TN Department of Disability & Aging

INNOVATION CENTER
Innovation Pathway Services – Service Definition

Service Description:
Innovation Pathway Service

Outcome Area:
Health, Wellness, Community Integration, Innovation and Independence

Service Area:
Innovation Service

Description:
Innovation Pathway Services are designed to transform traditional service delivery models into dynamic, collaborative support ecosystems improving the participant's experience. These services leverage technology, creative space utilization, and person-centered strategies to foster independence, community inclusion, and competitive integrated employment for individuals with ID/DD and/or aging individuals within Tennessee. Innovation Pathway Services emphasize the shift from clinical-based care to community-based engagement, utilizing the "Dignity of Risk/Opportunity of Risk" framework to empower individuals to explore their environments, build meaningful relationships, and achieve self-determined goals.

Innovation Pathway Services are intended to serve as a bridge between traditional support and full community participation. By integrating Enabling Technology and modern person-centered planning, these services focus on optimizing an individual's personal environment and support network to ensure long-term sustainability and independence through completion of a particular goal OR milestone. In short, people will come to the DDA Innovation Center with a particular goal in mind (or pursuit of a specific interest), it shall be the task of Innovation Center staff to provide the participant with a person-centered assessment resulting in the ability to access necessary resources or supports to get on a pathway to achieve targeted goals.

Definition:
1. The Innovation Manager works with individuals, their families, and their support network to audit and redesign the person's support ecosystem, identifying pathways to assist people to achieve desired goals.
2. Innovation Pathway Services prioritize the integration of Enabling Technology to increase autonomy or maintain self-sufficiency. This includes assessment, implementation, and training on assistive devices, smart-home technology, and digital platforms that reduce the need for constant, direct human intervention.
3. The service facilitates the transition of physical or virtual spaces into "Innovation Hubs,"

where individuals can practice real-world skills and access resources that promote independent living and competitive integrated employment.

4. Innovation Pathway Services utilize data-informed person-centered planning to identify gaps in an individual's current support structure and develop creative, non-traditional solutions that utilize natural support and community assets when applicable.
5. The Innovation Manager provides coaching to existing support staff, aging persons, and family members on how to transition from a "caregiving" role to a "facilitation" role, ensuring that the individual is the primary decisionmaker in their own life.
6. The service includes the development of a "Personal Innovation Roadmap," a dynamic plan that maps out an individual's path to independence, incorporating their unique goals for employment, education, self-sufficiency, and social contribution.
7. Innovation Pathway Services emphasize the development of "Soft-Skill Ecosystems," which provide structured opportunities for individuals to practice social interaction, conflict resolution, and self-advocacy within their chosen community settings.
8. The service is designed to be time-limited and outcome-focused, with a clear expectation that supports will be faded upon completion of Personal Innovation Roadmap.
9. The Innovation Manager actively identifies and removes barriers to inclusion, whether those barriers are physical, social, or systemic, by collaborating with community partners and stakeholders to create more accessible environments.

Innovation Service outcomes include, but are not limited to:

1. Increased Technological Independence: The successful adoption and utilization of enabling technologies that reduce reliance on paid, in-person supports.
2. Successful Environmental Transition: The measurable shift from clinical or restrictive settings to integrated, community-based environments of the individual's choosing.
3. Enhanced Social Capital: The development of a robust, self-sustaining network of natural supports and community relationships that exists independently of the formal service system.
4. Attainment of Integrated Outcomes: Achieving documented milestones in competitive integrated employment, post-secondary education, or independent living arrangements.
5. Demonstrated Skill Proficiency: The ability to navigate community settings, manage personal routines, and utilize public or independent transportation safely and confidently.
6. Self-Advocacy and Decision-Making: The application of Supported Decision-Making (SDM) practices to navigate life choices, evidenced by the individual's increased control over their daily schedule and long-term goals.
7. Sustainable Support Ecosystems: The creation of a support structure that remains effective even as formal service hours are reduced or faded.
8. Improved Quality of Life Metrics: Positive changes in an individual's self-reported satisfaction, social engagement, and perceived role within their community.

9. Aging in Place Resource Library: Innovation pathways services can assist aging populations to access valuable resources to maintain independence within a given environment.
10. Displacement Prevention: Access to collaboration and resources to ensure people can remain in their chosen living domicile or environment.

The Department recognizes Dignity/Opportunity of Risk and Person-Centered Planning Practices as a function of Innovation Services to ensure all parties are informed of the risks associated.