

Multi System Collaboration: Supporting Individuals from Pre-employment through Employment and Community Engagement Across Life Course

Study Overview

This third in the series of studies will conduct an in depth analysis of priority and emerging practices and policies implemented by state-system collaborations involving multiple state systems to supporting employment policy and strategy to support and impact employment outcomes and services for individuals served by state IDD over the course of their lives.

Individual Level: Person Centered Planning

All collaboration efforts should derive from the information made available through person centered planning (PCP). The goal of PCP is for a person to become empowered to build the life they choose or aspire to at any age across their lifespan.

Person Centered Thinking leads to...
 Person Centered Practices that lead to...
 Person Centered Organizations that create ...
 Person Centered Systems that support...
Person Directed Lives ...

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Federal Level

Currently, the collaboration between the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has the most direct influence for people with I/DD in accessing and maintaining employment in the general labor market. In 2015, federal agencies formed a workgroup to understand system gaps and to develop a federal interagency strategy to promote inclusive service delivery for youth with disabilities. 2020 Federal Youth Transition Plan: A Federal Interagency Strategy (2020) to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities.

www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/20150302-fpt.pdf

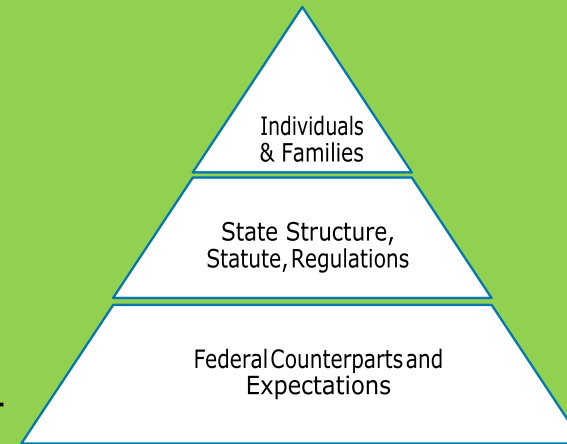
State and Local Level

Each of the entities at the federal level described above either has a counterpart at the state and local level or has its own local presence through field offices. Collaboration among the state departments of education, VR, and the I/DD agency is critical in ensuring that people with I/DD can use public services and supports to achieve success in employment and careers as well as in becoming full participating citizens in their communities. How and when they collaborate will be different based on where the person with I/DD is across the lifespan.

What Makes a Good Collaboration

Interagency Collaboration

Understanding effective interagency collaboration to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities requires a multilevel vantage point of the agencies themselves, including their role(s) and relationships within a federal framework, their statutory and regulatory obligations at the state level, and the key touchpoints they have in the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families. The opportunities and imperative for effective collaborative efforts to emanate and affect all levels of key structure.



Agency Collaboration for Students Preparing for Transition Ages, 14-22

	Education	Vocational Rehabilitation	I/DD
Career counseling	Provide exposure to life Work-based learning links knowledge gained through work with classroom or related instruction.	Provide information on potential employment and career options and information on accessing VR services. While still in school providing services that support job shadowing, paid and unpaid internships, and apprenticeships.	Provide family support, case management, taking lead on life course planning including, and employment service options.
Job Development	Provide information (research) on employment options.	Provide information (research) on employment options. Support internships, summer employment.	
Job Support	Provide support during work-study or internships.	Offer employment services to this age group after school, weekend or summer jobs.	Offer employment services to this age group after school, weekend or summer jobs.
Community Life Engagement	Support participation in extra curricula school activities.	Provide information assistive technology, home modifications, etc. to support community living	Utilize life course trajectory tools in planning for future.

