

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from combination of electronic originals
and scanned originals with text recognition applied
(electronic original may include minor formatting differences from printed original;
searchable text in scanned originals may contain some errors and/or omissions)



Department of Health
and Human Services
Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

**LAW & LEGISLATIVE
REFERENCE LIBRARY
43 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA ME 04333**

Department of Health and Human Services
Commissioner's Office
221 State Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-3707
Fax (207) 287-3005; TTY: 1-800-606-0215

January 30, 2012

Senator Earle L. McCormick, Co-Chair
Representative Meredith N. Strang Burgess, Co-Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator McCormick, Representative Strang Burgess, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

I am pleased to submit the enclosed, "The LD 28 Report" which was required by the LD 28, Resolve, To Improve Employment Opportunities for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Autistic Disorders.

This report fulfills the requirement set forth in April 2011 to evaluate the various models of employment currently funded by DHHS for persons with intellectual disabilities and autistic disorders and report data on available employment opportunities. The report also provides information on participation in, costs and outcomes from different models of employment. Lastly within the report recommendations have been made to changes to rule and continued work to strengthen the opportunities for people with developmental disabilities around employment.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mayhew
Commissioner

MCM/klv

Enclosure

MAR 31 2014



Department of Health
and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

LEGISLATIVE
LIBRARY
STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333

Department of Health and Human Services

Commissioner's Office

221 State Street

11 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

Tel: (207) 287-3707

Fax (207) 287-3005; TTY: 1-800-606-0215

February 17, 2012

Senator Earle L. McCormick, Chair
Representative Meredith N. Strang Burgess, Chair
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: The LD 28 Report

Dear Senator McCormick, Representative Strang Burgess, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am pleased to submit the enclosed report ("The LD 28 Report") which was required by the LD 28 Resolve, To Improve Employment Opportunities for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Autistic Disorders.

The LD 28 Report fulfills the requirement set forth in April 2011, to evaluate the various models of employment currently funded by DHHS for persons with intellectual disabilities and autistic disorders and report data on available employment opportunities. The LD 28 Report also provides information on participation, costs and outcomes from different models of employment. Recommendations have been made within the report suggesting changes to rule and identifying continued work to strengthen employment opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mayhew
Commissioner

MCM/kly

Enclosure



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

Department of Health and Human Services
Commissioner's Office
221 State Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-3707
Fax (207) 287-3005; TTY: 1-800-606-0215

Report Prepared in Response to LD 28

Resolve, To Improve Employment Opportunities for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Autistic Disorders

By:

Mary Mayhew, Commissioner
Department of Health and Human Services

Ricker Hamilton, Acting Director OACPDS
Department of Health and Human Services

To the
Joint Standing Committee of the 125th Legislature

Health and Human Services Committee

February 17, 2012

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Section 1: Overview	4
Summary	4
History	4
2012 Moving Forward	5
2012 Report Findings	6
Section 2: Recommendations	7
MaineCare Section 21 and Section 29	8
Enhancement of Employment Practices	10
Section 3: Data on Employment Outcomes 2011	12
Community Provider Employment Outcomes 2011	12
MaineCare Claims Paid 2011	13
Section 4: Appendices	15
MaineCare Comprehensive and Support Waiver, Paid Claims 2010	
DHHS Employment of People Served Policy	
The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Informational Bulletin	
Fall 2011 Outcome Based Employment Screenshot	
The Maine Biz	
The Economics of Supported Employment Article	

**LD 28 Report: Resolve, To Improve Employment Opportunities for Persons
with Intellectual Disabilities and Autistic Disorders.
February 17, 2012**

Section I: Overview

Summary:

The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disabilities (OACPDS) has supported employment as an outcome of services for individuals with developmental disabilities. Through MaineCare rule, DHHS Policy, and OACPDS practice Developmental Services currently has over 900 people working in hundreds of businesses throughout Maine who are receiving employment support through a Community Provider Agency. Individuals with disabilities who are employed earn wages, benefits where their skills are utilized. Businesses benefit when they have a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities and people with disabilities benefit when they earn wages and benefits, increase self-esteem, control, and obtain greater independence. By emphasizing the importance of employment The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services 1915 c waiver programs released new guidance in September, 2011, to “increase States efforts to increase employment opportunities and meaningful community integration for waiver participants.”¹

This report is in response to LD 28 and a request to DHHS to evaluate the various models of employment currently funded and report data on available employment opportunities. Information on participation in, costs of and outcomes of individual vs. group employment are provided and requested recommendations to rule change and service enhancement are provided.

History:

A 1998 Report of the then Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services recommended Employment Policy should be enacted that would set the direction for increased employment outcomes for service recipients. A Vocational Policy was developed in October, 2000, and from 2000–2010 this Policy was a cornerstone in a system developed to increase the focus on employment for people in DHHS Services. In 2010, the Employment of Individuals Served Policy² was updated and broadened to include recipients in the new Department of Health and Human Services, stating:

¹ The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Informational Bulletin 1915 c Waiver Instructions and Technical Guide regarding employment and employment related services, September 16, 2011.

² Department of Health and Human Services Policy # CS-01-10, Employment of People Served, November 15, 2010.

The Department of Health and Human Services shall support career development and meaningful employment for all working age individuals receiving services through the Department. Employment is part of the natural course of adult life and provides opportunities for economic gain, personal growth and contributing to one's community. The development of a skilled and motivated workforce is essential to meeting the needs of Maine businesses.

In 2005, Chapter 570 (HP 1351, LD 1910) "An Act to Create Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities" was enacted. This public law included the shift toward integrated, community based employment for individuals receiving services and annual reporting on a systemic Plan. In January, 2007, a joint report from DHHS and The Department of Labor was submitted to The Labor Committee on Part B of LD 1910: Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities. Included within the report were seven recommendations to increase the outcome of employment for people with developmental disabilities. This collaboration between DHHS and DOL-Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) has had the outcome of increased efficiency and effectiveness as we jointly serve the same individuals and work with the same businesses.

In FFY2011, two hundred and twenty seven (227) individuals with a cognitive disability³ were successfully closed in employment at minimum wage or above through The Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. On average those individuals worked 21.9 hours per week and earned \$224.00 per week. As of September 30, 2011, there were 2,035 individuals in with a cognitive impairment in active case status with BRS.

Moving Forward 2012:

OACPDS provides MaineCare employment services (in order to maintain employment) to over nine hundred (900) individuals who work in businesses throughout Maine. OACPDS continues through individual planning to focus on employment for all working age adults. Quality employment outcomes, sufficient wages, benefits, and integrated workplaces that allow people to be in the least restrictive environments are available to any recipients receiving MaineCare Section 21 or Section 29 Services by going to work. OACPDS is currently serving 3,000 working age adults (21-62) in the MaineCare Section 21 or Section 29 system. Individual planning for each of these people includes opportunities for discussion about employment and career development. An additional 100-150 people are believed to also be working and no longer require an ongoing paid employment MaineCare Service.

Businesses in Maine such as Procter and Gamble, Hannaford's Supermarkets, Wal-Mart, Mardens, Lowe's, and many small Maine businesses have hired individuals with developmental disabilities into their workforce. Support is also being provided to approximately 20 individuals who own their own business and are self-employed. People

³ Cognitive Impairment includes people with developmental disabilities and autism along with any individual who has an impairment that involves learning, thinking, processing information, and concentration.

with developmental disabilities do have access to opportunities for evaluation of work skills and interests, assistance with approaching employers, technology, and employment staff to provide support through the joint systems available to them by BRS and OACPDS MaineCare waivers.

OACPDS in conjunction with stakeholders: people with disabilities, families, businesses, advocacy agencies, commissions, and employment groups, providers of services, and The Department of Labor-Bureau of Rehabilitation Services is continuing to increase the numbers of citizens with developmental disabilities who are working in integrated, competitive employment in Maine.

2012 Report Findings:

As requested, this report contains data regarding the outcomes of the employment of people with developmental disabilities in Maine in the fall of 2011. The data comes from two sources: (i) information provided by Community Providers of MaineCare Employment Services about specific service recipients and their employment in a web based portal during the Fall of 2011 (Sections 21 and Section 29-1915c Waivers); and (ii) Paid Claims information from MECMS and MHIMS on MaineCare Work Supports/Employment Services FY 2011 (Section 21 and Section 29, 1915 c Waivers).

(i) Community Provider Information

Based upon the request of The Committee of Health and Human Services, the Department evaluated two models for employment of people with developmental disabilities: individual employment, and group employment. As requested, we evaluated these two models by collecting data and analyzing differences by earned wages and by costs.

“Individual Employment” is one person working at one job or self employment in an integrated business in the community (who is receiving work support through MaineCare).

“Group Employment” is more than one person working (together) at an integrated business. It includes the models of mobile work crews, enclaves, small business, and multiple placements at a business (who are receiving work supports through MaineCare).

The evaluation collected outcome data to support both individual level outcome and systemic/resource outcomes. Information provided will assist the Department to:

- Clarify what services are necessary to:
 - Measure and document individual level progress.
 - Evaluate effectiveness of services and supports.
- Guide statewide program and service system planning and development.

- Document results of public tax dollar spending.
- Effectiveness of Employment by Person-Level Outcomes:
- Community agencies reported wage information for 708 persons working and receiving employment services from the community agency in September, 2011.
- These 708 people reported working at a total of 733 jobs in September, 2011.

Finding 1: The mean wage for persons in individual employment was significantly higher than the mean wage of those in group employment (\$7.86 vs. \$5.22).

Finding 2: In September, 2011, 6.2% of persons working in individual employment worked below the minimum wage vs. 61% in group employment.

Effectiveness of System/Resource:

- Community agencies reported billing information for 708 persons working and receiving employment services from the community agency in September, 2011. A total of \$27.50/hour was used for cost of billing to DHHS by a community provider for employment support.

Finding 3: On average, DHHS spends significantly less money (\$2.25/hour) for every dollar a person earns in individual employment vs. group employment (\$2.69/hour).

(ii) MaineCare Paid Claims Information

Claims to MaineCare from Section 21 and Section 29 Work Supports by Provider agency show 909 individuals received services during FY 2011. Average cost per person for support to maintain employment (Work Supports) was \$4,411.46. (Comparative FY 2010 data is provided in the appendix). This shows a decline in the average cost (957 people) from FY 2010 which was reported at \$5,305.99 per person.

Section 2: Recommendations

OACPDS with our stakeholders gathered input for recommendations. These are in two sections: (i) recommended changes to MaineCare rule in order to align Section 21 and Section 29 1915 c Waivers with the recent (September, 2011) Technical Guidance Bulletin from The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services which will allow for increased employment opportunities for people; and (ii) recommendations for enhancement and continuation of practices that will increase the employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Recommendations have been developed through input gathered during the Employment Summit November, 2010, and from a work group in December, 2011. Stakeholders involved include: persons with disabilities, family, Employment Provider agencies, The Developmental Disabilities Council, The Disability Rights Center, The Commission on Disability and Employment, Department of Labor-Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Work Force Development System, Maine APSE, and DHHS-OACPDS.

(i) MaineCare Section 21 and Section 29

Based on CMS Information Bulletin released September 16, 2011, regarding *Updates to the 1915(c) Waiver Instructions and Technical Guide regarding employment and employment related services* the following recommendations are necessary to ensure compliance and the intended focus on competitive, integrated employment. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services bulletin is attached.

1. **Within overall Definitions Section (21.02 or 29.02)** add language that clearly states integrated, community based employment is the intended outcome of employment services.
2. **Within Community Support Section (21.05 and 29.05)** add clear language that outlines Pathway to Employment (Career Planning) services available that allow a participant to build the skills necessary to perform work in the most integrated setting possible and in a job matched with individual strengths, skills, priorities, and capabilities determined through an individualized discovery process.
3. **Within Community Support Section (21.05 and 29.05)** add clear language that Pathway to Employment (Career Planning) services are to plan with people to obtain, maintain, and advance in competitive employment or self-employment at or above the States minimum wage. It may include benefits planning as well as assessment for use of assistive technology to increase independence in the workplace. It may be used to develop experiential learning opportunities and career options consistent with the person's skills and interests.
4. **Within Community Support Section (21.05 and 29.05)** add clear language that Pathway to Employment (Career Planning) must be time limited, included within the Person Centered Planning process with employment related goals, and have the optimal outcome of competitive, integrated employment for which the person is compensated at or above minimum wage.
5. **Within Community Support Section (21.05 and 29.05)** add clear language that Pathway to Employment (Career Planning) services can be provided within a variety of community settings as documented in the Person Centered Plan and must be reviewed at least annually.

6. **Within Community Support Section (21.05 and 29.05)** add clear language that Pathway to Employment (Career Planning) includes transportation within the fixed rate statement.
7. **Within Employment Setting (21.07 and 29.07)** - this language can be included within the recommended new rules for **individual and small group (below)** - and clarify language to align with CMS Integrated definition and align expectations regarding the payment of at least minimum wage for all individual employment supports service recipients. Within small group employment require employee being paid subminimum wage be reviewed at 2 year point on a Federal and State subminimum wage certificate. Add clear language that Person centered plan must address the need to evaluate and review subminimum wages and have a clear goal regarding the usage of a Certificate.
8. **Develop new Employment Services Sections**

A. **Supported Employment – Individual Employment Support.** Supports to recipients that who because of their disabilities need intensive ongoing support to obtain and maintain an individual job in competitive or customized employment, or self-employment, in an integrated work setting in the general workforce for which the individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities.

