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# HCBS Conference MLTSS Intensive

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# Importance of Employment

- Employment First – competitive and integrated employment preferred
- Essential component to meaningful community integration
- There is a compelling business case for employment of people with disabilities
  - 48% lower turnover rate than those who do not have disabilities,
  - have lower sick time use, and
  - perform equal to or better than nondisabled individuals 90% of the time

# Key Trends

- The **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (“WIOA”)**, effective July 1, 2015, requires all states to create a unified plan to align investment into workforce, education, economic development, vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid, and other human and social service delivery systems in support of a high-quality workforce development system that serves youth and adult job seekers with disabilities.
- Additional focus on employment has come from recent efforts associated with **Employment First (EF) policy**. EF prioritizes integrated employment and employment supports programs for persons with disabilities over separated employment or day-activity programs.
- **Employment benefits within managed care programs are becoming more common** in part due to recent CMS guidance on inclusion of employment within LTSS programs and due to the increased interest in managed care for Individuals with IDD.

## Two Examples

### Kansas

- 2013 Kansas moves to a fully integrated managed care contract inclusive of individuals with ID/DD – acute, bh, pharmacy
- 2014 ID/DD waiver services come under capitation as part of the fully integrated Medicaid managed care contract

### Texas

- September 2014 - Texas Health and Human Services moved individuals with ID/DD into the Texas STAR+PLUS program for all acute benefits
- September 2014 - Texas Health and Human Services added employment and employment supports to the STAR+PLUS program
- 2014-2015 – Texas Stakeholder Groups working on Employment First and ID/DD System Redesign
- 2015 – Texas Developing ID/DD LTSS Pilot

# So How Are We Responding?



Integrating  
Employment into  
Person Centered  
Planning Process

Building Networks &  
Relationships

Improving  
Community Capacity  
to Improve  
Employment  
Outcomes for  
Individuals with  
Disabilities

# Integrating Employment into Person Centered Planning Process

## What we have done

- Trained our care coordinators in employment issues
- Provided Employment Specialists to support our care coordinators
- Mapped the system from the perspective of those we serve to identify opportunities for improvement
- Developed tools and resources for the individuals we serve to more easily navigate the system

## What we have learned

- Employment is a new area for many of our care coordinators and additional support by someone who specializes in employment is critical
- Navigating between Voc Rehab and Medicaid remains challenging for many individuals but we continue to work to find ways to improve this process
- Concerns about loss of benefits remain a barrier to meaningful employment for many individuals

## What we have done

- Hired someone very knowledgeable about employment and vocational rehab
- Participated in stakeholder advisory committees to deepen our understanding of critical issues for individuals, families and providers
- Leveraged national partnerships and capacity to bring innovative approaches to the State

## What we have learned

- Continual opportunity to build relationships and knowledge of managed care within the Voc Rehab community
- While many strategies are local and we need to have a State/Local lens, it is very helpful to be able to borrow from others who are doing well or have “solved” for a particular piece of the employment puzzle

# Improving Community Capacity

## What we do

- Survey the landscape
- Listen to individuals, families and other stakeholder to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement
- Evaluate our resources and capacity
- Find strategic partners that help us improve our community and outcomes for those we serve

## What we have learned

- Relationships that come organically from this process of gap analysis provide the greatest benefit for those we serve and have the most lasting impact
- This approach ensures solutions are rooted in local communities while also borrowing best practices and lessons learned



# Example: Project SEARCH

In 2014, UnitedHealthcare Sugarland Office became a host site for Project SEARCH.

We partnered with:

- Project SEARCH
- Fort Bend Independent School District
- Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services

Session on Wednesday, Sept 2 from 10-11:15 am to learn more



Project | SEARCH

## Example: Empower Kansas

- Community investment grants focused on improving employment system and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- Funded three rounds of grants to a variety of organizations who were doing direct support to individuals in Kansas
- Empower Kansans also supports a grassroots coalition, the **Employment Systems Change Coalition**, in developing a set of recommendations about employment supports and related policies in Kansas.
  - A cross disability group, including Kansans with disabilities
  - Constituent engagement activities (focus groups and listening sessions held across the state)
  - Research on current best practices in other states
  - Consultation and facilitation with National experts on employment of persons with Disabilities
  - The Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities is also providing funding for some complementary efforts around employment system issues in Kansas and is a key partner in these activities.

# Questions