



## September 12, 2013 – CONSORTIUM MEETING

### **MEETING OUTCOMES**

- Met Karen Flippo from Institute from Community Inclusion
- Learned about Employment Learning Community and Resources
- Reviewed Desired Outcomes and Narrowed Focus of Activities
- Reviewed Strategic Plan and Timeline and revised as needed
- Updated members on recent events
- Provided information from Collaborative Workgroup on Adult Services
- Heard from workgroups on progress for IDEAM and other activities
- **CANCELED October meeting** – suggested **November 7** or **14**

### **September 12<sup>th</sup> - Members Present:**

Trina Balanoff, Dina Flores-Brewer, Lori Gentillon, Gordon Graff, Howard Fulk, Noll Garcia, Monique Johns, Marilyn Sword, Becky Woodhead, Scott Hoover, Tracy Warren  
Guest: Karen Flippo, Institute for Community Inclusion, ELC TA Liason for Idaho

### **Employment Learning Community:**

IEFC Consortium members learned about the Employment Learning Community project from Karen Flippo who is our technical assistance liason. Karen described the purpose behind the ELC and the Communities of Practice (CoP) where peer states will choose topics and explore opportunities for systems change and solutions for challenges. She also shared the barriers to employment that ELC states shared during the application process and through discussions. Karen cautioned that many states start out with great ideas and try to do too much. She has found that it can be more effective to go narrow and deep to make the most impact on issues. She also said that in tight budget times, often training and technical assistance are the first things to go.

The first CoP was held on September 6<sup>th</sup> with the topic of rate setting and structure and Tracy and Gordon participated in the teleconference. Tracy asked that Employment First members to please try to participate in future ELC webinars – especially when a topic is discussed for which they have knowledge. It will be most effective for us, in our systems change efforts, to have a group of IEFC members consistently participating in the Communities of Practice to get the most out of this resource. The next Community of Practice webinar is scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup> to continue the rate setting/structure conversation.

The group discussed how we might make the best use of the ELC and other resources. We have been making progress on a variety of fronts but we may have more effective in systems change efforts if we focus on one or two things to have deeper impact. We don't want to lose IEFC members because we are trying to do too many small things without moving forward on some of our main goals. However, it is important to celebrate successes along the way to keep people motivated. Tracy note: to this point I believe many of our activities have been implemented as a way for us to make steps towards our desired outcomes – we just want to make sure we are not spreading our limited time and resources in too many directions. Revisiting our plan, noting progress, and prioritizing issues is one way to keep us focused.

**IEFC Outcomes and Strategic Plan Update:**

The desired outcomes that were developed by the IEFC were reviewed as well as the current strategic plan and timeline. The group discussed this in relation to recommendations from ICI in the research report and other upcoming opportunities to prioritize items and narrow our focus to have a deeper impact.

The group came up with the following three priorities:

1. Data Collection – develop structure/policy for data collection that is focused on individual employment outcomes
2. Marketing to Business – focus marketing and outreach on businesses and employers to gain support that may provide influence with Governor, legislators, and other policymakers.
3. Medicaid Budgets Policy – work on statute change in collaboration with CWG during an upcoming legislative session (Tracy is checking with CWG members including DHW-Medicaid to see if the 2014 session is possible. This may depend on factors such as the IDHW lawsuit related to individual budgets.)

Data Collection: Howard reported that the Data Workgroup established a baseline and has been gathering information from systems based on what is collected now. He suggested that a next step is for the group to define what we want to measure. Some of that we may already capture and some may be new data points. We also need to look at how we compile information between systems. Tracy mentioned that recent Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project webinars (ODEP Community of Practice) have been about data collection. The webinars are archived and available on the ODEP EFSLMP website. Karen suggested we may want to consider getting help from an evaluator (like the Center on Disability and Human Development) to look at data. Gordon attended the last ODEP webinar and suggested we take a look at Washington's website where they post state employment services reporting data: <http://www.statedata.info/washington-ddd/>. Karen said that ICI has information about employment services data collection at: [http://www.communityinclusion.org/topic.php?topic\\_id=5](http://www.communityinclusion.org/topic.php?topic_id=5)

Marketing and Awareness: Discussion about how we might get state-level leadership support. Our Governor is very pro-business and business leaders influence his decisions. Idea to have a group meet to identify Idaho business leaders to outreach to like Keybank and Micron. Karen mentioned that Walgreens and Lowes both have national corporate programs related to hiring individuals with disabilities and we may want to look into that at the local level. She shared that Stephen Szilagi, Senior Vice President at Lowes would be a good contact. We may want to talk with business associations to have them help us craft our message. Some states are holding project meetings at businesses. She share about a webinar on Business Engagement available from the Partnerships in Employment project at: [www.partnershipsinemployment.com](http://www.partnershipsinemployment.com).