- Expand self-employment to include home-based self-employment – ongoing counseling, guidance, and support once the business has been launched.
- Add in Customized employment for individuals with severe disabilities – include long term support to successfully maintain a job due to the ongoing nature of the recipients support needs, changes in life situation, or evolving and changing job responsibilities.
- Add in coworker support model – allowing qualified coworkers to provide onsite individual Employment Supports for a stipend (TBD).
- Continue Employment Specialist Services and Work Supports Services under this section (update and align training requirements and other information as needed).

B. **Supported Employment – Small Group Employment Support.** Supports to recipients that are provided in regular business, industry and community settings for groups of 2-8 workers with disabilities. Mobile

work crews, and business based workgroups (enclaves) are examples of the models allowed. Supported Employment-Small Group Employment must be provided in a manner that promotes the integration into the workplace and interaction between participants and people without disabilities in those workplaces. The outcome of this service is sustained paid employment and work experience leading to further career development and individual integrated community based employment for which the individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities. Supported Employment-Small Group Employment support does not include vocational services provided in a facility based work setting.

- Information must be provided to the recipient that individual employment is available to them in order to make an informed decision.
- Add in coworker support model – allowing qualified coworkers to provide Supported Employment-Small Group Employment Support for a stipend (TBD).
- Continue Employment Specialist and Work Supports Services under this section (update and align as needed).

9. Clarify that Ticket to Work Milestone and Outcome payments are not in conflict with Medicaid Services.

(ii) Enhancement of Employment Practices

10. DHHS to develop clear internal practices that support individual employment as the preferred outcome for recipients of OACPDS in order to increase employment opportunities for waiver participants.
11. DHHS together with Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and other stakeholders continue discussions concerning transportation resources available and identify methods to improve knowledge of people and support staff about those options.
12. DHHS together with BRS and other stakeholders determine current usage of Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) and Plans to Achieve Self Support (PASS) available through the Social Security Administration and develop a plan to increase their usage to offset work related expenses such as transportation.
13. DHHS to develop a secondary internal review process for situations where individuals are being paid subminimum wage, ensure they are legally covered

under a Certificate from DOL, and make recommendations to the team on ways to move toward employment at minimum wage or better.

14. DHHS to develop new resources that are for families, transition age youth, and support teams that provide information on customized employment and stories of successful employment.
15. DHHS to continue to develop and add to www.employmentforme.org the web site created as a one-stop informational clearing house on employment and disability for people with disabilities, Providers of Employment Services, and Business.
16. DHHS to continue to enhance the Employment Workforce Development System in Maine through www.employmentformewds.org that is in conjunction with Syntiro Inc. and The Bureau of Rehabilitation to provide quality employment training, mentoring, and certification for employment staff across the State of Maine.
17. DHHS to continue the Business Development work that has occurred in conjunction with The Department of Labor-Bureau of Rehabilitation Services over the past year. Strengthen ties with The Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Walgreens, Procter and Gamble, L.L. Bean, and other businesses that are now working in partnership with the State of Maine to offer increased opportunities to people with disabilities.
18. DHHS to continue to provide support and guidance to the start-up of the Maine affiliate of The United States Business Leadership Network to promote the business-to-business approach to employment of people with disabilities.
19. OACPDS to continue to work together with Office of Adult Mental Health Services and other Offices within DHHS to create effective employment support systems.
20. DHHS to further enhance the Employment Outcome data being collected by OACPDS yearly by moving toward a permanent, ongoing reporting system that allows for the management of resources based on desired quality employment outcomes.

Section 3: Data on Employment Outcomes 2011

(i) Community Provider Employment Outcomes 2011

- Data based on 708 persons.
- Data based on information for September, 2011.
- Data reported by Community Provider Agencies.

		Group 1: Individual Placement	Group 2: Group Placement
Person Level Outcomes	Sample Size	438 jobs	295 jobs
	Wage: Mean	\$ 7.86*	\$ 5.22*
	Wage: Median	\$ 7.58	\$ 5.34
	Wage: High	\$ 12.98	\$ 12.30
	Wage: Low	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.30
	Count and Percentage: Below Minimum Wage	27 or 6.2%	180 or 61%
	Persons working under Federal Minimum Wage certification	28	88
	Count and Percentage: At or above Minimum Wage	411 or 93.8%	115 or 39%
	Systemic / Resource Level Outcomes	Average \$ Earned by Person	\$ 199.57
Average \$ Billed to DHHS		\$ 448.94	\$ 477.07
		On average, for every \$1 earned, DHHS pays \$2.25 to support the person in an individual placement*	On average, for every \$1 earned, DHHS pays \$2.69 to support the person in a group placement*

*** Differences were found to have statistical significance. “Statistical significance” means that the results were not likely to have occurred by chance but more likely to be attributed to a specific cause.**

(ii) MaineCare Claims Paid 2011

- Data by Community Provider Agency/Organization.
- Data on 909 persons.
- Data from full FY 2011.
- Data from both MECMS and MHIMS systems.

MaineCare Comprehensive and Support Waiver Work Support Paid Claims for FY2011 Prepared by the Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disability Services – January 2012				
ORGANIZATION-Provider Agency	Paid Service Hours	Total Paid Amount	People Supported	Average Cost Per Person
AMICUS	24,790	\$674,740.77	74	\$9,118.12
WORK OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED	14,176	\$382,351.03	96	\$3,982.82
WORK FIRST INC	12,457	\$339,036.39	39	\$8,693.24
PATHWAYS INC	9,312	\$252,770.01	52	\$4,860.96
PERSONAL ONSITE DEVELOPMENT	8,486	\$234,055.52	20	\$11,702.78
YORK - CUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION FOR HANDICAPPED PERSONS	6,989	\$192,063.45	68	\$2,824.46
EMPLOYMENT SPECIALISTS OF MAINE	6,949	\$185,802.99	46	\$4,039.20
MAINE VOCATIONAL AND REHABILITATION ASSOCIATES, INC.	6,752	\$183,969.92	74	\$2,486.08
GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND	5,856	\$159,268.59	49	\$3,250.38
INDEPENDENCE ASSOCIATION INC	4,896	\$131,746.06	34	\$3,874.88
THE PROGRESS CENTER INC	4,856	\$129,445.03	25	\$5,177.80
SKILLS, INC.	4,227	\$116,212.38	39	\$2,979.80
SUPERIOR EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATES, LLC	3,978	\$105,904.96	23	\$4,604.56
GROUP HOME FOUNDATION INC	3,850	\$104,043.87	31	\$3,356.25
COMMUNITY LIVING ASSOCIATION	3,546	\$96,843.65	15	\$6,456.24
MOBIUS INC	3,493	\$92,435.07	19	\$4,865.00
KFI	2,204	\$60,759.63	15	\$4,050.64
PERSONAL SERVICES OF AROOSTOOK, INC.	2,088	\$57,097.33	12	\$4,758.11
COMMUNITY PARTNERS, INC.	1,944	\$52,605.83	19	\$2,768.73
WABAN PROJECTS INC	1,854	\$51,244.56	14	\$3,660.33
HOPE ASSOCIATION, INC.	1,610	\$44,431.30	15	\$2,962.09
CENTRAL AROOSTOOK A.R.C.	1,367	\$37,770.06	11	\$3,433.64
CHARLOTTE WHITE CENTER	1,230	\$33,997.20	18	\$1,888.73
BEST	1,228	\$33,637.88	7	\$4,805.41
ELMHURST INC	1,129	\$31,198.65	8	\$3,899.83
UPLIFT INC	1,120	\$30,846.24	8	\$3,855.78
MAINE MEDICAL CENTER VOCATIONAL SERVICES	925	\$23,680.57	13	\$1,821.58
JOHN F. MURPHY HOMES INC.	818	\$22,118.91	4	\$5,529.73

DEH (DOWNEAST HORIZONS) OPERATING CO	714	\$19,741.87	3	\$6,580.62
COASTAL OPPORTUNITIES	704	\$17,309.55	5	\$3,461.91
GREEN VALLEY ASSOCIATION, INC.	598	\$16,397.43	6	\$2,732.91
MEDICAL CARE DEVELOPMENT	519	\$14,338.25	11	\$1,303.48
MOMENTUM INC.	515	\$14,234.60	3	\$4,744.87
TRI COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	983	\$13,186.54	17	\$775.68
PEREGRINE CORP	302	\$8,347.28	1	\$8,347.28
GREAT BAY SERVICES	240	\$6,619.78	3	\$2,206.59
LANDMARK HUMAN RESOURCES	221	\$6,101.53	1	\$6,101.53
MOTIVATIONAL SERVICES INC	219	\$6,046.25	1	\$6,046.25
JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES INC	209	\$5,769.85	2	\$2,884.93
SMITH, E. TERRANCE	198	\$4,871.55	2	\$2,435.78
COMMUNITY REHABILITATION SERVICES INC.	156	\$4,318.75	2	\$2,159.38
DANFORTH HABILITATION ASSOCIATION	135	\$3,738.31	2	\$1,869.16
WOOSTER HILL HOME	120	\$3,123.32	5	\$624.66
ADDISON POINT SPECIALIZED SERVICES	98	\$2,314.85	3	\$771.62
GALLANT THERAPY SERVICES	72	\$1,990.08	2	\$995.04
EASTER SEALS NEW HAMPSHIRE	42	\$1,160.88	1	\$1,160.88
SUNRISE OPPORTUNITIES	12	\$331.68	2	\$165.84
TOTALS	148,183	\$4,010,020.20	909	\$4,411.46

Section 4: Appendices

MaineCare Comprehensive and Support Waiver, Paid Claims 2010

DHHS Employment of People Served Policy

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Informational Bulletin

Fall 2011 Outcome Based Employment Screenshot

The Maine Biz Article on Disability Employment in Maine

The Economics of Supported Employment Article

**MaineCare Comprehensive and Support Waiver
Work Support Paid Claims for FY2010**
Prepared by the Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical
Disability Services – March 2011

Org Name	Paid Service Hours	Total Paid Amount	People Supported	Average Cost Per Person
AMICUS	29143.25	\$821,839.65	77	\$10,673.24
Work Opportunities Unlimited Contracts, Inc.	16498.25	\$465,250.65	99	\$4,699.50
Work First Incorporated	15659	\$441,583.80	38	\$11,620.63
Personal Onsite Development	10562	\$297,848.40	23	\$12,949.93
Pathways Incorporated	8766.75	\$247,219.10	54	\$4,578.13
Maine Vocational Associates Inc.	7742.75	\$218,174.89	75	\$2,909.00
Employment Specialists Of Maine	7526	\$212,233.20	39	\$5,441.88
York Cumberland Association For Handicapped Persons	6893.5	\$194,384.80	65	\$2,990.54
Independence Association Inc	6487.75	\$182,954.55	39	\$4,691.14
Sebasticook Farms	6289.75	\$177,357.49	51	\$3,477.60
Goodwill Industries of Northern N.E.	6155.5	\$173,585.10	48	\$3,616.36
Superior Employment Associates	5641.5	\$159,066.15	23	\$6,915.92
Progress Center, Inc.	5581	\$157,384.20	24	\$6,557.68
Group Home Foundation, Inc.	4632.5	\$130,636.50	35	\$3,732.47
Mobius Inc.	4589	\$129,409.80	17	\$7,612.34
Community Living Associates	4162.25	\$117,375.45	18	\$6,520.86
Medical Care Development	3730.25	\$105,193.05	11	\$9,563.00
Community Partners Inc	2964.75	\$83,295.75	19	\$4,383.99
Personal Serv of Aroostook	2497.75	\$70,222.47	14	\$5,015.89
Katahdin Friends Incorporated	2412.25	\$68,025.45	13	\$5,232.73
Hope Association	2381.75	\$67,165.35	14	\$4,797.53
Waban Projects Inc	2256.25	\$63,626.25	14	\$4,544.73
Charlotte White Center	1884	\$53,128.80	17	\$3,125.22
Community Rehabilitation Services Incorporated	1759.5	\$49,617.90	8	\$6,202.24
Pottle Hill Inc	2840	\$39,612.12	15	\$2,640.81
Central Aroostook Associates	1361.25	\$38,387.25	9	\$4,265.25
Maine Medical Center	1298.75	\$36,624.75	14	\$2,616.05
Uplift Incorporated	1259.75	\$35,524.95	9	\$3,947.22
Elmhurst, Inc.	1106.25	\$31,196.25	8	\$3,899.53
John F Murphy Homes Inc	1039.75	\$29,320.95	5	\$5,864.19
Coastal Opportunities	889.25	\$25,076.85	5	\$5,015.37
Downeast Horizons, Inc.	902.25	\$23,579.93	3	\$7,859.98
Tri-Cty Mental Hlth Serv	2196.25	\$22,907.14	21	\$1,090.82
Green Vly Assoc	657.75	\$18,548.55	7	\$2,649.79
Peregrine Corporation	600	\$16,920.00	1	\$16,920.00
Motivational Services Incorporated	512.5	\$14,452.50	1	\$14,452.50
Landmark Human Resources Inc	344.75	\$9,721.95	2	\$4,860.98
Momentum, Inc.	316	\$8,685.60	3	\$2,895.20
Addison Point Specialized Serv	252.25	\$7,113.45	4	\$1,778.36
Smith, Terry	245.75	\$6,909.00	2	\$3,454.50
Great Bay Services	212.25	\$5,985.45	3	\$1,995.15

Org Name	Paid Service Units	Total Paid Amount	People Supported	Average Cost Per Person
Darlene Langley	616	\$4,342.80	1	\$4,342.80
Danforth Habilitation Association	435	\$3,066.75	2	\$1,533.38
Saint John Valley Associates	420	\$2,961.00	1	\$2,961.00
Job Placement Services Inc	419	\$2,953.95	1	\$2,953.95
NE Occupational Exchange Inc	352	\$2,481.60	1	\$2,481.60
Gouzie Associates, Inc	311	\$2,192.55	1	\$2,192.55
Easter Seals Maine	306	\$2,157.30	1	\$2,157.30
Sunrise Opportunities	75	\$528.75	2	\$264.38
	731942	\$5,077,830.14	957	\$5,305.99



Department of Health
and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner

Office of the Commissioner

Employment Policy for Individuals Served

Policy # DHHS-CS-01-10

I. SUBJECT

Employment Policy for Individuals Served

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Health and Human Services shall support career development and meaningful employment for all working aged individuals receiving services through the Department. Employment is part of the natural course of adult life and provides opportunities for economic gain, personal growth and contributing to one's community. The development of a skilled and motivated workforce is essential to meeting the needs of Maine businesses.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Implementation of the DHHS Employment Policy will be driven by continuing quality improvement, quality assurance and service accountability consistent with the following tenets:

1. All individuals shall be presumed able and have the opportunity to work.
2. Career planning will result from a strength based approach identifying the individuals' interests, capabilities and supports needed for successful employment.
3. Employment support will emphasize the development and use of natural connections such as co-workers, supervisors, friends and family.
4. Employment shall be in integrated businesses and offer compensation that is fair and equitable.
5. Employment services shall be culturally and linguistically appropriate.
6. Efforts to increase employment will be coordinated in partnership with other State and Private agencies working toward a strong, diversified Maine workforce.

