Ability vs. Disability:
Working Towards
Employment and Recovery

NAMI North Carolina
28th Annual Conference

Raleigh, NC
Saturday, October 19, 2012

Presenters: Emery Cowan, Gina Price, & Diana Marsh
Session

- Unemployment issues, costs, effects, and barriers to employment
- NC Employment Initiatives
- Supported Employment in the NC Implementation Plan for DOJ
So...what is your name and what you do for a living?
So...“What do you do?”

- When we meet new people, they ask "what do you do?"
- Whether it is fair or not, what we do shapes others' opinions of who we are
- Likewise, what a person does influences his/her confidence, esteem, social role, values
- Employment affords people with disabilities the opportunity to regain a positive identity, including a sense of purpose and value.
The Issue

- Estimated that up to 70% of People with Disabilities are unemployed
- The employment rate *(USDOL, June 2012)*
  - 17.7% for people with disabilities
  - 63.9% for those without disabilities
- This includes all disabilities – physical, sensory, cognitive, mental health, developmental
- It is a human-rights issue
The Cost

- NC served 377,362 people with MH, IDD, SA through DMH and DVR in 2011
- Only 3.1% of dollars spent for all services went towards community-based employment programs
- The biggest expenditures are high-cost services like crisis, hospitalizations, and recidivism
The Effect

- Funding for care continues to grow and is not sustainable
- People with disabilities are kept in poverty, dependency and segregation
- Employers miss a key talent pool
- Communities miss tax revenue and full inclusion of their citizens
The Cause

- The focus is often on disabilities and not abilities
- SSI, SSDI, Medicaid and Medicare foster dependence
- Attitudes and beliefs of Parents, Consumers, Teachers, Service Providers
- Stigma and discrimination
Common Issues & Barriers When Seeking Work and Maintaining Employment

- Concern about keeping treatment a secret
- Fear of stigma and rejection
- Underemployment
- Economic disincentives
- Transportation
- Lack of education/experience
- Lack of job search and interviewing skills
- Inadequate self confidence in the ability to work
- Treatment program requirement conflict

Table 10. Barriers to Employment Reported by Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Percent of Members Identifying the Barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stigma and discrimination against people with mental</td>
<td>44.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of losing health or disability income benefits</td>
<td>39.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate treatment of mental health condition</td>
<td>27.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of vocational services</td>
<td>22.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of transportation to job/employment services</td>
<td>19.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>31.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
North Carolina SSI Statistics

The number of adults on SSI as of December 2011:

- 2009: 127,015
- 2010: 133,281
- 2011: 138,172

http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/
The Benefit Trap

- To get SSI/SSDI, an individual must document a disability and that they cannot work
- Once benefits are obtained, one of the biggest concerns people have about going to work is the possibility of losing Medicaid
- SSI benefits are suspended when a recipient no longer meets eligibility requirements

But there are Work Incentives and Benefits Counselors!
- Many are different for SSI and SSDI
- NC has a “Medicaid Buy-in” program “Health Coverage For Workers With Disabilities”

Employment Works!

- Employment is an important stepping-stone to recovery
  - Sense of identity other than a diagnosis
  - Using skills and talents unique to individual
  - Personal satisfaction
  - Community inclusion
  - Social Integration
  - More discretionary income is necessary for a comfortable life with choices
  - Reduces "double stigma" – mental illness and lack of occupation
  - For some, it leads to independence from system

emphasize abilities, not disabilities!
New DHHS Employment Focus
Employment Initiatives

- **NC Employment First Steering Committee (NCEFSC)**
  - Est. March 2011 in a response to community concerns around the publication of “Segregated and Exploited” (2011) by the National Disability Rights Network (DRNC)
  - The group now has about 40 members currently representing all disabilities - includes DVR, DMH, DPI, DMA, and stakeholders, families, consumers, youth
  - Goals:
    - To discuss the future of employment services in this state
    - To strengthen the collaboration between the state divisions, advocates, organizations, stakeholders
    - To be a launching point for ideas, issues, initiatives

Employment Initiatives

- **Employment First Position Paper**
  - Approved on October 24, 2011
  - Cross-disability, statewide employment initiative
  - Endorsed by NAMI NC and over 50 other organizations!

- **Talking Points & Resolution Statement**
  - Approved August 2012 by the committee
  - Next step, maybe **Policy or Legislation** based on position paper

[https://sites.google.com/site/employmentfirstnc/](https://sites.google.com/site/employmentfirstnc/)
Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome for all citizens with disabilities regardless of level of disability, in a job of their choosing with supports and accommodations provided as necessary to achieve and maintain employment.
So what is Employment First?

