

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

LOB #275:

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AND DAY SERVICES

Purpose

Intellectual Disability Employment and Day Services provide employment assistance and training to improve individual independence and self-sufficiency to help individuals enter and remain in the workforce. Employment and day services for people with intellectual disability are provided primarily through contracts and partnerships with private, nonprofit and/or public agencies. This service area includes developmental services; sheltered, group and individualized supported employment; the Cooperative Employment Program (CEP); and self-directed employment services.

Day or developmental services provides a meaningful day activity utilizing self-maintenance skills training and nursing care for people with intellectual disability who have a severe disability. Needs include various types of services in areas such as intensive medical care, behavioral interventions, socialization, communication, fine and gross motor skills, daily and community living skills, and possibly some level of employment. Transportation services are also available for persons to attend Employment and Day Programs if there are no other transportation options available to them.

Description

Many individuals with intellectual disability (ID) desire the same life opportunities as the population at large. They desire meaningful social activities and employment, caring friends and family, and a safe and accessible home in which to live. The nature of their disability necessitates reliance on a continuum of long-term services and supports to help them lead successful, independent lives. The services are in demand, and periodically a waiting list for day support and employment services exists resulting from limited funding and a weak economy in which employment sites and positions are reduced or eliminated.

ID Employment Services provide assistance and training to improve individual independence and self-sufficiency to obtain vocational training and support to enter and remain in the workforce. Services are tailored to meet individual needs, but also are defined with progressive independence so persons can move to the most independent service level possible. Often persons with ID progress through the system as they mature and gain experience, in the same way anyone would do in their career.

ID Employment Services are divided into two categories: Developmental Services and Employment Services.

Developmental (Day Support) Services are activities that may include learning independent living skills, enhancing personal activities of daily living, developing pre-vocational skills, and peer-run recovery “drop in” centers. Developmental (Day Support) Services provide self-maintenance training and nursing care for individuals with intellectual disability who are severely disabled in areas such as intensive medical care, behavioral interventions, socialization, communication, fine and gross motor skills, daily and community living skills, and possibly limited remunerative employment. Developmental Services are provided primarily through contracts and partnerships with private and public agencies and organizations.

- **Sheltered Employment** provides individuals with intellectual disability remunerative employment in a supervised setting with support services for habilitative development. Sheltered Employment Services are provided primarily through contracts and partnerships with private and public agencies and organizations.
- **Self-Directed Services** are an alternative to traditional developmental and employment services for people with intellectual disability. The individual/family is ultimately responsible to determine service needs (with input from the individual’s CSB support coordinator and interdisciplinary team); identify a service schedule; and recruit, hire, train, supervise, compensate, and evaluate

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direct service providers. Services are provided within an established budget under contract with the CSB.

Employment Services may include job placement (which for some individuals may be in a group or facility-based setting) and employment service coordination. Depending on an individual's needs, various levels of ongoing support can be provided.

- **Group Supported Employment** provides individuals with intellectual disability intensive job placement assistance for off-site, supervised contract work and competitive employment in the community. Job retention services are also provided. Group Supported Employment Services are provided primarily through contracts and partnerships with private and public agencies and organizations.
- **Individualized Supported Employment** provides individuals with intellectual disability remunerative employment with necessary support services. This service primarily serves persons with less severe disabilities and stresses social integration with non-disabled workers. Individualized Employment Services are provided primarily through contracts and partnerships with private and public agencies and organizations.
- **Cooperative Employment Program (CEP)** is operated directly by the CSB and provides supported competitive employment services to eligible individuals with developmental disabilities. The CEP is a partnership jointly funded and operated by the state Department of Rehabilitative Services and the CSB. Using an individualized approach, program staff assesses skills, analyzes job requirements, and provides on-the-job training for disabled individuals and disability awareness training for employers. Extensive follow-up services are provided to ensure the success of the job placement. In addition to the job-training component, the CEP offers mobility training to enhance individuals' ability to use public transportation.

Transportation Services are provided or coordinated for persons attending the above programs, if there are no other viable transportation options available to the individual. Transportation services are provided by FASTRAN or purchased from other employment and day service providers who offer a transportation service. Coordinated transportation includes Metro Access.

Benefits

Employment or a meaningful day activity is an important part of everyone's life. Employment provides many benefits including meaning, inclusion, economic self-determination, and identity. It also reduces reliance on the safety net and other support services that become necessary for handling the myriad of issues that can emerge when someone is unemployed or is without purposeful activity. Employment or a meaningful day activity is particularly important for someone with intellectual disability. Advocates and others often refer to the importance for persons with ID in the community of leading "a life like yours," meaning a normal life. Employment or a day activity is crucial to achieving a life like yours.