IV. PRACTICE GUIDELINES

This Departmental Policy provides the framework for employment practice guidelines within each participating Division/Office of DHHS. Those practice guidelines will adhere to and support this Employment Policy.

V. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy was developed by the DHHS Employment Policy Workgroup (Offices of Adult Mental Health Services, Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disability Services, Child and Family Services, Elder Services, Integrated Access and Support, MaineCare Services and Substance Abuse in collaboration with the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in September, 2010 and approved by the Integrated Management Team on October 7, 2010.

VI. BACKGROUND

This policy replaces the DHHS/BDS Vocational Policy #01-CS-110 issued October 18, 2000. That first departmental *Vocational Policy* assisted the then Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services with moving toward a system that supports integrated, community based employment. The Policy was instrumental in promoting the conversion of sheltered workshops in Maine, and ending all state funding of segregated employment in July, 2008. The Policy was also instrumental in better coordinating services within the Department to increase the numbers of individuals working for real wages at real jobs in Maine.

This 2010 DHHS Employment Policy builds upon and expands the scope of this policy direction by addressing the employment needs of people served by DHHS who experience barriers to employment. It will ensure that supporting an individual's employment goals will continue to be an integral part of the work that the Department does in supporting Maine people to lead productive lives in their communities.

VII. DEFINITIONS

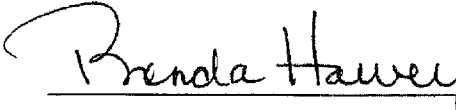
Integrated: "Integrated Community Setting (business) with respect to an employment outcome means a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals, other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons."
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/tac-06-01.doc>

Fair and Equitable Compensation: Individuals employed at a business are compensated in an even and fair method by the employer as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act.
<http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/index.htm>

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate: Support is provided that meets the National Standards of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services.
<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=15>

November 15, 2010

Effective Date


Brenda M. Harvey
Commissioner



Center for Medicaid, CHIP and Survey & Certification

CMCS Informational Bulletin

DATE: September 16, 2011

FROM: Cindy Mann, JD
Director
Center for Medicaid, CHIP and Survey & Certification (CMCS)

SUBJECT: Updates to the §1915 (c) Waiver Instructions and Technical Guide regarding employment and employment related services

This Informational Bulletin is intended to provide clarification of existing CMS guidance on development and implementation of §1915 (c) Waivers regarding employment and employment related services. Specifically, this letter provides updates to several sections of the current Waiver Technical Guide Version 3.5, which was released in January of 2008, in advance of a future release of Technical Guide Version 3.6.

This guidance does not constitute new policy, but rather highlights the opportunities available to use waiver supports to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities within current policy. Further, it underscores CMS's commitment to the importance of work for waiver participants and provides further clarification of CMS guidance regarding several core service definitions.

While States have the flexibility to craft their own service definitions and modify CMS core service definitions, many States rely on CMS language for their waiver core service definitions. We hope that by emphasizing the importance of employment in the lives of people with disabilities, updating some of our core service definitions, and adding several new core service definitions to better reflect best and promising practices that it will support States' efforts to increase employment opportunities and meaningful community integration for waiver participants.

The major changes in the Instructions and Technical Guide are summarized below:

- Highlights the importance of competitive work for people with and without disabilities and CMS's goal to promote integrated employment options through the waiver program
- Acknowledges best and promising practices in employment support, including self direction and peer support options for employment support
- Clarifies that Ticket to Work Outcome and Milestone payments are not in conflict with payment for Medicaid services rendered because both Ticket to Work and Milestone payments are made for an outcome, not service delivery
- Adds a new core service definition- by splitting what had previously been supported employment into two definitions- individual and small group supported employment
- Includes a new service definition for career planning, that may be separate or rolled into the other employment related service definitions

- Emphasizes the critical role of person centered planning in achieving employment outcomes
- Modifies both the prevocational services and supported employment definitions to clarify that volunteer work and other activities that are not paid, integrated community employment are appropriately described in pre-vocational, not supported employment services
- Explains that pre-vocational services are not an end point, but a time limited (although no specific limit is given) service for the purpose of helping someone obtain competitive employment

I hope that you will find this information helpful. States and other interested parties may also find information contained in the attachments at www.hcbswaivers.net. If you have any additional questions about this guidance, please contact Ms. Nancy Kirchner, Health Insurance Specialist, Division of Long Term Services and Supports at 410-786-8641 or nancy.kirchner@cms.hhs.gov.

Attachments (2):

- 1 - Revisions to the Instructions and Technical Guide for §1915 (c) Waivers - Supported Employment and Prevocational Services
- 2 - Revisions to the Core Service Definitions for Employment and Employment related services in the Instructions and Technical Guide for §1915 (c) Waivers

Attachment 1

Revisions to the Instructions and Technical Guide for §1915 (c) Waivers for Supported Employment and Prevocational Services

Work is a fundamental part of adult life for people with and without disabilities. It provides a sense of purpose, shaping who we are and how we fit into our community. Meaningful work has also been associated with positive physical and mental health benefits and is a part of building a healthy lifestyle as a contributing member of society. Because it is so essential to people's economic self sufficiency, as well as self esteem and well being, people with disabilities and older adults with chronic conditions who want to work should be provided the opportunity and support to work competitively within the general workforce in their pursuit of health, wealth and happiness. All individuals, regardless of disability and age, can work – and work optimally with opportunity, training, and support that build on each person's strengths and interests. Individually tailored and preference based job development, training, and support should recognize each person's employability and potential contributions to the labor market.

Peer support is a powerful best practice model for helping support people to be successful in the world of employment. Most specifically for people with mental illness, the evidenced based practice of peer support has been a critical component of successful community living, including employment. Additionally, various types of employment and employment related supports may be provided by consumer operated service programs, independent nonprofit organizations that have a majority consumer board of directors. There is broader applicability for peer support and self advocacy for other disability population groups to ease the transition into community living and/or to develop stronger ties in those communities through the support and guidance from others who have navigated those situations and can now mentor others and offer mutual support. States may wish to consider provider qualifications for employment supports that draw on peer support models. Additional information concerning peer support services is contained in the August 15, 2007 State Medicaid Director letter #07-011 at <http://www.cms.gov/SMDL/downloads/SMD081507A.pdf>.

Self directed service delivery models can also be used to provide employment supports. In a self-directed model, individuals may hire their own job coaches and employment support staff, rather than relying exclusively on agency based staffing models. This may be particularly useful as individuals seek to expand the pool of people who can provide employment supports and services to include friends, family members, co-workers and other community members that do not view themselves as part of the traditional Medicaid provider employment supports workforce.

Customized employment is another approach to supported employment. Customized employment means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. It may include employment developed through job carving, self-employment or entrepreneurial initiatives, or other job development or restructuring strategies that result in job responsibilities being customized and individually negotiated to fit the needs of individuals with a disability. Customized employment assumes the provision of reasonable accommodations and

supports necessary for the individual to perform the functions of a job that is individually negotiated and developed. (Federal Register, June 26, 2002, Vol. 67. No. 123 pp 43154 -43149).

Co-worker models of support to deliver on the job supports are effective service delivery methods that are often less expensive to provide and less intrusive to the flow of a business, helping the employee with a disability not just learn the task based elements of the job, but also the cultural norms and relationships within that job setting. Co-worker models of support rely on regular employees within the work setting who provide on the job training and ongoing support to the waiver participant that is beyond what is typically provided as part of supervision or training to employees. Co-worker supports may be delivered on a volunteer basis or paid through a stipend or other statewide payment methodology and unit cost as described in the waiver application Appendices I and J. Importantly, payment for co-worker supports is not payment to the employer for hiring the individual. Instead, it is encouraging the forging of natural work relationships with individuals already present and participating in the work environment. These models are not intended to replace the support provider's work, rather, it would be an additional mentoring/support role for which co-workers could receive additional compensation above what they receive in the course of their typical job responsibilities.

The Ticket to Work Program (TTW) is an employment support program offered through the Social Security Administration (SSA) which is available to SSA beneficiaries with disabilities who want to achieve and maintain their employment goals and can work in a complementary fashion with waiver services. Ticket Outcome and Milestone payments do not conflict with CMS regulatory requirements and do not constitute an overpayment of Federal dollars for services provided since payments are made for an outcome, rather than for a Medicaid service rendered. Additional information regarding the receipt of Federal funds under the SSA's Ticket to Work program is contained in the January 28, 2010 State Medicaid Director letter SMD# 10-002 at <http://www.cms.gov/SMDL/SMD/list.asp>.

Supported employment and prevocational services may be furnished as expanded habilitation services under the provisions of §1915(c)(5)(C) of the Act. They may be offered to any target group for whom the provision of these services would be beneficial in helping them to realize their goals of obtaining and maintaining community employment in the most integrated setting. As provided in Olmstead Letter #3 (included in Attachment D), the provision of these services is not limited to waiver participants with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and can be a meaningful addition to the service array for any of the regulatorily identified target groups.

It is important to note that such services may only be furnished to a waiver participant to the extent that they are not available as vocational rehabilitation services funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. When a state covers any category of supported employment services and/or prevocational services in a waiver, the waiver service definition of each service must specifically explain that the services do not include services that are available under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or, in the case of youth, under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as well as assure that such services are not available to the participant before authorizing their provision as a waiver service.

Waiver funding is not available for the provision of vocational services delivered in facility based or sheltered work settings, where individuals are supervised for the primary purpose of producing goods or performing services. The distinction between vocational and pre-vocational services is that pre-vocational services, regardless of setting, are delivered for the purpose of furthering habilitation goals *such as attendance, task completion, problem solving, interpersonal relations and safety*, as outlined in the individual's person-centered services and supports plan. Prevocational services should be designed to create a path to integrated community based employment for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities.

Although this is guidance with respect to the 1915 (c) Waiver program, we note that states have obligations pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision interpreting the integration regulations of those statutes. Consistent with the *Olmstead* decision and with person centered planning principles, an individual's plan of care regarding employment services should be constructed in a manner that reflects individual choice and goals relating to employment and ensures provision of services in the most integrated setting appropriate.

Attachment 2

Revisions to the Core Service Definitions for Employment and Employment related services in the Instructions and Technical Guide for §1915 (c) Waivers

Day Habilitation

Core Service Definition:

Provision of regularly scheduled activities in a non-residential setting, separate from the participant's private residence or other residential living arrangement, such as assistance with acquisition, retention, or improvement in self-help, socialization and adaptive skills that enhance social development and develop skills in performing activities of daily living and community living. Activities and environments are designed to foster the acquisition of skills, building positive social behavior and interpersonal competence, greater independence and personal choice. Services are furnished consistent with the participant's person-centered plan. Meals provided as part of these services shall not constitute a "full nutritional regimen" (3 meals per day).

Day habilitation services focus on enabling the participant to attain or maintain his or her maximum potential and shall be coordinated with any needed therapies in the individual's person-centered services and supports plan, such as physical, occupational, or speech therapy.

Instructions

- Supplement or modify the core definition as appropriate to specify service elements/activities furnished as day habilitation under the waiver.
- Day habilitation may be furnished in any of a variety of settings in the community other than the person's private residence. Day habilitation services are not limited to fixed-site facilities. Supplement the core definition by specifying where day habilitation is furnished.
- If transportation between the participant's place of residence and the day habilitation site, or other community settings in which the service is delivered, is provided as a component part of day habilitation services and the cost of this transportation is included in the rate paid to providers of day habilitation services, the service definition must include a statement to that effect in the definition.

Guidance

- Day habilitation may not provide for the payment of services that are vocational in nature (i.e., for the primary purpose of producing goods or performing services).

- Personal care/assistance may be a component part of day habilitation services as necessary to meet the needs of a participant, but may not comprise the entirety of the service.
- Participants who receive day habilitation services may also receive educational, supported employment and prevocational services. A participant's person-centered services and supports plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services. However, different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of the day.
- Day habilitation services may be furnished to any individual who requires and chooses them through a person-centered planning process. Such services are not limited to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.
- For individuals with degenerative conditions, day habilitation may include training and supports designed to maintain skills and functioning and to prevent or slow regression, rather than acquiring new skills or improving existing skills.
- Day habilitation services may also be used to provide supported retirement activities. As some people get older they may no longer desire to work and may need supports to assist them in meaningful retirement activities in their communities. This might involve altering schedules to allow for more rest time throughout the day, support to participate in hobbies, clubs and/ or other senior related activities in their communities.
- If States wish to cover "career planning" activities they may choose to include it as a component part of day habilitation services or it may be broken out as a separate stand alone service definition.