- Employment first is an “umbrella” term where states and programs align to emphasize the importance of employment focusing on ability vs. disability. It does not mean that employment is the only outcome for all; rather, that employment is the expectation not the exception.

- Some of the goals and guiding principles of Employment First include:
  - Cross-Disability effort: intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health, and substance abuse
  - Individual Choices
  - Appropriate accommodations and supports
  - Resources for Youth in Transition
  - Resources for Self-Employment
  - Employer and business education and awareness
  - Employment-enhancing education and career advancement

- 19 states now have an official Employment First policy, 6 of these states have a cross-disability effort

http://www.apse.org/employmentfirst/
NC joined the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) on October 2011 with funding from the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities - DMH is the lead agency, in partnership with DVR, DPI, DMA

Cross-disability effort

National consultants assist states committed to improve employment outcomes- helping us develop…

- Best Practices
- Employment First
- Employment in Managed Care
- Performance Outcomes

http://www.seln.org/
Employment Services

- **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)**
  - Supported Employment, Transitional Employment, support services, On the Job Training, school & formal education, work adjustment training
  - Rehab Counselors are getting more MH training and focus

- **Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SA)**
  - State-Funded Supported Employment and Long Term Vocational Supports

*Employment Services are mostly provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) – who contract with LME/MCOs and VR – very few have links to mental health providers*
Employment Success Stories

- October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), sponsored by ODEP, DOL
- Idea discussed at the NC Employment First Steering Committee meeting as part of the Employment First Initiative
- 30 stories from around the state
- Read the publication on our EF blog

https://sites.google.com/site/employmentfirstnc/
Why I think Employment Works!

By: Diana Marsh, CPSS
DOJ Settlement Agreement signed 8/23/12

- North Carolina has agreed to develop and implement effective measures to prevent inappropriate institutionalization and to provide adequate and appropriate public services and supports identified through person centered planning in the most integrated setting appropriate to meet the needs of individuals with SMI, who are in or at risk of living in congregate settings and offer alternative choices.

- The State is required to develop projects that will help people live successfully in the community:
  - Must develop housing includes Transition Coordinators and InReach
  - Must develop wrap-around services, includes ACT, Supported Employment, CST, Peer Support…

Supported Employment Proposal

- Per DOJ, Supported Employment must use evidence-based models and must comply with ADA & Olmstead’s integration mandate
- Implementation plan includes:
  - Rewriting service definitions & reassessing rates
  - Workforce Development- New staff training and technical assistance processes
  - Fidelity measurement processes and outcome data
  - New Innovations
    - “Certified Employment Support Professional” credentialing
    - Use of “Employment Peer Mentors”
- Opportunity for Medicaid (B3) service, as well as state-funded services
- Ensuring VR collaboration
  - Individuals have informed choice of receiving SE services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
The State will also need to review and enhance services such as ACT, CST and PSR for supports

- People don’t fail at a job because they can’t do the job, it’s usually due to other issues (symptoms, stress, conflicts, etc)

Cross-training will also need to be provided to Transition Coordinators, Care Coordinators (and other LME/MCO staff), and other providers to promote employment for all
Evidence-Based Models:  
A Different Approach to Supported Employment

**SE is a well-known and researched evidence-based practice:**

1. The SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) SE Model
2. The Dartmouth IPS (Individual Placement and Support) SE model
   - Took the SAMHSA toolkit & enhanced it with extensive research, pilots, and additional resources.
How it’s different…

- SE programs aim to quickly capitalize on a person’s strengths and motivation…
- de-emphasizes prevocational assessment and training and puts a premium on rapid job search and attainment
- work around disclosure issues (these are often hidden or invisible disabilities)
- personalized benefits counseling
- avoid imposing unrealistic time limitations on services, while focusing on helping consumers become as independent and self-reliant as possible
Core Principles

- Eligibility is based on choice - **no one is excluded, not even because of relapse or being off medication**
- Competitive employment is the goal - **no group or facility-based services**
- Supported employment is integrated with treatment - **SE staff participate regularly in clinical treatment team meetings and coordinate care with clinical staff**
- Rapid job search - **starts soon after a individual expresses interest in working**
- Follow-along supports are continuous - **Support is provided over time, as long as consumers want it**
- Individual preferences are important - **highly person-centered**
SAMHSA SE model:  
NC’s 1st Evidence-Based SE Definition

**Supported Employment is comprised of two phases**

- **Phase 1: Supported Employment**
  - the intensive “supported” phase of obtaining a job:
    - Rapid job search (community based assessment, job sampling, job shadowing & participation in business-led internship training programs),
    - Job development (securing a job the community or the development of a micro-enterprise or small business)
    - On-site job training (including the development new skills)

