Employment First Task Force Meeting

January 26, 2017

**Members present**: Elise McMillan, Wanda Willis, Briana Moore, Donna Goodaker, Lynnette Henderson, Carrie Guiden, Kim Black, Tom Cheetham, Katie Lee, Lisa Primm, Rachael Jenkins, Michelle Halman, Blake Shearer, Bianca Knight, Ruth Brock, Lorri Mabry, Taylor Fife, Carrie Brna, Janet Shouse, Matthew Parriott, Mary Fultineer, Doria Panvini, Cristi Blalock, Jeff Fladen, Jeremy Norden-Paul, Bob Nicholas, Stephanie Cowherd, Ellyn Wilbur, Michelle Halman, Corrine Wiesmueller, Nichole Phillips, Nathan Walsh

* Welcome and introductions
* Thank you to DRT for lending space for the Task Force meetings
* Ted Townsend and Ann Thompson from ECD attended as guests
* For people participating remotely, there may be the option in the future to join via video/Skype
* Rachael shared a story that inspires her and will pass the baton to someone else to continue the storytelling tradition at the next meeting

**Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP) update:**

* 10 core states
* Reduction in TA hours for all states
* Pushes us to be more strategic and look at sustainability
* 3 main goal areas-

1. Provider transformation;
   1. Madison Haywood
      1. ODEP is allowing us to use Tyler Hampton (director of SRVS) as a local SME, to team up with national SME
   2. McNairy County Developmental Services
   3. Pacesetters
2. Customized employment- Customized Employment Consortium (CEC)
3. Mental health- MOU & dual diagnosis pilot in east TN

**Ted Townsend, COO of TN Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD)**

* Front door of commerce for the state, working with employer, investing in communities (rural and urban)
* 130,000 net new jobs, $23 billion in capital
* Median household income is second only to Montana in percentage growth
* Council of State Governments- “Work Matters” report delivered as a result; advised on disability inclusion. State faces lack of workforce that is skilled, trained and ready.
* Launch of TN Promise and TN Reconnect all intended to meet that head on, training a workforce for generations to come.
* In order to get there at the rate that we need to, we must focus on high school age, or sooner.
* ECD is looking to partner in order to achieve this goal. They have the knowledge of what skill level is needed and can help eliminate barriers.
* ECD feels it is their responsibility to add this component, identify their role, partner, collaborate, ideate, and get results. Find that metric/key performance measure and address it.
* Also looking at what policies are necessary for employers to get in the game (working with Senator Massey on this).

**ECF CHOICES Update**

* Employment numbers reported from MCOs
* At the beginning of the week of January 23rd, 728 enrolled
* 348 people in the process
* Sum of enrolled and in-process (1076) is 63% of goal of 1700
* 2 MCOs currently
  + Amerigroup-29 working in competitive employment, 1 member self-employed, 1 participating in the choice process; average hourly wage is $9/hour
  + BlueCare- 184 members receiving pre-employment services; 50 members actually working
* Weekly implementation calls with MCOs occurring
* Gathering stakeholder feedback re: what’s working and what’s not
* Future plans:
  + 900 additional slots will be in the next budget request;
  + United Healthcare slated to come on board in July;
  + 2nd mailing for 6,000 people targeted at people who may want to enroll
* Stakeholder meetings (if someone is interested in attending please contact Corrine Wiesmueller: [Corrine.n.wiesmueller@tn.gov](mailto:Corrine.n.wiesmueller@tn.gov))
  + MCO advisory committees (quarterly meetings-check with your MCO)
  + TennCare Advisory/Stakeholder Group meets quarterly (last meeting was 1/18/17)
  + State Transformation Leadership Group meets monthly (next meeting 2/9/17)
  + MCO and Provider workgroup meets monthly (next meeting 2/2).