Prevocational Services

Core Service Definition:

Services that provide learning and work experiences, including volunteer work, where the individual can develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that contribute to employability in paid employment in integrated community settings. Services are expected to occur over a defined period of time and with specific outcomes to be achieved, as determined by the individual and his/her service and supports planning team through an ongoing person-centered planning process.

Individuals receiving prevocational services must have employment-related goals in their person-centered services and supports plan; the general habilitation activities must be designed to support such employment goals. Competitive, integrated employment in the community for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities is considered to be the optimal outcome of prevocational services.

Prevocational services should enable each individual to attain the highest level of work in the most integrated setting and with the job matched to the individual's interests, strengths, priorities, abilities, and capabilities, while following applicable federal wage guidelines. Services are intended to develop and teach general skills; Examples include, but are not limited to: ability to communicate effectively with supervisors, co-workers and customers; generally accepted community workplace conduct and dress; ability to follow directions; ability to attend to tasks; workplace problem solving skills and strategies; general workplace safety and mobility training.

Participation in prevocational services is not a required pre-requisite for individual or small group supported employment services provided under the waiver. Many individuals, particularly those transitioning from school to adult activities, are likely to choose to go directly into supported employment. Similarly, the evidence-based Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model of supported employment for individuals with behavioral health conditions emphasizes rapid job placement in lieu of prevocational services.

Documentation is maintained that the service is not available under a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.).

Instructions

- Supplement or modify the core definition as appropriate to incorporate the specific service elements furnished under the waiver.
- Prevocational services may be furnished in a variety of locations in the community and are not limited to fixed-site facilities. Specify in the service definition where these services are furnished.
- If transportation between the participant's place of residence and the prevocational service site/s is provided as a component part of prevocational services and the cost of this transportation is included in the rate paid to providers of prevocational services, the service definition must include a statement to that effect.
- Specify in the definition how the determination is made that the services furnished to the participant are prevocational rather than vocational in nature in accordance with 42 CFR §440.180(c)(2)(i).

Guidance

- Pre-vocational Services include activities that are not primarily directed at teaching skills to perform a particular job, but at underlying habilitative goals (e.g., attention span, motor skills, interpersonal relations with co-workers and supervisors) that are associated with building skills necessary to perform work and optimally to perform competitive, integrated employment. Vocational services, which are not covered through waivers, are services that teach job task specific skills required by a participant for the primary purpose of completing those tasks for a specific facility based job and are not delivered in an integrated work setting through supported employment. The distinction between vocational and pre-vocational services is that pre-vocational services, regardless of setting, are delivered for the purpose of furthering habilitation goals that will lead to greater opportunities for competitive and integrated employment and career advancement at or above minimum wage. These goals are described in the individual's person centered services and supports plan and are designed to teach skills that will lead to integrated competitive employment.
- A person receiving pre-vocational services may pursue employment opportunities at any time to enter the general work force. Pre-vocational services are intended to assist individuals to enter the general workforce.
- Individuals participating in prevocational services may be compensated in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the optimal outcome of the provision of prevocational services is permanent integrated employment at or above the minimum wage in the community.
- All prevocational and supported employment service options should be reviewed and considered as a component of an individual's person-centered services and supports plan no less than annually, more frequently as necessary or as requested by the individual. These services and supports should be designed to support successful employment outcomes consistent with the individual's goals.

- Personal care/assistance may be a component of prevocational services, but may not comprise the entirety of the service.
- Individuals who receive prevocational services may also receive educational, supported employment and/or day habilitation services. A participant's person-centered services and supports plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services. However, different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of the day.
- If States wish to cover "career planning" activities they may choose to include it as a component part of pre-vocational services or it may be broken out as a separate stand alone service definition.
- Prevocational services may include volunteer work, such as learning and training activities that prepare a person for entry into the paid workforce.
- Prevocational services may be furnished to any individual who requires and chooses them through a person-centered planning process. They are not limited to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Supported Employment -Individual Employment Support Core Service Definition

Supported Employment -Individual Employment Support services are the ongoing supports to participants who, because of their disabilities, need intensive on-going support to obtain and maintain an individual job in competitive or customized employment, or self-employment, in an integrated work setting in the general workforce for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities. The outcome of this service is sustained paid employment at or above the minimum wage in an integrated setting in the general workforce, in a job that meets personal and career goals.

Supported employment services can be provided through many different service models. Some of these models can include evidence-based supported employment for individuals with mental illness, or customized employment for individuals with significant disabilities. States may define other models of individualized supported employment that promote community inclusion and integrated employment.

Supported employment individual employment supports may also include support to establish or maintain self-employment, including home-based self-employment. Supported employment services are individualized and may include any combination of the following services: vocational/job-related discovery or assessment, person-centered employment planning, job placement, job development, negotiation with prospective employers, job analysis, job carving, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, benefits support, training and planning, transportation, asset development and career advancement services, and other workplace support services including services not specifically related to job skill training that enable the waiver participant to be successful in integrating into the job setting.

Documentation is maintained that the service is not available under a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.).

Federal financial participation is not claimed for incentive payments, subsidies, or unrelated vocational training expenses such as the following:

1. Incentive payments made to an employer to encourage or subsidize the employer's participation in supported employment; or
2. Payments that are passed through to users of supported employment services.

Instructions

- Supplement or modify the core definition as appropriate to incorporate the specific service elements furnished in the waiver.
- Supported employment individual employment supports is not intended for people working in mobile work crews of small groups of people with disabilities in the community. That type of work support is addressed in the core service definition for Supported Employment Small Group employment support.
- If transportation between the participant's place of residence and the employment site is a component part of supported employment individual employment supports services and the cost of this transportation is included in the rate paid to providers of supported employment individual employment supports services, the service definition must include a statement to that effect.

Guidance

- Statewide rate setting methodologies, which are further described in I-2-a of the waiver application may be used to embrace new models of support that help a person obtain and maintain integrated employment in the community. These may include co-worker support models, payments for work milestones, such as length of time on the job, number of hours the participant works, etc. Payments for work milestones are not incentive payments that are made to an employer to encourage or subsidize the employer's hiring an individual with disabilities, which is not permissible.
- Supported employment individual employment supports does not include facility based, or other similar types of vocational services furnished in specialized facilities that are not a part of the general workplace.
- In addition to the need for an appropriate job match that meets the individual's skills and interests, individuals with the most significant disabilities may also need long term employment support to successfully maintain a job due to the ongoing nature of the waiver participant's support needs, changes in life situations, or evolving and changing job responsibilities.
- All prevocational and supported employment service options should be reviewed and considered as a component of an individual's person-centered services and supports plan no less than annually, more frequently as necessary or as requested by the individual. These services and supports should be designed to support successful employment outcomes consistent with the individual's goals.
- Supported employment individual employment supports do not include volunteer work. Such volunteer learning and training activities that prepare a person for entry into the paid workforce are addressed through pre-vocational services.
- Supported employment individual employment supports do not include payment for supervision, training, support and adaptations typically available to other workers without disabilities filling similar positions in the business.
 - Supported employment individual employment supports may be provided by a co-worker or other job site personnel provided that the services that are furnished are not part of the normal duties of the co-worker, supervisor or other personnel and these individuals meet the pertinent qualifications for the providers of service.

- Personal care/assistance may be a component part of supported employment individual employment supports, but may not comprise the entirety of the service.
- Supported employment individual employment supports may include services and supports that assist the participant in achieving self-employment through the operation of a business; however, Medicaid funds may not be used to defray the expenses associated with starting up or operating a business. Assistance for self-employment may include: (a) aid to the individual in identifying potential business opportunities; (b) assistance in the development of a business plan, including potential sources of business financing and other assistance in including potential sources of business financing and other assistance in developing and launching a business; (c) identification of the supports that are necessary in order for the individual to operate the business; and (d) ongoing assistance, counseling and guidance once the business has been launched.
- Individuals receiving supported employment individual employment supports services may also receive educational, pre-vocational and/or day habilitation services and career planning services. A participant's person-centered services and supports plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services. However, different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of time.
- If States wish to cover "career planning" they may choose to include it as a component part of supported employment individualized employment support services or it may be broken out as a separate stand alone service definition.
- Supported employment individual employment supports may be furnished to any individual who requires and chooses them through a person-centered planning process. They are not limited to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Supported Employment - Small Group Employment Support

Core Service Definition

Supported Employment Small Group employment support are services and training activities provided in regular business, industry and community settings for groups of two (2) to eight (8) workers with disabilities. Examples include mobile crews and other business-based workgroups employing small groups of workers with disabilities in employment in the community. Supported employment small group employment support must be provided in a manner that promotes integration into the workplace and interaction between participants and people without disabilities in those workplaces. The outcome of this service is sustained paid employment and work experience leading to further career development and individual integrated community-based employment for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities. Small group employment support does not include vocational services provided in facility based work settings.

Supported employment small group employment supports may include any combination of the following services: vocational/job-related discovery or assessment, person-centered employment planning, job placement, job development, negotiation with prospective employers, job analysis, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, benefits support, training and planning transportation and career advancement services. Other workplace support services may include

services not specifically related to job skill training that enable the waiver participant to be successful in integrating into the job setting.

Documentation is maintained that the service is not available under a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.).

Federal financial participation is not claimed for incentive payments, subsidies, or unrelated vocational training expenses such as the following:

1. Incentive payments made to an employer to encourage or subsidize the employer's participation in supported employment services; or
2. Payments that are passed through to users of supported employment services.

Instructions

- Supplement or modify the core definition as appropriate to incorporate the specific service elements furnished in the waiver.
- If transportation between the participant's place of residence and the employment site is a component part of supported employment services small group employment support and the cost of this transportation is included in the rate paid to providers of supported employment small group employment supports services, the service definition must include a statement to that effect.

Guidance

- Supported employment small group employment support does not include vocational services provided in facility based work settings or other similar types of vocational services furnished in specialized facilities that are not a part of general community workplaces.
- Supported employment small group employment supports do not include volunteer work. Such volunteer learning and training activities that prepare a person for entry into the paid workforce are more appropriately addressed through pre-vocational services.
- Supported employment small group employment support does not include payment for supervision, training, support and adaptations typically available to other workers without disabilities filling similar positions in the business.
 - Supported employment small group employment support services may be provided by a co-worker or other job site personnel provided that the services that are furnished are not part of the normal duties of the co-worker, supervisor or other personnel and these individuals meet the pertinent qualifications for the providers of service.
- Personal care/assistance may be a component part of supported employment small group employment support services, but may not comprise the entirety of the service.
- All prevocational and supported employment service options should be reviewed and considered as a component of an individual's person-centered services and supports plan no less than annually, more frequently as necessary or as requested by the individual. These services and supports should be designed to support successful employment outcomes consistent with the individual's goals.
- Individuals receiving supported employment small group employment support services may also receive educational, prevocational and/or day habilitation services and career planning services. A participant's person-centered services and supports plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services. However, different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of time.

- If States wish to cover “career planning” they may choose to include it as a component part of supported employment small group employment support services or it may be broken out as a separate stand alone service definition.
- Supported employment small group employment support services may be furnished to any individual who requires and chooses them. If a state offers both supported employment- individual and small group employment support services, individuals should be provided information to make an informed decision in choosing between these services. Supported employment small group employment support services are not limited to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Career Planning

Core Service Definition

Career planning is a person-centered, comprehensive employment planning and support service that provides assistance for waiver program participants to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment. It is a focused, time limited service engaging a participant in identifying a career direction and developing a plan for achieving competitive, integrated employment at or above the state’s minimum wage. The outcome of this service is documentation of the participant’s stated career objective and a career plan used to guide individual employment support.

Instructions

- Supplement or modify the core definition as appropriate to incorporate the specific service elements furnished in the waiver.
- Supplement the core service definition by specifying where in the community career planning may be furnished.
 - If transportation between the participant's place of residence and the site where career planning is delivered is provided as a component part of career planning services and the cost of this transportation is included in the rate paid to providers of career planning services, the service definition must include a statement to that effect in the definition.

Guidance

- For young people with disabilities transitioning out of high school or college into adult services, it is important to have the opportunity to plan for sufficient time and experiential learning opportunities for the appropriate exploration, assessment and discovery processes to learn about career options as one first enters the general workforce.
- Individuals who receive career planning services may also receive educational, supported employment, pre-vocational and/or day habilitation services. A participant’s person-centered services and supports plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services. However, different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of the day.
- If a waiver participant is receiving prevocational services or day habilitation services, career planning may be used to develop experiential learning opportunities and career options consistent with the person’s skills and interests.

- If a waiver participant is employed and receiving either individual or small group supported employment services, career planning may be used to find other competitive employment more consistent with the person's skills and interests or to explore advancement opportunities in his or her chosen career.
- All prevocational and supported employment service options, including career planning, should be reviewed and considered as a component of an individual's person-centered services and supports plan no less than annually, more frequently as necessary or as requested by the individual. These services and supports should be designed to support successful employment outcomes consistent with the individual's goals.
- Career planning furnished under the waiver may not include services available under a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or section 602(16) and (17) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(16 and 17)).
- Career planning may include benefits support, training and planning, as well as assessment for use of assistive technology to increase independence in the workplace.
- If a State wishes to cover "career planning" it may choose to include it as a component part of day habilitation, pre-vocational services or supported employment small group or individual employment support services or it may be broken out as a separate stand alone service definition.
- Career planning services may be furnished to any individual who requires and chooses them. They are not limited to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

This page allows user to review the questions related to an Instrument Dimension.