- **Phase 2: Long Term Vocational Supports**
  - the “maintenance” phase of keeping a job:
    - providing critical elements of phase 1, as long and as often as the person needs it to retain employment.
    - Stress management, budgeting, benefits counseling, conflict resolution, crisis plans, natural supports

http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Employment-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA08-4365
Dartmouth IPS-SE Model

- Also looking to implement this model in the next year possibly through pilot sites…
  - *Dartmouth IPS (Individual Placement and Support) SE*
    - Evidence-Based Practice for individuals with SPMI
    - Developed from the SAMHSA SE Toolkit and includes a 25-item fidelity scale
  - *Characteristics*
    - *It uses a multidisciplinary team approach*
    - IPS supported employment practitioners focus on client strengths
    - Rapid job search and personalized benefits counseling
    - Practitioners work in collaboration with state vocational rehabilitation
    - Services are individualized and long-lasting

- DVRs in these states have integrated this model into their service array: *Connecticut, Illinois, Minnesota, Vermont, Kentucky*

http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/index.html
State Divisions

- NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse
  - Services Locator http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddasas/services.htm
  - Advocacy and Customer Service
    http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddasas/consumeradvocacy/index.htm
  - Employment webpage coming soon!

- NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Directory of Employment Programs
    http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/pwd/crs.htm
  - Think Beyond the Label® partner

- NC Division of Medical Assistance
  - Health Coverage for Workers with Disabilities
    http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/medicaid/hcwd.htm
Employment Resources

Employment-Specific Organizations & Advisory Groups
- NC Association for Persons in Supported Employment (NCAPSE) [http://www.ncapse.org/](http://www.ncapse.org/)
- State Rehabilitation Council [http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/rehabcouncil.htm](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/rehabcouncil.htm)

Mental Health & Substance Abuse
- NAMI on Supported Employment [http://www.nami.org/template.cfm?template=/contentManagement/contentDisplay.cfm&contentID=8364](http://www.nami.org/template.cfm?template=/contentManagement/contentDisplay.cfm&contentID=8364)
- National Association of Mental Health Advisory and Planning Councils [http://namhpac.org/resources.html#05](http://namhpac.org/resources.html#05)
- Dartmouth IPS Center [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/index.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/index.html)

General Information
- Job Accommodations by Disability [http://askjan.org/media/atoz.htm](http://askjan.org/media/atoz.htm)
Local Recovery Resources

Peer-Run Organizations:
- NC Mental Health Consumers Organization (NCMHC0) [http://www.ncmhco.org/](http://www.ncmhco.org/)
- The Healing Place of Wake County [http://www.hpowc.org/](http://www.hpowc.org/)
- NC Youth M.O.V.E (Motivating Others through Voices of Experience) [http://www.ncfamiliesunited.org/youthmove.html](http://www.ncfamiliesunited.org/youthmove.html)

Recovery and Advocacy Groups:
- In the Rooms- Meeting Locator for NA, AA, OA, CA [http://meetings.intherooms.com/](http://meetings.intherooms.com/)
- Veterans & Military Families- Citizen Soldier Support [Program & Trainings](http://www.disabilityrightsnc.org/pages/283/events-workshops/)
National Recovery Resources

- Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center (BRSS TACS) [http://www.center4si.com/whats_new/index.cfm](http://www.center4si.com/whats_new/index.cfm)
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) [http://www.dbsalliance.org/site/PageServer?pagename=home](http://www.dbsalliance.org/site/PageServer?pagename=home)
- Faces and Voices of Recovery (addictions) [http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/)
- In the Rooms- an online global SA Recovery community [http://www.intherooms.com/](http://www.intherooms.com/)
- Mental Health America (MHA) [http://www.nmha.org/](http://www.nmha.org/)
- NAMI - National Alliance for the Mentally Ill [http://www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)
- NAMI STAR (Support Technical Assistance Resource) Center [http://www.consumerstar.org/home.html](http://www.consumerstar.org/home.html)
- National Empowerment Center [http://www.power2u.org](http://www.power2u.org)
- Resiliency Center: [http://www.resiliencycenter.com/definitions.shtml](http://www.resiliencycenter.com/definitions.shtml)
- SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services [http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/](http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/)
- Taking Charge [http://www.pljunlimited.com/takingcharge/tc.htm](http://www.pljunlimited.com/takingcharge/tc.htm)
- What a Difference a Friend Makes! [http://whatadifference.samhsa.gov/learn.asp?nav=nav01_7&content=1_7_recovery](http://whatadifference.samhsa.gov/learn.asp?nav=nav01_7&content=1_7_recovery)