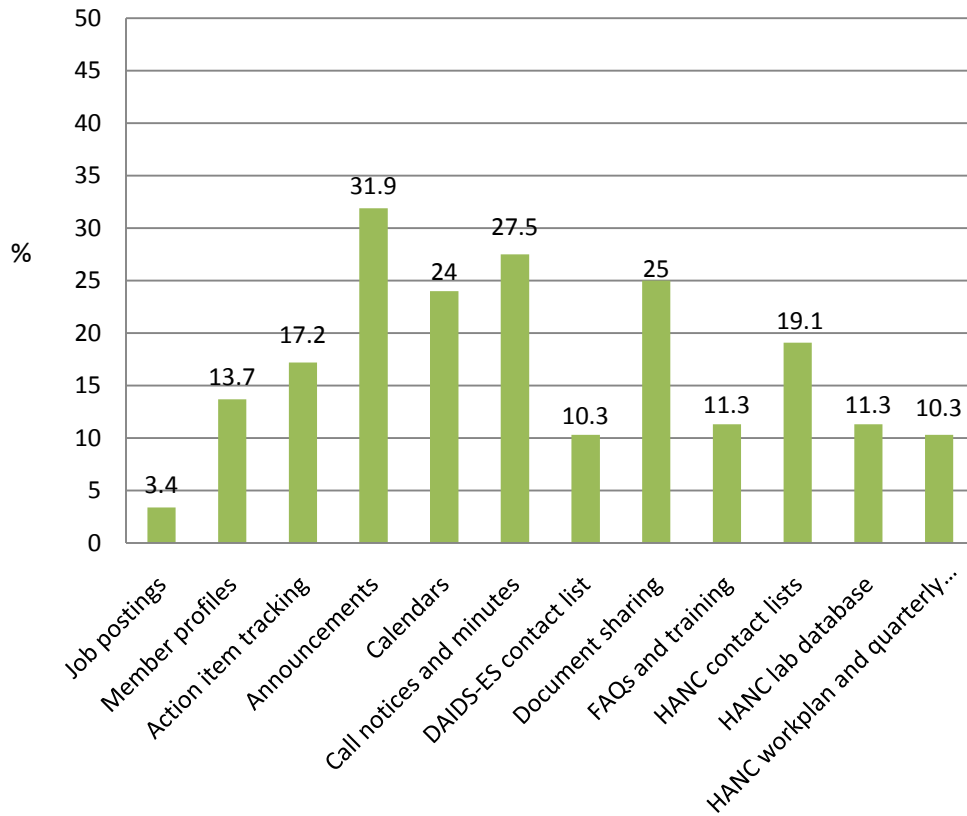
**Figure 24: Frequency of Use of the HANC Portal**



**Figure 25: In general, do you think the HANC portal is a useful collaborative tool?**



**Figure 26: Which portal features do you find useful?**



## Acknowledgments

Thanks to all of the HANC collaborators who took the time to respond to this survey and thanks to Concept Systems, Inc. for their assistance with the data analysis and chart preparation.