Instrument: EMPLOYMENT DATA
Dimension: Employment Data

			Domain (s)
Dimension Description			
Did the person work during the previous quarter?	--Select--		
If the person did not work during the last quarter, please select the option that best describes why the person did not work.	--Select--		
MHLTSE ONLY: Was the person discharged from MHLTSE?	If discharged, reason why?	If Other, please specify:	
--Select--	--Select--		
Length of time in Adult MH LTSE as of end of quarter: (choose one)	--Select--		
DD ONLY: Does the person no longer require paid Work Supports/Emp Spt Services?	--Select--		
Provider Agency for Employment Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> X		
Number of jobs this person held: (You must choose the number of jobs before you can enter job specific data below)	--Select--		
Consumers future job plans? (choose one):	--Select--		
What is the primary method of transportation to work? (choose one):	If Other, please specify:		
--Select--			
Jobs - All Data for Jobs in the quarter			
Hours of Work Support billed for this person: (round to whole number)	Job 1 (WS - DD Only)	Job 2 (WS - DD Only)	Job 3 (WS - DD Only)
Hours of Employment Specialist Services billed for this person: (whole numbers)	Job 1 (ES - DD Only)	Job 2 (ES - DD Only)	Job 3 (ES - DD Only)
Hours of Adult MH Long term supported employment billed for the quarter	Job 1 (AMH LT SE)	Job 2 (AMH LT SE)	Job 3 (AMH LT SE)
Is the person utilizing IRVE/PASS?	--Select--		
Total hours worked by this person for the quarter:	Job 1 (Hrs)	Job 2 (Hrs)	Job 3 (Hrs)
Hourly Wage: (99.99)	Job 1 (Wage)	Job 2 (Wage)	Job 3 (Wage)
Business Name:	Job 1 (Business)	Job 2 (Business)	Job 3 (Business)
Other (Business Name):	Job 1 (Other Business)	Job 2 (Other Business)	Job 3 (Other Business)
Is this business owned by the Agency providing Employment Services?	Job 1 (Owned by Agency)	Job 2 (Owned by Agency)	Job 3 (Owned by Agency)
Other (town):	Job 1 (Other Town)	Job 2 (Other Town)	Job 3 (Other Town)
Town of Business physically located in:	Job 1 (Town of Business)	Job 2 (Town of Business)	Job 3 (Town of Business)
Who pays the person based on name that appears on the paycheck?	Job 1 (Payee)	Job 2 (Payee)	Job 3 (Payee)
	Job 1 (Benefits)	Job 2 (Benefits)	Job 3 (Benefits)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid vacation	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid vacation	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid vacation

Benefits the person receives at this job:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid sick <input type="checkbox"/> Health/dental insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Free/reduced cost meals <input type="checkbox"/> Uniforms <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid sick <input type="checkbox"/> Health/dental insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Free/reduced cost meals <input type="checkbox"/> Uniforms <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid sick <input type="checkbox"/> Health/dental insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Free/reduced cost meals <input type="checkbox"/> Uniforms <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Benefits
Year the person started working:	Job 1 (Year) --Select--	Job 2 (Year) --Select--	Job 3 (Year) --Select--
Is this an individual job placement (1 pers/1 job-not sharing support with another employee)?	Job 1 (Job Placement) --Select--	Job 2 (Job Placement) --Select--	Job 3 (Job Placement) --Select--
Is this a group placement (inclusive, mobile work crew, provider owned business)?	Job 1 (Group Job) --Select--	Job 2 (Group Job) --Select--	Job 3 (Group Job) --Select--
Is this person working under a FDOL Special Worker Sub Minimum Wage Certificate?	Job 1 (Federal Dept of Labor) --Select--	Job 2 (Federal Dept of Labor) --Select--	Job 3 (Federal Dept of Labor) --Select--
Name of person submitting form:			
E-mail person submitting form:			

Mainebiz

Maine's Business News Source

Employing abilities | Procter & Gamble opens its doors to a new kind of worker

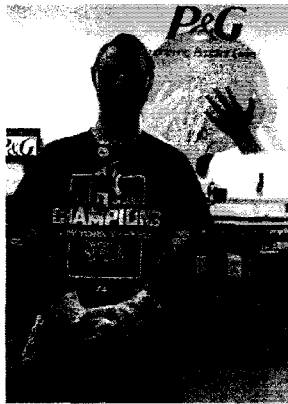
BY REBECCA GOLDFINE, Mainebiz staff reporter
11/14/11

Daniel Twitchell is a 21-year-old recent high school graduate who can't vocalize more than 50 or so words. To express his needs, he uses signs, word boards and a tablet programmed with simple phrases and words. Despite this limitation, he landed a job at Procter & Gamble's Tambrands factory in Auburn this summer, and since then, has become the face of P&G's inclusive hiring initiative. When the company on Aug. 2 unveiled a new manufacturing station where Twitchell and other employees with disabilities work, it was Twitchell who cut the ribbon.

Asked whether he likes his job, Twitchell nods "yes" repeatedly, closing his eyes behind his glasses to reinforce the feeling. He has just wrapped up a six-hour shift as one of the company's newest hires in a work-force development program that has been surprisingly successful in its three months of operation.

P&G's Auburn site is the sole manufacturer of Tampax tampons in North America and makes more than 10 million tampons a day, according to the company. The facility has some 500 employees — the vast majority of them able-bodied workers, many of whom oversee machines that in 15 minutes can pump out a lifetime supply of tampons. Although the plant is mostly automated, with silent robots gliding up and down its wide corridors, P&G has recently begun hiring for a new production center it built within the facility to handle customized orders. These orders include, for example, tampon boxes with different packaging shipped to England or Korea. Previously, P&G had subcontracted this work out to other plants, but the company opted to bring the service in-house to save on transportation costs and ensure quality control, according to Human Resources Director Jodi Eller.

While the company was planning its new customization center, P&G executive Miguel Garcia, whose daughter has Down syndrome, proposed staffing it with disabled workers. After all, the center was to be named, fittingly, the FlexiCenter. "Flexibility is the whole concept," Eller says. To research Garcia's idea, several P&G staff visited a Walgreens distribution center in South Carolina where 40% of the workers have a disability. They were inspired by what they saw, Eller recalls. "It took us a year to figure out the model," she continues, because the company



P&G employee Daniel Twitchell

had to learn how to screen, train, compensate, schedule and manage a new kind of worker.

To date, the company has hired 52 people for its FlexiCenter; about 19 of them have a disability. The plant plans to hire more workers for its customized operation, but hasn't set targets yet, according to Eller. The workers pack tampon boxes that come streaming down conveyor belts, and then stack boxes onto pallets, working alongside retired teachers, college students, single mothers and longtime P&G employees.

"This is not a charity program," Eller says. "The big breakthrough was putting people with disabilities side by side with people without disabilities. We hold them to the same expectations as other employee workers and they're rising to the challenge." All of the FlexiCenter's part-time employees start at \$9 an hour and are eligible for some benefits, Eller says. The center runs around the clock, with minimum six-hour shifts.

The FlexiCenter is, at the moment, the most substantial hiring program for those with disabilities in Maine, according to Valerie Oswald, a business consultant for Maine's Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. She says, however, that more Maine

companies, including a large unnamed manufacturer in southern Maine, are beginning to rethink their hiring policies, especially in light of P&G's program. "It's only been in the last five years that businesses are starting to catch on to this," Oswald says, "and it all goes back to Walgreens."

Work force potential

Walgreens invites companies to visit its distribution center in Anderson, S.C., to witness its hiring experiment. It even offers a free week-long training program it calls "boot camp" for companies looking for guidance on inclusive hiring. More than 100 businesses have participated, according to Walgreens. Eller participated in the boot camp, where she met Angela Mackey, a manager with cerebral palsy, and some of the 300 or so other employees with disabilities. She called the visit "eye opening."

"Thirty to 40% of the people had disabilities and you couldn't tell," she says.

Dan Coughlin, a vice president at Walgreens, says in the five years since Walgreens opened its doors to the disabled, the turnover among these workers has been 50% lower than those without disabilities. He says their productivity is equal to able-bodied workers, and that the distribution center has seen a 54% decrease in accidents, "because they pay attention ... and are not easily distracted." Additionally, he says these workers have had 67% fewer medical claims than their able-bodied counterparts.

These claims, as well as the emotional testimonials they heard from employees and some employees' parents, helped convince P&G managers to mimic Walgreens' program, Eller says.

Beyond decreasing turnover, boosting a business' public image, elevating workplace morale or even creating more sensitive managers, hiring disabled workers can also be a practical solution to staffing needs in Maine — especially as Maine's baby boomers retire. Since the early 1960s, births in Maine have declined 40%, and half the population will be 44 and older by 2018, according to the Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information. With the number of women entering the work force leveling off, growth in Maine's labor force be-



P&G Human Resource Director Jodi Eller says the company has hired nearly 20 workers with disabilities to work part time in a new production center in Auburn

tween 2008 and 2018 is expected to nudge up only 2%, down from 7% growth the previous decade, and 11% the decade prior to that.

"At some point in the future, as boomers age out, we'll likely be looking at a labor force decline," says Glenn Mills, the center's director of economic research. While the recession "alleviated much of the labor-force challenges for businesses," Mills says, "eventually we'll get back to a faster rate of growth, and there is reason to believe businesses will be challenged to be fully staffed."

Mary LaFontaine, the manager of Lewiston's CareerCenter, says, however, there's a clear solution to a future worker shortage: people with disabilities, older workers, refugees, immigrants and people with criminal backgrounds. She says these groups represent large pools of untapped labor. Based on 2009 Census data, 42,204 employed workers in Maine had a disability out of the total 610,667 employed. About 7,700 or so disabled workers were unemployed, or roughly 15.4%, compared to a 7% unemployment rate for people without a disability. A further 65,000 weren't even in the work force, although Oswald says many could have been had they been given the right opportunity. (See chart, "Who's working?" this page.)

To help businesses tap the disabled work force, Oswald says her agency is tweaking its systems to support companies as it now supports job seekers. It recently installed a direct line for businesses, 1-855-ALL-HIRE, and is also planning more outreach to companies in the future. "My vision is that someday, and I really hope I see this in my lifetime, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is the same as with abilities," Oswald says. "It should be a reflection of the economy and not the disability."

The learning curve

While interest in the disabled labor force appears to be growing, some Maine companies — such as the Harraseeket Inn in Freeport and Presque Isle's Aroostook Centre Mall — have been hiring disabled workers for years.

Having a variety of employees with different abilities has created a tolerant, understanding and more enjoyable workplace, according to Chip Gray, the Harraseeket Inn's general manager. He says his diverse staff, which includes immigrants as well as the disabled, "promotes more of a family atmosphere. It's a work-family where everyone feels like they're part of it. It doesn't make a difference whether you're a brain surgeon or the maintenance man."

Patti Crooks, the general manager of the Aroostook mall, has hired people with disabilities for 15 years. Currently half of her 25-person staff has a disability. "It has probably made me a better manager, a more compassionate manager," she says. She's hired an assortment of people with dis-

abilities, including autism, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, as well as a man who had no arms, for janitorial work, maintenance, security and some customer service. "The longevity of these employees is incredible," she says. "They get in a groove, they're happy, it works."

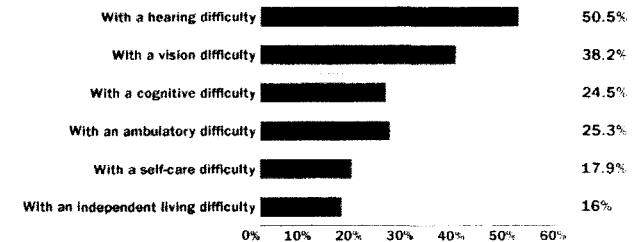
Eller says she's already seen a better-than-average retention rate from her FlexiCenter employees. So far, none of center's disabled workers has quit, whereas two or three of the

tor for Strive U, a Portland-based social services organization that trains and finds employment for people with disabilities. At P&G, training materials were reprinted with more visual cues, and its FlexiCenter work stations labeled with animal mascots rather than numbers to make it easier for some folks to remember them.

Both Eller and Crooks say their programs are critically dependent on their partnerships with employment agencies. The Maine Bureau of

Who's working?

More than 42,000 people with disabilities are working in Maine. The following breakdown shows the type of disability and the percent of people within those categories who have found employment



Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information

Rehabilitation Services, and other job-services organizations such as Maine's CareerCenters, Pathways Inc. in Lewiston, Strive U and Aroostook Mental Health Center, can supply businesses with disabled applicants. They also perform job assessments and often provide ongoing job support and training, saving some companies from initial screening and training costs.

While a business might have every intention of treating a disabled employee as any other employee, it will inevitably face some unique challenges. Crooks warns, "It's very much a learning curve." For one, Crooks says she's had to become a more skillful communicator. "I deal with 20 different people in a day, and ... to learn those different styles of management has been a career hurdle. You don't deal with an autistic person the same as someone who's chronically depressed or someone with one less limb."