In FY 2015, 1,318 individuals with intellectual disability received directly-operated or contracted day support and employment services. Directly-operated services were provided by the CSB's Cooperative Employment Program and the Self-Directed Services program. Contracted services were provided by 16 community-based organizations. Of the 1,318 individuals with ID who received these services, 521 were funded through the Medicaid Waiver and 797 were funded by local tax dollars.

The local economy continues to impact group and individual supported employment with the elimination of community-based jobs and the reduction of work hours available. CSB staff and community-based service providers are working to build community capacity to result in additional job placement opportunities. Even with a reduction in employment opportunities, 95 percent of adults receiving these services maintained or improved their level of employment due to the creativity of service providers to find alternative activity. This service area provided group support employment services to 319 adults who earned a total of \$1,676,848, or an average hourly wage of \$6.58 an hour. The 205 adults who received individual supported employment earned a total of \$3,437,092, or an average hourly wage of \$11.90.

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Mandates

Employment and Day Services for persons with an intellectual disability is not a mandated service however the outcome of employment and/or a meaningful day activity is a value of the community, County, and government. Many students with ID graduate from mandated services through Fairfax County Public Schools into the non-mandated Employment and Day Services for adults with ID.

Trends and Challenges

The need for CSB Employment and Day Services for persons with intellectual disability continues to increase on an annual basis. As an example, the number of special education graduates with intellectual disability needing employment and day support services after graduation will continue to place demands on the CSB. Services provided to these individuals are largely funded through local dollars. Approximately 100 special education graduates with intellectual disability leave the school system every year. In June 2014, 120 special education students graduated, the largest number to date. In June 2015, 85 students graduated. Below is a projection from Fairfax County Public Schools for the next 5 years of students with ID who will be aging out of school services and will be eligible for and need CSB services:

Year of School Completion				
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
91	110	117	136	131

Sheltered Employment and Employment First

CSB provides several types of ID employment and day support services, including habilitation (day), sheltered employment, group-supported employment, and individual supported employment. In sheltered employment, people with disabilities are paid based on their productivity compared to the productivity of a minimum wage worker (referred to as “commensurate wages”). Usually, but not always, the productivity and amount paid is less than minimum wage and providers must have a minimum wage waiver from the Department of Labor to pay employees on this piece rate basis. Recently, the nationwide “Employment First” movement is expected to be adopted by local providers that will eventually eliminate sheltered employment programs. This change, along with the state’s imminent Medicaid Waiver Rate Reform, will significantly impact ID Employment and Day Services. CSB staff is currently working on short-term and long-term solutions and will forward a plan to the Board of Supervisors for consideration during the FY 2017 budget cycle.

Self-Directed Services

The Self-Directed Services (SDS) program was established in July 2007 as a programmatic and cost saving alternative to traditional day support and employment services for people with intellectual disability. CSB provides funds directly to families who can purchase customized services for a family member, rather than have CSB coordinate the service. Services can include: training in functional self-help and daily living skills; task learning skills which improve motor and perceptual skills; community integration and awareness; safety skills; work and work environment skills; social/interpersonal skills; and participation in community-based recreational activities, work, or volunteer activities. Funding for each SDS contract is calculated at 80 percent of the average cost of traditional day support and employment services, for recurring annualized costs avoided of approximately \$4,500 per person achieved by eliminating CSB as the pass-thru entity. In FY 2015, 58 families participated in SDS.

Department of Justice Settlement Agreement

As the state and County move to implement the requirements and services required as part of DOJ Settlement Agreement, there is a significant challenge for CSB ID Employment and Day Services. Each person impacted by DOJ Settlement Agreement must be offered “Employment First.” If that is not chosen, then an integrated (as much as possible) day activity program must be offered. Currently there are not resources in the community to meet these demands. Providers are reluctant to commit to expansion with related uncertain funding for those individuals needing services. A condition of DOJ Settlement Agreement is elimination of the Medicaid Waiver waitlist by 2020, but again neither state nor County resources appear

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to be adequate to meet these increased needs. However, elimination of 100 percent local funding for those currently on the waiver waitlist could reduce costs to the County for persons with ID receiving Employment and Day Services. Additionally, as the State moves to expand the category of those eligible for Waivers to include individuals with Developmental Disabilities, there could be significantly more persons needing services, mainly persons with Autism.