Agency Collaboration for Transitioning Youth, Ages 18-26

	Education	Vocational Rehabilitation	I/DD
Career counseling	Provide a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities about life choices.	Provide opportunities for employment experience on a trial basis.	Provide family support, case management. Provide information and connection to general community services and support in participating on community activities.
Job Development	Provide information (research) on employment options. Look at how typical work study and internships can translate to employment	Provide real life opportunities to experience working and elements of different jobs by doing them. Secure jobs based on desired interests.	
Job Support	Encourage an attitude of belief and achievement in the student to help in later life.	Ensure that SE providers plan for ever decreasing paid supports by substituting natural support (and tech)	Provide assistance to support working on transportation options, flexible scheduling for residential and day services Provide for the ongoing job supports as needed
Community Life Engagement	Set up expectations of the individual and family that their loved one will be integrated into the community	Provide opportunities to for employment in the community independently, and thereby be exposed to the most common engagement activity.	Provide opportunities to continually discover and develop knowledge of potential ways to be part of the community independently.

Agency Collaboration for Working Adults, age 27-older

	Vocational Rehabilitation	I/DD
Career counseling	Provide information (research) on employment options. Provide information on potential employment and career options and information on accessing VR services. Determine what employment supports the person is already involved in through I/DD services.	Referral to VR with detailed information on the person and what conditions for successful employment. Provide services to support community participation while person is engage with VR. Provide services to support volunteer experiences, career planning and development. Support Coordinator's continue to use information from the Person Centered Plan to facilitate meaningful discussions about employment by asking probing questions to understand a person's vision of work and/or if the person is truly satisfied in their current position.
Job Development	Provide real life opportunities to experience working and elements of different jobs by doing them. Secure jobs based on desired interests.	Support community life engagement.
Job Support	Job Coaching/job placement. Supported employment.	LTSS job coaching as needed.
Community Life Engagement		Provide opportunities to continually discover and develop knowledge of potential ways to be part of the community. Support Coordinators continue to identify community life experiences that can lead to increased opportunities for meaningful employment and community inclusion and coordinate those activities with other agencies.

Partnerships that work

Age 14-22

Delaware recognized the value and importance of collaboration and implemented their "Early Start to Supported Employment" initiative in 2005. Building on this collaboration, Delaware has continued to engage youth between the ages of 14 and 25 to plan and achieve their individual employment goals via the "Pathways to Employment" waiver. One of the key elements to this program is the addition of "employment navigators." The role of the employment navigator is to assist the youth in developing a person-centered employment plan for achieving integrated community employment, and to facilitate the interagency service authorizations to ensure the state is using the resources from the individual service agencies in the most cost-effective way.

<http://dhss.delaware.gov/dsaap/pathways.html>

Age 18-26

In Washington state, the King County Developmental Disabilities Division (KCDDD) began the School to Work (STW) project began in 2005. Its goal was to assist students with I/DD to leave school with a job or on a pathway to employment. Central to this program is the goal of ensuring that students with I/DD leave school with a job. Some specific objectives of STW include:

- » Help I/DD-eligible students in King County School Districts leave school with a paid job each year.
- » Increase the capacity of schools to prepare students for employment. » Improve systems coordination between school districts, DDD, and DVR.
- » Increase collaboration between schools and employment providers.
- » Increase parents' awareness of employment related resources available and the value and possibility of employment for their children.

Age 27 and older

In 2013, Alaska cross-system leadership engaged in a renewed commitment to understand each other's systems and collaborate to provide quality, cost effective employment services across systems in the state. Alaska has also developed an accompanying guide and matrix between agencies so that all are working towards the common goal. The guide ensures that people have access to job supports and services that lead to competitive, integrated community employment as they navigate dual systems. Collaborating agencies know when to use the supports and what the next steps should be.

Key References

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Conclusions

Federal and state policy priorities continue to promote services that support individuals with I/DD to be fully engaged with their communities, not only in where they live, but also in how they spend their days (integrated employment and community engagement).

Practice has shown that to achieve these goals, sequencing and braiding of supports and services to meet the desired outcomes needs to occur. Recognizing that support needs of people change over their life course from childhood through transition to adulthood. States need to ensure that a person can move smoothly through the employment process as they move from one life phase (and associated service delivery agency) to another.

This paper has identified the need for strong interagency collaboration in the major service functions of each service specialty to achieve the priorities of federal and state policy and practice. Federal and state agencies need to collaborate in functions such as service design, shared resources, provider development, etc. with a recognition of life stages to assure integrated competitive employment and community participation are a reality for

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