Crooks also points out that scheduling shifts for disabled workers can be tricky because many work part time to avoid losing their public government disability benefits. Disability benefits can also make it difficult to adjust part-timers' pay and hours. The best employee in Crooks' 35-year career was a man with schizophrenia who "truly, truly loved his job here," she says. "I would try to give him more money but he said he can't take it because he'll lose his medical or Social Security benefits. More money would mean less hours doing the job he desperately loved." Instead, she compensated him by making him employee of the year twice and taking him out to dinner.

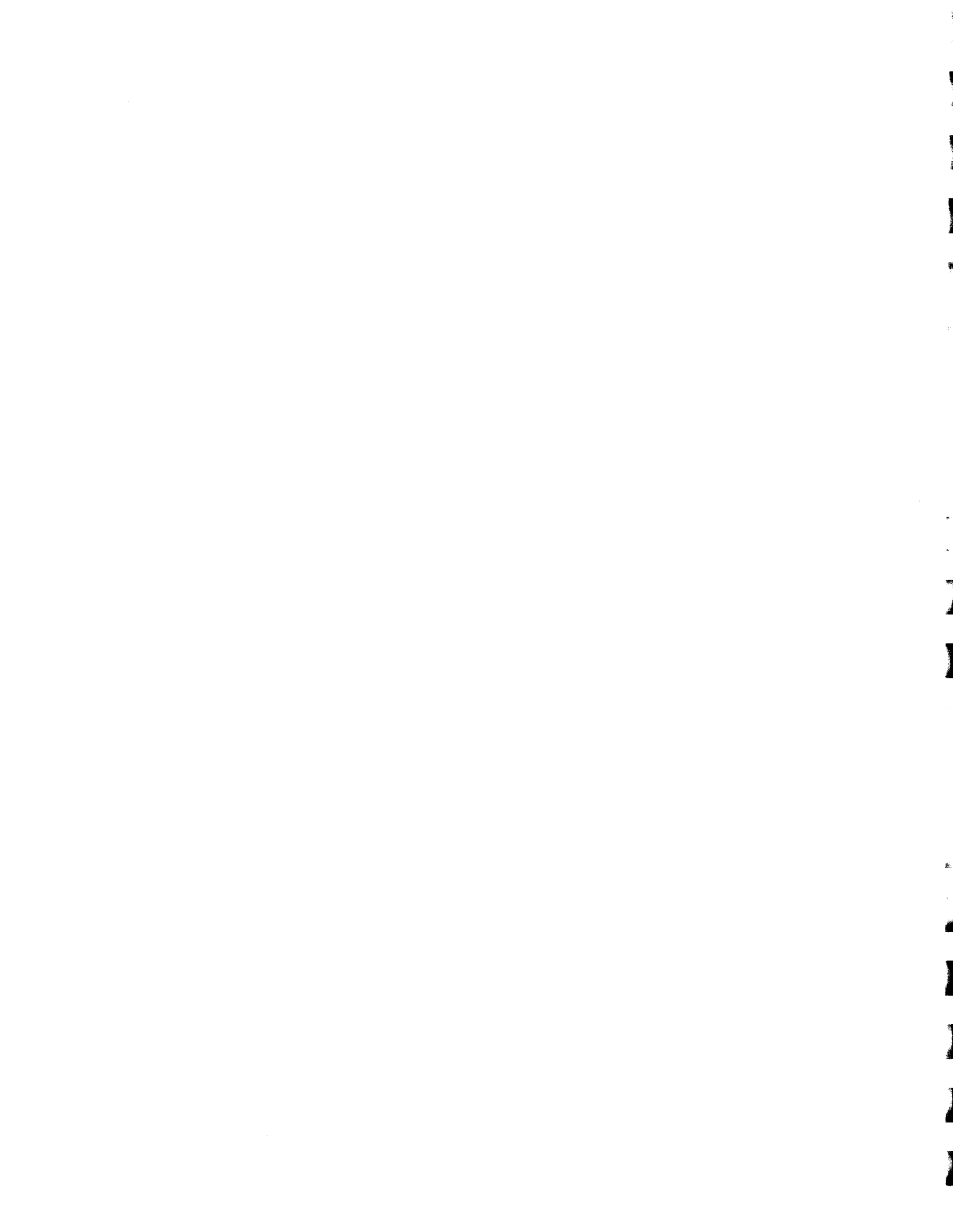
Training, too, might require slightly more time for some workers with disabilities, according to MaryAnn Schwanda, the employment coordina-

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services also gave P&G managers a lesson in disability etiquette. They taught managers to use the phrase, "people with disabilities," rather than "disabled people," and coached them to speak to people directly rather than to their able-bodied partners. The managers in turn trained the rest of the P&G staff. So far, Eller says P&G's employees have been welcoming to the new recruits. Ken Roux, a technician at P&G, says he regularly interacts with FlexiCenter workers in the lunchroom. "They come in and sit with us and talk. They're like regular employees," he says.

Leading up to the launch of the FlexiCenter, Eller says she had no idea how important it would become to her. "I get goose bumps. When I look back at my career, this will have been the most important thing I've done," she says. "When you create a job, it's an opportunity for someone to be self-sufficient; you're giving them freedom."

Rebecca Goldfine, Mainebiz staff writer, can be reached at rgoldfine@mainebiz.biz.

©2011 New England Business Media



Running head: THE ECONOMICS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The Economics of Supported Employment: What New Data Tell Us

Robert Evert Cimera, Ph.D.

Kent State University

405 White Hall

Kent, OH 44242-0001

rcimera@kent.edu

(330) 672-5796

Abstract

This paper reviews the literature on the economics of supported employment. By comparing results from research conducted prior to, and after, 2000, several important findings were identified. The first was that individuals with disabilities fare better financially from working in the community than in sheltered workshops, regardless of their disability. This is especially true given that the relative wages earned by supported employees have increased 31.2% since the 1980s while the wages earned by sheltered employees have decreased 40.6% during the same period. Further, supported employment appears to be more cost-effective than sheltered workshops over the entire “employment cycle” and returns a net benefit to taxpayers.

KEYWORDS: supported employment, literature review, cost, benefits, cost-efficiency, cost-effectiveness

October 7, 2011

The Economics of Supported Employment: What New Data Tell Us

Even before “supported employment” was officially defined by the Developmental Disability Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1984 (PL 98-527), the economics of community-based, competitive employment for individuals with severe disabilities was being investigated and debated (Rusch & Hughes, 1990). Indeed, prior to 1984 several cost-accounting studies had already been conducted and disseminated in the vocational rehabilitation literature (cf. Cho & Schuermann, 1980; Brickey & Campbell, 1981; Schneider, Rusch, Henderson, & Geske, 1981; Hill & Wehman, 1983).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, at least thirty other research studies explored issues related to the monetary benefits or costs of supported employment (cf. Bond et al., 1995; Conley, Rusch, McCaughrin, & Tines, 1989; Lam, 1986; Rogers, Sciarappa, MacDonald-Wilson, & Danley, 1995; Thompson, Powers, & Houchard, 1992; Wehman, Hill, Wood, & Parent, 1987). Further, studies had been conducted in numerous countries, including Australia (Jaeger et al., 2006; Tuckerman, Smith, & Borland, 1999), Canada (Latimer, 2001), and Great Britain (Shearn Beyer, & Felce, 2000). From this extensive body of research, at least three reviews of the literature appeared in 1999 and 2000 (Cimera, 2000; Cimera & Rusch, 1999; Kregel, Wehman, Revell, Hill, & Cimera, 2000), conclusions from which have been documented in many articles and even in testimony to Congress (Lawhead, 2005; Young, 2005). To say the least, the collection of research on the economics of supported employment is abundant.

However, perhaps more than any other type of analysis, cost-accounting is highly fluid and quickly becomes out-of-date (Boardman, Greenberg, Vining, & Weimer, 2006). If only one economic variable changes (e.g., how programs are funded, increases in minimum wage,

changes in how subsidies are allocated, decline in the value of the dollar), the conclusions drawn from cost-accounting data can literally become flawed overnight (Conley, 1973; Johnston, 1987). Consequently, what cost-accounting research indicates in one year is unlikely to be accurate the following year, let alone thirty-two years later.

The purpose of this investigation is to examine and synthesize the recent research (i.e., since 2000) on the monetary cost and benefits of supported employment programs in the United States. It examines what we know about the economics of supported employment, what we thought we once knew, and what we need to figure out in order to increase rates of competitive employment among people with disabilities. Policy implications and future research are also discussed.

Questions Explored in the Supported Employment Literature

Should People with Disabilities Work Competitively in their Communities?

When supported employment was still in its infancy, many authors speculated that, while individuals with disabilities were capable of working competitively within their communities, they were better off financially by not doing so (Brickey & Campbell, 1981; Knapp, 1988; Schloss, Wolf, & Schloss, 1987). Specifically, these authors indicated that, as a result of working, supported employees would lose their governmental subsidies and that this loss would be greater than the wages actually made.

During the 1980s and 1990s, numerous studies investigated this issue (cf. Cho & Schuermann, 1980; Conley et al., 1989; Lam, 1986; Hill, Banks, et al., 1987; Hill, Wehman, et al., 1987; Kregel et al., 1989). The general conclusion drawn from these studies was that people with disabilities benefited more monetarily from working in their community than not working

or working in sheltered workshops (i.e., supported employment was cost-efficient from the worker's perspective).

For example, Hill, Banks, et al. (1987) explored data on 214 supported employees in Virginia over a 94-month period. They found that these supported employees received an average of \$13,815 in benefits (i.e., gross wages earned and fringe benefits) and experienced \$7,000 in costs (i.e., forgone wages from sheltered workshops, reduction in governmental subsidies, and taxes withheld). This translated to a benefit-cost ratio of 1.97 (i.e., \$1.97 of benefit per \$1.00 of cost) or a per capita net benefit of \$6,815.

Since 2000, several new studies have explored this same question (cf. Cimera, 2010c, 2009b; Cimera and Burgess, 2011; Wehman et al., 2003). Specifically, Cimera (2010c) investigated the monetary benefits and costs accrued by 104,213 supported employees with intellectual disabilities from 2002 to 2007. He found that these supported employees averaged a benefit-cost ratio of 4.20 and a monthly net benefit of \$475.35. Similar results were obtained regardless of whether or not supported employees had multiple disabilities. Supported employees without secondary conditions averaged a benefit-cost ratio of 4.27 and a monthly net benefit of \$489.83; whereas, supported employees with secondary conditions averaged benefit-cost ratios of 4.07 and a monthly net benefit of \$454.51.

Cimera and Burgess (2011) investigated the monetary benefits and costs of 19,436 supported employees diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Their results were comparable to Cimera (2010c). That is, supported employees with ASD incurred greater monetary benefits from working in their communities than monetary costs (i.e., average benefit-cost ratio of 5.28; average monthly net benefit of \$643.20). Further, these results were not significantly influenced by the presence of secondary conditions.

Utilizing identical cost-accounting methodology as previous research, some of these recent studies had two decisive advantages over the research conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. First, they had significantly higher sample sizes. In fact, Cimera (2010c, 2009c) and Cimera and Burgess (2011) incorporate data on the entire *population* of supported employees who were funded by vocational rehabilitation from 2002 to 2007. So the cost figures presented were not subject to sampling error. Second, the data analyzed came from throughout the United States and its territories, so their findings were not influenced by the variations in programmatic costs that occur between regions (Lewis, Johnson, Bruininks, Kallsen, & Guillery, 1992).

Taken in total, the recent cost-analysis research on the worker's perspective collaborate the findings of studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s—individuals with disabilities experience greater monetary benefits than costs when working in the community. Further, this cost-efficiency appears to be regardless of type of disability and the presence of secondary conditions. Put simply, working in the community makes economic sense for people with disability regardless of their diagnoses.

When the 1980s and 1990s cost-accounting studies are compared to more contemporary data, a surprising finding immerges—the cost-efficient of supported employment from the worker's perspective appears to be increasing over time. For example, in 1987, Hill et al., found that 214 supported employees with intellectual disabilities earned an average of \$1.43 per \$1 that they lost as a result of working in the community. As already reported, two decades later, Cimera (2010c) found this figure to be \$4.20 for the same population. This is an increase of 269.2%.

Given that the methodologies utilized by these authors were analogous, it is likely that this rise in cost-efficiency is primarily the result of the increase in wages earned by supported employees. In the 1980s, supported employees with intellectual disabilities earned an average of

\$3.15 per hour (Kregel, Wehman, & Banks, 1989). By the 2000s, this figure rose to \$7.15 (Cimera, 2010c).

Conversely, the hourly wages earned by sheltered employees have remained relatively unchanged over this period. In the 1980s, Lam (1986) found that sheltered employees earned \$1.17 per hour. A recent multi-state study (NASDDS & HSRI, 2009) found that the average sheltered employees earned \$101 while working 74 hours per month, which corresponds to a mean hourly wage of \$1.36. In other words, over twenty years, the rate of hourly pay experienced by sheltered employees increased by only 19 cents. After adjusting for inflation, these gains disappear; \$1.17 in 1986 would be the equivalent to \$2.29 in 2009. So the relative value of what sheltered employees earned actually *decreased* by 40.6% since the 1980s while the relative value of wages earned by supported employees *increased* by 31.2%

Although, research has consistently shown that supported employment produces more monetary benefits than costs, there is an important caveat to this finding. While the wages earned by supported employees rose continuously over the years and are significantly higher than what can be expected in sheltered workshops, supported employees are still making wages that will not keep them out of poverty. For instance, Cimera (2010c) found that supported employees with intellectual disabilities only earned an average of \$623.77 per month (i.e., \$7,485.24 annually). Cimera and Burgess (2011) found that supported employees with ASD earned \$793.34 per month (i.e., \$9,520.08 annually). According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011), a family of one living in the 48 contiguous U.S. States needs to earn \$10,830 annually to stay above the “poverty line.” On this measure, supported employment doesn’t measure up to expectations. Clearly, more needs to be done to develop positions in the community for supported employees that pay a livable wage.