Waiver Reform

Medicaid Waiver reform in Virginia will result in redefined services, rates, and eligibility criteria. CSB continues to wait for final actions from DBHDS and the General Assembly regarding reforms. With a major focus on inclusion, community integration, choice, and least restrictive settings, this effort will tax the system to provide community-based employment and day programs. Services are planned so that they will be able to meet individual needs to a much greater extent than they do currently. This means making significantly expanded service options available on an hourly basis, rather than a unit basis. Related Medicaid Waiver reimbursement rates have yet to be established for many of the services. In addition, the level of service will be based on a needs analysis called the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS). Current SIS assessment is ongoing. Given these changes, it is not at all clear what the financial impact will be to ID Employment and Day Services and the County.

Waiver Rates

Medicaid Waiver rates are currently inadequate to meet the cost of service in Northern Virginia (or in many other parts of the state). Fairfax County has generously attempted to find ways to reimburse providers so that needed services can be provided. It is unclear at this point how Waiver reform will impact Medicaid Waiver rates or what sort of gap between cost and reimbursement will remain.

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #275: Intellectual Disability Employment and Day Services			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$367,353	\$659,839	\$756,724
Benefits	137,465	264,270	341,915
Operating Expenses	17,858,261	19,731,883	22,097,382
Total Expenditures	\$18,363,079	\$20,655,992	\$23,196,021
Total Revenue	\$332,187	\$178,751	\$180,000
<u>Transfers In:</u>			
Transfer In from General Fund	\$18,030,892	\$20,477,241	\$23,016,021
Total Transfers In	\$18,030,892	\$20,477,241	\$23,016,021
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	10 / 10	10 / 10	12 / 12
Total Positions	10 / 10	10 / 10	12 / 12

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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Number of individuals served	1,286	1,284	1,318	1,350	1,350
Number of individuals for whom 100% of services are locally funded	689	712	797	840	840
Average cost per individual for whom 100% of services are locally funded	\$16,704	\$16,224	\$17,575	\$18,821	\$18,821
Average annual wages of individuals with an intellectual disability receiving group supported employment services	\$5,858	\$6,006	\$5,891	\$5,900	\$5,900
Average annual wages of individuals with an intellectual disability receiving individual supported employment services	\$16,553	\$16,831	\$16,777	\$16,725	\$16,725

During the past fiscal year, 1,318 individuals with intellectual disability received directly-operated and contracted day support and employment services. Directly-operated services were provided by the CSB's Cooperative Employment Program and the Self-Directed Services program. Contracted services were provided by 16 community-based organizations. Of these individuals, 797 were funded by non-Medicaid Waiver resources (Fairfax County) and 521 were funded through the Medicaid Waiver.

The number of people receiving services increased over the 1,284 served in FY 2014 due to several factors. Through a multi-year review process, services eligibility, current residency and current level of service needs have been reviewed and evaluated. As a result of appropriate and intentional service discharges, opportunities for new service recipients have been increased. This is a trend that is likely to continue in upcoming fiscal years. In addition, the number of people with intellectual disability receiving this and other CSB services will continue to increase as individuals are transitioned out of state training centers and into community services. The average cost per adult served was \$17,575, an 8 percent increase over \$16,831 in FY 2014 primarily due to changes in the levels of service required for program participants.

The local economy continues to impact group and individual supported employment with the elimination of community-based jobs and the reduction of hours available. CSB staff and community-based service providers are working to build community capacity to result in additional job placement opportunities. Even with a reduction in employment opportunities, 95 percent of adults maintained or improved their level of employment, largely due to the resourcefulness of service providers in finding alternative placements. People who received group support employment services earned an average annual wage of \$5,891, and those who received individual supported employment earned an average annual wage of \$16,777. Average annual wages for both group and individual supported employment were slightly lower than the previous year. It is not uncommon to see some fluctuation in this outcome, which varies based on the number of hours worked each year.

Reduction or elimination of Sheltered Employment is a trend nationally and state-wide. In addition to the call for discontinuing Sheltered Employment in the DOJ Settlement Agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services will no longer allow Medicaid Waiver reimbursement for Sheltered Employment. Many local providers are discontinuing or eliminating this service. People who will be impacted by a discontinuation of Sheltered Employment will be assessed through the person-centered planning process to identify their needs and preferences for alternative options for programs. At this time, it is not clear how variables such as individual needs, medical necessity and provider service options will impact potential cost increases. The CSB will continue to explore community options for employment programs, and will attempt to keep costs steady for alternative options through current providers.