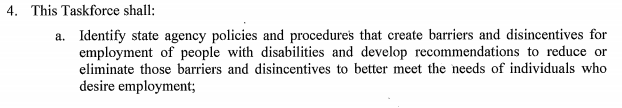
**Workgroup updates (see attachment)**

1. **Policy:** 
   * Youth transition MOU w/ 6 agencies signed on.
   * Finalized the draft of 2017 Employment 1st strategic plan.
   * Supported Decision Making-huge education piece will be needed to make this successful. A few states currently have legislation or are working toward it and TN wants to be a leader in this area.
   * Working with DOL and VR on implementation of WIOA.
   * Importance of data and using that data to make business decisions. Want to talk to ECD about some of the possibilities.
   * Increasing the employment among people with disabilities in state government. DOHR has been approached and is very supportive. First student with a disability entered Governor’s internship program this semester. Very competitive. Has his own office and a support person who will fade out once he learns the job. It is one semester. Internship done 3 times a year.
   * Meeting set up with hospitality manager, Lauren Hill, for all of the state parks to discuss next steps for getting a path to get people with disabilities hired.
2. **Employers and Providers**:
   * Model Community Employer Tool Kit. All pieces exist, but just need to be pulled together. Made accessible and there is a good outline. Meeting Feb 15.
   * Employer Leadership Committee (ELC)- Asking people to serve 1 year. Every 3 months a new group that has been nominated will be selected. 2nd invitation will go out soon. In the works with MNPS and Williamson County schools on how they can be involved. Learning how to engage them and help them maintain expectations.
   * Employer outreach continues. Open to scheduling additional presentations if you know of someone. Why does it make good sense to employ people with disabilities? Most effective ways in TN to get people employed are discussed, including Project Search and the Walgreens REDI Initiative. Offer that as an option to ECD.
   * Organizing employer workgroup. What barriers do you see that needs to lead to policy and systems change? Goal is to not work on topics that occur at STEC or VR meetings.
   * Occupational Diploma. Janet Shouse recommends EDC receive education about OD and train employers on it. Recommendation to try Pilot Flying Jay-- looking for a contact in the company; headquarters in Knoxville.
3. **Individuals and Families:** 
   * See handout for list of blogs. Updates about ECF are popular blogs.
4. **Data**
   * We have been collecting a nice set of data beginning with publications.
   * If you are applying for a grant or are doing a presentation, please use this data.
   * Possible to bring in a post-doctoral researcher to help with data analysis and moving projects along.
   * Maryville was the lead applicant and will bring in Pellissippi State for their community conversation.
   * Large survey was with transition teachers
   * Employers and VR counselors were both very interested in participating in survey.
5. **Communications**
   * ECF CHOICES- we want to invite a representative from TennCare to think about ECF CHOICES communication strategies. Workgroup members have access to resources and connections to the target populations, just need to know what to say and how to say it
   * Taking Hire My Strengths year-round. Rather than sending people to a website, hand them a factsheet about Hire My Strengths. It can be on social media 30 seconds later. The draft will be polished up by TennesseeWorks. Can be centered around events such as the Disability MegaConference and Southeastern Post -Secondary Education Alliance Conference.
6. **Mental Health** 
   * Objectives:
     + Access to IPS- evidence-based model.
     + MOU to streamline services between DMHSAS and VR.
     + DMHSAS did not receive TTI grant, but still looking at doing the dual diagnosis pilot with Frontier.
     + Question: Can this group work on getting VR approval quicker so cases can be opened and people do not lose jobs?

**Employment First Strategic Plan 2017**

* Has been through several rounds of feedback, which has been incorporated into final draft.
* The hope is that this is a practical document that you can use in the workgroups and make sure that you are being guided by this document, or the document may need to be updated to reflect efforts. Not set in stone.
* Task Force unanimously approved the 2017 strategic plan

**Transportation for people with disabilities**



* Brainstorming list (non-exhaustive)
  + Resources
    - Access to Work grant (through Northwest TN Human Resource Agency)
    - Department of Transportation grants for new vehicles (5310)
    - Volunteer Senior Assistance Transportation (Knoxville)
    - Helping Hands transportation (crosses county lines)
    - Social security counseling/benefits
    - Vanpools (TMA)
    - Enterprise fleet rentals
    - Travel trainers (through HRAs)
    - Night buses (e.g. in Johnson City)
    - Carpooling with coworkers, etc.
  + Barriers
    - Lack of same-day and on-demand options for public transportation
    - Impact of inclement weather
    - Cost of public transportation
    - Lack of options in rural areas
    - Not being able to easily cross county lines
    - Accessibility of Uber, taxis, etc.
    - Difficulty of getting around during “non-traditional” hours, i.e. evenings and weekends
    - Low reimbursement rates for transportation
    - Lack of first/last mile options
    - Definition of what is deemed “medically necessary” per Medicaid
  + Ideas
    - Cities to specifically include people with disabilities and accessibility issues in transportation plans
    - Inclusive transportation planning committees
    - Open access for everyone
    - Same day and on-demand public transportation services
    - Funding free rides on public transportation (income-based)
    - Safety training for drivers
    - Expand “good Samaritan” liability legislation
    - 24-hour availability of transportation services
    - Coordination among providers
    - More cars (not just large vans)
    - Use of vehicles that are “sitting around”, not otherwise in use (e.g. churches, schools, etc.)
    - Expand travel training programs
    - Expand medical appointment transportation to be able to use to get to/from work (i.e. broadening Medicaid definition of “medically necessary”)
    - Non-profit Uber-type service and/or non-profit branch of existing private company
    - Transportation education/outreach
    - Technology to track Access rides via phone app

**Next Task Force Meeting will be in late April. Doodle poll is included with minutes.**