Is Supported Employment Cost-Efficient from the Taxpayers' Perspective?

Compared to the worker's perspective, there was far less consensus in the pre-2000 cost-accounting literature regarding whether supported employment is cost-efficient for taxpayers. Some studies found that supported employment generated more monetary benefits than cost (cf. Hill & Wehman, 1983; Hill, Banks et al., 1987; Hill, Wehman, et al., 1987; McCaughrin et al., 1993; Wehman et al., 1985). Others found that the opposite was true (cf. Conley et al., 1989; Noble, Conley, Banerjee, & Goodman, 1991; Rusch, Conley, & McCaughrin, 1993; Tines, Rusch, McCaughrin, & Conley, 1990).

For instance, Hill and Wehman (1983) analyzed the employment outcomes of 90 supported employees placed in the community in Virginia over a 47-month period. They found that these individuals generated gross benefits of \$620,576 (i.e., per capita gross benefits of \$6,895) and gross costs of \$530,200 (i.e., per capita gross costs of \$5,891) for a net benefit of \$90,376 (i.e., \$1,004 per person) or a benefit-cost ratio of 1.17. In other words, according to Hill and Wehman's data, for every \$1 relinquished, taxpayers received \$1.17 back in the form of taxes paid, reduced governmental subsidies, and decreases in alternative program costs.

Conversely, Rusch et al. (1993) examined the benefits and costs of 729 supported employees in Illinois over 48 months and found that these individuals generated a gross benefit to taxpayers of \$6,471,561 (i.e., per capita gross benefit of \$8,877). They also generated a gross cost of \$8,418,448 (i.e., per capita gross cost of \$11,548), for a net *cost* to taxpayers of \$1,946,887 (i.e., \$2,671 per supported employee) and a benefit-cost ratio of 0.77. The explanation for these divergent conclusions becomes clear with two critical findings from studies conducted after 2000.

First, the post-2000 literature determined that the costs of supported employment differed significantly across the country. For instance, Cimera (2010a) found that within the same state, supported employment program produced wildly divergent benefit-cost ratios ranging from 1.79 to 0.18. Further, when examining the cost of supported employment throughout the United States, Cimera (2010b) found that rates of cost-efficiency varied dramatically from location to location. Supported employees in Nebraska returned \$2.77 to taxpayers for every dollar of cost, whereas supported employees from Illinois returned only \$0.63. This disparity in cost could explain why pre-2000 studies conducted in Illinois (cf. McCaughrin, Rusch, Conley, & Tines, 1991; Rusch et al., 1993; Tines et al., 1990) produced significantly different results than studies in Virginia (cf. Hill et al., 1987; Hill & Wehman, 1983; Wehman et al., 1985) or New York (cf. Noble et al., 1991).

The second critical finding from the post-2000 literature involves the cost-trend of supported employment, or when in the supported employment process most expenditures occur. Cimera (2008) examined the cumulative costs generated by 56 supported employees with intellectual disabilities over one “employment cycle;” that is, the point at which a person enrolls in supported employment to the point at which they exit supported employment or change positions within the community. He found that the costs generated did not occur uniformly from month to month. Instead, initial costs started high (e.g., 11.8% of total costs occurring within the first three months) and then decreased substantially over time (e.g., only 1.1% of total costs occurring during the last three months).

These findings indicate that the period in which costs are analyzed has a marked effect on supported employment’s reported cost-efficiency. If a researcher examines the costs of supported employment during the first few months an individual is in the program, supported employment

will likely be seen as inefficient (i.e., costs higher than benefits). However, if a researcher analyzes costs at the tail end of the supported employee's vocational cycle, supported employment will likely appear cost-efficient (i.e., benefits higher than costs). Unfortunately, most of the cost-efficiency studies on supported employment do not indicate when during the employment cycle data were gathered. Consequently, it is unclear as to how to interpret their findings. In order to determine supported employment's actual cost-efficiency, the entire employment cycle has to be investigated.

In addition to examining the entire employment cycle, research effectively investigating the cost-efficiency of supported employees from the taxpayers' perspective must also examine data from across the country in order to avoid the regional affects identified earlier. Unfortunately, to date, there has yet to be a national study focusing on the entire employment cycle of a large number of supported employees. However, given what is known about the cost-trend of supported employment, a reasonable approximation of supported employment's cost-efficiency to taxpayers can be ascertained.

As indicated, research has shown that the majority of costs occur during the initial phases of supported employment (e.g., assessment, job development, initial training). Further, costs decrease once follow along services begin (Cimera, 2008). Therefore, if supported employment is cost-efficient while the lion's share of the costs are being accrued, supported employment must also be cost-efficient when per capita costs decrease, since the monetary benefits of supported employment (e.g., reduction in subsidies, taxes paid, and forgone alternative program costs) remain relatively constant.

Cimera (2009a) examined all 231,204 supported employees served by vocational rehabilitation throughout the United States from 2002 to 2007. He found that supported

employees returned an average of \$1.46 per \$1.00 of taxpayer costs. Further, all disability groups examined (e.g., mental illnesses, physical disabilities, autism, sensory impairments, intellectual disabilities, and TBI) were found to cost-efficient. Individuals with “other learning difficulties” returned an average of \$2.20 per dollar of taxpayer cost (i.e., the most cost-efficient group examined), while individuals with TBI returned \$1.17 (i.e., the least cost-efficient group examined). Moreover, when individuals with and without secondary conditions were examined, Cimera found that, in each analyses, supported employees were cost-efficient from the taxpayers’ perspective.

It should be noted that this study only examined costs resulting from services funded by vocational rehabilitation and not costs from follow along services, which are funded by other sources. Yet, vocational rehabilitation tends to fund the “up front” costs of supported employment (e.g., vocational assessment, job development, and initial training) that, as previously discussed, contain the majority of the cumulative costs generated by supported employees throughout their entire employment cycle. Therefore, if supported employment is cost-efficient from the taxpayers’ perspective during this period, it must also be cost-efficient if all other, less costly, services were included within the analyses. Even so, the field would gain significantly from a nationwide benefit-cost analysis examining all cumulative costs generated by all supported employees.

Which is More Cost-Effective, Supported Employment or Sheltered Workshops?

Another issue frequently debated within the supported employment literature is whether supported employment costs less (i.e., is more cost-effective) than programs found in segregated settings, such as sheltered workshops. Prior to 2000, only a handful of studies examined this question (cf. Lam, 1986; Lewis et al., 1992; McCaughrin et al., 1993).

For example, Lam (1986) compared the costs generated by 50 supported employees and 50 sheltered employees with “developmental disabilities.” He found that, overall, individuals generated less cost in supported employment. More precisely, the average per capita cost of supported employment was \$654.42 compared to \$1,345.48 for sheltered workers. However, Lam also determined that, when cost-per-hour-worked was examined, individuals with more significant disabilities were cheaper to serve in segregated settings (\$4.66 versus \$7.53 per hour worked). Because Lam only examined costs during a three-month period, and not during the workers’ entire employment cycle, he may have inflated supported employment’s costs for reasons previously discussed.

Since 2000, four studies have examined the total cumulative cost generated by supported and sheltered employees from the moment they enter their respective programs to the moment they left or changed positions in the community (Cimera 2011a, 2008, 2007a, 2007b). In each case, supported employment was more cost-effective than sheltered workshops.

For instance, Cimera (2011a) examined the cost and outcomes (e.g., wages earned) achieved two groups of 46 supported and sheltered employees who were matched together based upon identical demographics across nine variables (e.g., age, gender, diagnoses, employment status, self-injurious behaviors, offensive behaviors, communication skills, and toileting skills). He found that supported employees generated an average cumulative cost of \$23,459 compared to \$44,433 for sheltered employees. Further, when cost-per-month of service, cost-per-hour worked, and cost-per-dollar earned were compared, supported employees were more cost-effective in the majority of the cases examined. This was also true when the author examined the outcomes of 29 individuals who were in both supported and sheltered employment at the same time. In each analysis, these individuals were more cost-effective when served in community-

based settings. The other cost-effectiveness studies (Cimera, 2008, 2007a, 2007b) found similar results—over the entire employment cycle, supported employment is more cost-effective than sheltered workshops.

However, all of the cost-effective studies published since 2000 were conducted in only one state (i.e., Wisconsin). Consequently, their results may be influenced by the regional factors discussed earlier. In order to better explore this question, a multi-state analysis examining the cumulative costs of each program will need to be undertaken.

How Can Supported Employment Become More Effective and Efficient?

One topic that has gained considerable attention in the literature since 2000 is how to make supported employment more cost-efficient and cost-effective. Several methods for reducing costs while improving outcomes have been explored.

For instance, Cimera (2001) examined the effect of non-disabled coworker involvement in the training of 111 supported employees. He found that while having coworkers train supported employees did not influence cost-efficiency, it did appear to increase the length of time supported employees were employed by 12.36 months.

Another study investigated four supported employment agencies participating in a “natural supports initiative” (NSI) that reimbursed job coaches for fading support from supported employees by using pre-approved natural supports strategies (Cimera, 2007c). Agencies participating in the NSI reduced the cost of training supported employees by 57.6%.

Another method for reducing the costs of supported employment while increasing the outcomes achieved by supported employees appears to be involving students with disabilities in community-based transition programs while in high school. Specifically, Cimera (2010a) examined two groups of supported employees (i.e., supported employees who had community-

based transition experiences in high school versus supported employees who had only in-school transition services). He found that supported employees who had community-based transition services generated 32.4% fewer costs and kept their jobs 3.4 months longer than supported employees who had only in-school transition services.

Finally, not referring individuals to sheltered workshops prior to enrolling them in supported employment has also been found to decrease costs while increasing outcomes. Cimera (2011a) examined two matched pairs of 9,808 supported employees with intellectual disabilities. One group had previously been in sheltered workshops. The other group had not. Individuals from each group were matched based upon their diagnosis, the presence of secondary conditions, and gender. When these matched pairs were compared, individuals who were not previously in sheltered workshops were found to cost 42.5% less to serve than individuals who had been in a sheltered workshop (i.e., \$4,543 versus \$7,895). Further, individuals who had not been in sheltered workshops earned more per week than their matched pairs who had been in sheltered workshops (\$137.20 versus \$118.55).

Cimera, Wehman, West, & Burgess (in press) found similar results for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Specifically, when examining the costs and outcomes achieved by 430 supported employees with ASD, Cimera et al. found that supported employees with ASD who had not been in sheltered workshops cost 59.8% less to serve than similar supported employees who had been in sheltered workshops (\$2,441 versus \$6,065). Further, they earned significantly more wages per week (\$191.42 versus \$129.36).

The authors speculated that individuals with disabilities learn counter-productive skills or behaviors while in sheltered workshops. These then have to be “unlearned” in order for the

worker to be successful in the community, which results in significantly more job coaching.

More job coaching results in greater programmatic cost to the taxpayer.

These potential savings are not trivial. In 2006, agencies spent over \$709 million funding supported employment programs (Braddock, Hemp, & Rizzolo, 2008). If implemented nationwide, the strategies outlined here, which resulted in a reduction of programmatic costs ranging from 32.4% to 59.8%, could fund between 9,790 and 18,070 additional supported employees throughout their entire employment-cycle without any added funding by taxpayers (e.g., using the \$23,459 figure for cumulative costs found by Cimera, 2010a). Moreover, these additional supported employees would return even more monetary benefits to taxpayers in the form of taxes paid and forgone sheltered workshop costs. In other words, improving supported employment's cost-effectiveness is in everybody's best interests.

Although these studies present promising results, more needs to be done to investigate the issue of decreasing supported employment's costs while improving rates of employment, tenure, and wages earned by supported employees. Among others, areas of future research may include how effective job development strategies can result in better outcomes for supported employees and how private, for-profit, adult service programs perform compared to public, non-profit, programs.

Discussion

From the analysis of cost-accounting literature on supported employment presented here, several significant findings arise. The first is that individuals with disabilities are far better off financially by working in their communities than working in sheltered workshops. This is of no surprise.

In the 1980s, many authors feared that earning a competitive wage would decrease the amount of subsidies individuals would receive and that there would be a net loss (cf. Brickey & Campbell, 1981). However, not only has research consistently found that the monetary benefits of working exceed the corresponding costs by as much as five to one (Cimera & Burgess, 2011), but it also determined that the wages earned by supported employees have increased substantially since the 1980s while the relative wages earned by sheltered employees have decreased. Moreover, some research has even found that the amount of governmental subsidies received actually increases after enrolling in supported employment, perhaps due to the advocacy of job coaches (Cimera, 2010b; Rusch et al., 1993).

However, although working in the community is far more financially advantageous than working in sheltered-setting, the wages currently being earned by supported employees do not allow them to live out of poverty. This is one of supported employment's greatest failings. Employment for the sake of getting out of the house and doing something productive is all well and good; however, people with disabilities need to be able to earn a wage that they can live on. Presently, the average supported employee is unable to do this.

Although the literature investigating the cost-efficiency of supported employment from the taxpayers' perspective is less convincing than from the worker's perspective, recent research strongly suggests that supported employment returns approximately \$1.46 per dollar of taxpayers' cost. Additionally, supported employees, in general, appear to be cost-efficient regardless of their disability and the presence of secondary disabilities. Nonetheless, there are three important caveats to these findings.

The first is that supported employment is only cost-efficient in relation to sheltered workshops. That is, if the savings from not funding sheltered workshops were taken out of the

equation, every study reviewed here would have found that supported employment had greater costs than benefits to the taxpayer. Therefore, if the cost-efficiency of sheltered workshops improved or sheltered workshops were no longer an alternative program, the cost-efficiency of supported employment would decrease.

The second caveat is that research has found that certain populations of supported employees may not be cost-efficient in some states. Specifically, Cimera (2010b) found that individuals with intellectual disabilities are cost-efficient from the taxpayers' perspective in all states except, Indiana, Arizona, Hawaii, Washington, Wisconsin, California, and Illinois. This raises the question of why. What makes some state and localities more cost-efficient at providing supported employment services than others? It also raises the question, "Are there other disabilities (e.g., ASD or TBI) that are not cost-efficient to taxpayers in some states?" Future research will need to address both of these issues.

Finally, supported employment is only cost-efficient from the taxpayers' and worker's perspectives if supported employees become employed in the community. Unfortunately, rates of employment among people with disabilities remain low. Only 33.5% of individuals seeking services from vocational rehabilitation become employed by the time their cases are officially closed (Cimera & Oswald, 2009). Quite simply, this figure has to be increased. The more people with disabilities who become gainfully employed within their communities, the greater the benefits to them and the taxpayer.

In addition to finding that supported employment is cost-efficient from the worker's and taxpayers' perspectives, this review of the available literature also suggests that supported employment is more cost-effective than sheltered workshops. This was the case whether cumulative costs, cost-per-hours worked, dollar earned, or month of service were compared.

Unfortunately, these findings are based upon data from only one state (i.e., Wisconsin) and, as noted earlier, cost and outcomes of supported employment vary considerably across the United States. Consequently, these findings may not be indicative of programs elsewhere. A multi-state research project will need to be undertaken in order to address this issue with greater certainty.

Moreover, the comparisons between sheltered and supported employment are based upon the populations of individuals presently being served by both programs. It may be that there are individuals with certain disabilities, or combination of disabilities, who are served primarily by sheltered workshops and not supported employment. In other words, perhaps there is a “creaming effect” where the most competent workers go into supported employment while those with more limited skills and challenging behaviors enter sheltered workshops. Additional research needs to determine if there are populations who are served more cost-effectively in segregated programs.

Finally, this review examined the literature on methods for reducing supported employment’s costs while increasing outcomes achieved by supported employees. Several strategies appear promising, including utilizing natural supports training strategies and having students participate in high school community-based transition programs. However, the most surprising method identified thus far is not having individuals with disabilities in sheltered workshops.

The fact that two nationwide studies found that supported employees who used to be in sheltered workshops cost more to serve and achieve poorer vocational outcomes than supported employees who were never in segregated programs is very telling for policymakers. One would have to conclude that sheltered services are no longer viable training programs that “prepare” individuals with disabilities for competitive employment. The only remaining rationale for their

use is in the capacity of adult daycare where participants can earn less now than they could have thirty years ago.

As abundant as the cost-accounting literature on supported employment is, there are considerable holes that need to be filled. Many of these have already been outlined (e.g., the need for national comparisons between supported and sheltered employees). However, many others remain. For instance, little is known about the employer's cost-accounting perspective. Is it cost-effective for them to hire supported employees compared to more traditional workers? Few studies have examined this critical issue in detail. Further, no recent research has looked at the different models of supported employment (e.g., enclaves, mobile work crews, etc.). Consequently, it is unclear as to which model provides the most effective and efficient services.

However, the holy grail of supported employment cost research is determining why some states and agencies are able to provide very cost-effective and efficient services while other do not. If researchers can ascertain why Nebraskan supported employees, for example, generate an average monthly net benefit of \$481.17 and a benefit-cost ratio of 2.77 while supported employees from Illinois generate an average monthly net *cost* of \$364.88 and a benefit-cost ratio of 0.63, perhaps more individuals with disabilities can become employed with fewer expenditures to the taxpayer. In such a situation, everybody wins. Yet, to date, research in this area is still lacking.

Conclusions

In this era of fiscal uncertainty, politicians and policymakers will look even closer at the monetary costs and benefits of human service programs. Programs that can show positive returns on the taxpayers' investment will undoubtedly fare better in budget battles than programs that are not cost-effective or cost-efficient, or have no data one way or another. If supported

employment, and workers with disabilities, are to thrive, these issues need to be continuously explored, not just to figure out how cost-effective or cost-efficient programs are, but also how can they become even better.

References

- Boardman, A.E., Greenberg, D.H., Vining, A.R., & Weimer, D.L. (2006). *Cost-benefit analysis: Concepts and practice*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Bond, G.R., Dietzen, L.L., Vogler, K., Katuin, C.H., McGrew, J.H., & Miller, L.D. (1995). Toward a framework for evaluating cost and benefits of psychiatric rehabilitation: Three case examples. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 5*, 75-88.
- Braddock, D., Hemp, R., & Rizzolo, M.C. (2008). *State of the States in Developmental Disabilities, 2008*. Boulder, CO: The University of Colorado.
- Brickey, M., & Campbell, K. (1981). Fast food employment for moderately and mildly retarded adults: The McDonald's project. *Mental Retardation, 19*, 113-116.
- Cho, D.W., & Schuermann, A.C. (1980). Economic costs and benefits of private gainful employment of the severely handicapped. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 46*(4), 28-32.
- Cimera, R.E. (2011a). Does Being in Sheltered Workshops Improve the Employment Outcomes of Supported Employees with Intellectual Disabilities? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 35*, 21-28.
- Cimera, R.E. (2011b). Supported versus sheltered employment: Cumulative costs, hours worked, and wages earned. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*
- Cimera, R.E. (2010a). Can community-based high school transition programs improve the cost-efficiency of supported employment? *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 33*(1) 4-12.
- Cimera, R.E. (2010b). The national cost-efficiency of supported employees with intellectual disabilities: 2002 to 2007. *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 115*, 19-29.

- Cimera, R.E. (2010c). The national cost-efficiency of supported employees with intellectual disabilities: The worker's perspective. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 33, 123-131.
- Cimera, R.E. (2009a). Supported employment's cost-efficiency to taxpayers: 2002 to 2007. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 34, 13-20.
- Cimera, R.E. (2009b). The national costs of supported employment to vocational rehabilitation: 2002 to 2006. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 30, 1-10.
- Cimera, R.E. (2008). The cost-trends of supported versus sheltered employment. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 28, 15-20.
- Cimera, R.E. (2007a). The cost-effectiveness of supported employment and sheltered workshops in Wisconsin: FY 2002-2005. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 26, 153-158.
- Cimera, R.E. (2007b). The cumulative cost-effectiveness of supported and sheltered employees with mental retardation. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 32(4), 247-252.
- Cimera, R.E. (2007c). Utilizing natural supports to reduce the costs of supported employment. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 32(3), 1-6.
- Cimera, R.E. (2001). Utilizing coworkers as "natural supports": Evidence on cost-efficiency, job retention, and other employment outcomes. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 11, 194-201.
- Cimera, R. E. (2000). The cost-efficiency of supported employment programs: A literature review. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 14, 51-61.
- Cimera, R.E., & Oswald, G. (2009). An exploration of the costs of services funded by vocational rehabilitation. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 75, 18-26.

- Cimera, R.E. & Burgess, S. (2011). Do adults with autism benefit monetarily from working in their communities? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 34*, 173-180.
- Cimera, R. E., & Rusch, F. R. (1999). Empirical evidence on the long-term effectiveness of supported employment: A literature review. In L. M. Glidden (Ed.), *International Research on Mental Retardation (Vol. 22)*. (pp. 175-226). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Cimera, R.E., Wehman, P., West, M., & Burgess, S. (in press). Do sheltered workshops enhance employment outcomes for adults with autism spectrum disorder? *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*.
- Conley, R. (1973). *The economics of mental retardation*. Baltimore: John Hopkins.
- Conley, R.W., Rusch, F.R., McCaughrin, W.B., & Tines, J. (1989). Benefits and costs of supported employment: An analysis of the Illinois supported employment project. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 22*, 441-447.
- Hill, M., & Wehman, P. (1983). Cost benefit analysis of placing moderately and severely handicapped individuals in competitive employment. *Journal of the Association for the Severely Handicapped, 8*, 30-38.
- Hill, M.L., Banks, P.D., Handrich, R.R., Wehman, P.H., Hill, J.W., & Shafer, M.S. (1987). Benefit-cost analysis of supported competitive employment for persons with mental retardation. *Research in Developmental Disabilities, 8*, 71-89.
- Hill, M.L., Wehman, P.H., Kregel, J., Banks, P.D., & Metzler, H.M.D. (1987). Employment outcomes for people with moderate and severe disabilities: An eight-year longitudinal analysis of supported competitive employment. *Journal of the Association for the Severely Handicapped, 12*, 182-189.

- Jaeger, J., Berns, S., Douglas, E., Creech, B., Glick, B., & Kane, J. (2006). Community-based vocational rehabilitation: Effectiveness and cost impact of a proposed program model. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 40*, 452-461.
- Johnston, M.V. (1987). Cost-benefit methodologies in rehabilitation. In M.J. Fuhrer (Ed.), *Rehabilitation outcomes: Analysis and measurement* (pp. 99-113). Baltimore: Brookes.
- Knapp, S.F. (1988). Financial implications of half- and full-time employment for persons with disabilities: A response to Schloss, Wolf, and Schloss. *Exceptional Children, 55*, 181.
- Kregel, J., Wehman, P., & Banks, P.D. (1989). The effects of consumer characteristics and type of employment model on individual outcomes in supported employment. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 22*, 407-415.
- Kregel, J., Wehman, P., Revell, G., Hill, J., & Cimera, R. (2000). Supported employment benefit-cost analysis: Preliminary findings. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 14*, 153-161.
- Lam, C.S. (1986). Comparison of sheltered and supported work programs: A pilot study. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 30*(2), 66-82.
- Latimer, E.A. (2001). Economic impacts of supported employment for persons with severe mental illness. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 46*, 496-505.
- Lawhead, R. (2005, October). *Testimony to the Senate HELP Committee*. Retrieved October 8, 2008, from http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2005_10_20/Lawhead.pdf
- Lewis, D.R., Johnson, D.R., Bruininks, R.H., Kallsen, L.A., & Guillery, R.P. (1992). Is supported employment cost-effective in Minnesota? *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 3*, 67-92.

- McCaughrin, W.B., Ellis, W.K., Rusch, F.R., & Heal, L.W. (1993). Cost-effectiveness of supported employment. *Mental Retardation*, 31, 41-48.
- McCaughrin, W.B., Rusch, F.R., Conley, R.W., & Tines, J. (1991). A benefit-cost analysis of supported employment in Illinois: The first two years. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 3, 129-145.
- NASDDS & HSRI (2009). *Annual Summary Report 2007-2008*. National Core Indicators. Washington, DC: Authors.
- Noble, J.H., Conley, R.W., Banjerjee, S., & Goodman, S. (1991). Supported employment in New York state: A comparison of benefits and costs. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 2, 39-74.
- Rogers, E.S., Sciarappa, K., MacDonald-Wilson, K., & Danley, K. (1995). A benefit-cost analysis of a supported employment model for persons with psychiatric disabilities. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 18, 105-115.
- Rusch, F.R., Conley, R.W., & McCaughrin, W.B. (1993). Benefit-cost analysis of supported employment in Illinois. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 59, 31-36.
- Rusch, F.R., & Hughes, C. (1990). Historical overviews of supported employment. I F.R. Rusch (Ed.), *Supported employment: Models, methods, and issues* (pp.5-14). Sycamore, IL: Sycamore.
- Schloss, P.J., Schloss, C.N., & Wolf, C.W. (1987). Financial implications of half- and full-time employment for persons with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 54, 272-276.
- Schneider, K., Rusch, F.R., Henderson, R., & Geske, T. (1981). Competitive employment for mentally retarded persons: Costs vs. benefits. In W. Halloran (Ed.), *Funding and cost analysis*. University of Illinois: Leadership Training Institute.

- Shearn, J., Beyer, S., & Felce, D. (2000). The cost-effectiveness of supported employment for people with intellectual disabilities and high support needs: A pilot study. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities, 13*, 29-37.
- Thompson, L., Powers, G., & Houchard, B. (1992). The wage effects of supported employment. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 17*, 87-94.
- Tines, J., Rusch, F.R., McCaughrin, W., & Conley, R.W. (1990). Benefit-cost analysis of supported employment in Illinois: A statewide evaluation. *American Journal on Mental Retardation, 95*, 44-54.
- Tuckerman, P., Smith, R., Borland, J. (1999). The relative cost of employment for people with significant intellectual disability: The Australian experience. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 13*, 109-116.
- Wehman, P., Hill, J.W., Wood, W., & Parent, W. (1987). A report on competitive employment histories of persons labeled severely mentally retarded. *Journal of the Association for the Severely Handicapped, 12*, 11-17.
- Wehman, P., Hill, M., Hill, J., Brooke, V., Pendleton, P., & Britt, C. (1985). Competitive employment for persons with mental retardation: A follow-up six years later. *Mental Retardation, 23*, 274-281.
- Wehman, P., Kregel, J., Keyser-Marcus, L., Sherron-Targett, P., Campbell, L., West, M., Cifu, D.X. (2003). *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 84*, 192-196.
- Young, T. (2005, October). *Testimony to the Senate HELP Committee*. Retrieved October 8, 2008, from http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2005_10_20/Young.pdf
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011). *The 2009 HHS Poverty Guidelines*. Retrieved October 4, 2011, from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/09poverty.shtml>