The group also wanted to engage with associations and business related projects that may not be disability related. Monique agreed to meet with Brooke Green who is with the Youth Business Leadership group. What about Chambers of Commerce – they sometimes have a Leadership Development group that takes on projects. Monique said she would also look into LEAD Boise. Marilyn said we may want to approach John

Watts who is the lobbyist for the Chamber of Commerce. Gordon has connections to the Idaho Workforce Development Council. Overall the group decided to shift our marketing focus to business and workforce development for the time being.

Karen mentioned a "World Cafe" model project started in Wisconsin and Tennessee called Community Conversations. A guidelines document on how to implement a similar project has been developed and can be found at:

[www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/pdfs/Community\\_Conversation\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/pdfs/Community_Conversation_Guide.pdf)

These can be coordinated with low overhead and limited resources. We may want to look at this as an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model related to employment and merge with other community development activities of the Council.

Statue Change: IEFEC members would work with members of the Collaborative Workgroup on Adult DD Services to change the language in law that limits additional individual Medicaid budget requests to those services that ensure health and safety. Language was drafted in previous years to change this but was not moved forward.

Tracy met with Representative Sue Chew who is interested in helping us with this work and provided some tips on messages that may be most effective with specific legislators. She also provided a list of legislators who would be good to approach. Lori mentioned that she had communicated with Sue about the Take Your Legislator to Work activities. It may be possible to mention our work on statute change as a follow-up to those legislators who have participated in TYLTW.

The group discussed possible messages about employment first to overcome some policymakers' antiquated views of people with disabilities as a "liability." Do we share the concept of a variety of levels of employment for different individuals or stay away from talking about amount of hours because, as Karen quoted a national advocate: "a job is a job is a job." Lori recommended we talk to CRP associations to get backing for legislation.

### **Lunch Discussion/Networking**

Lori is part of the Idaho Falls Community Transition Team that hosts Disability Mentoring Day in Idaho Falls each year. Their group is revisiting the value to teachers and alignment of DMD job shadowing to community work experience and outcomes. She said that the person who has led that group has had a job change and is unable to continue her leadership role so there are concerns about the groups continued efforts.

Trina said that the Center on Disability and Human Development (CDHD) is hosting upcoming live webinar series for Professional Development credit as well as CEUs. The first webinar is titled "Transition to Work for Youth with Significant Disabilities" presented by Ellen Condon, M.Ed. from the Montana Rural Institute. It is scheduled for October 14, 24, and 31 from 4:00-6:00pm Mountain Time. Registration information will be available on the Idaho Training Clearinghouse shortly before the start of each series at: [www.idahotc.com/forcredit.aspx](http://www.idahotc.com/forcredit.aspx). If you have any questions, contact Trina.

Dina reported that Disability Rights Idaho is seeing a shift in education priorities and things are moving backwards for students with disabilities with more segregation in separate classrooms or districts sending students with the same disability/diagnosis to one school in the district.

Tracy, Noll, and Becky are providing a presentation to 18-21 year old students in the Boise District STEP student transition program on Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>. We will be talking about

what Employment First means and doing interactive activities with students to get them thinking about an employment goal. We are video recording the presentation and will edit it for possible posting on our website.

Trina suggested we may want to do a presentation at one of the topical luncheons held at the U of I Boise Center hosted by the Rehabilitation Counseling Masters program.

Gordon, Lori, and Dina serve on the State Rehabilitation Council and suggested we might want to get on their agenda.

Scott Hoover reported that the WIPA program is up and running again with the approval at the federal level. He has 40 new clients as of August 1 and 19 of those are employed. The program has mandated they use SSI provided laptops for client files.

### **Update from CWG (Collaborative Workgroup on Medicaid Services for Adults with Disabilities):**

Marilyn shared about the most recent meeting of the CWG and work they are doing: The group has pushed their strategic plan out to the year 2020. They are developing a plan and information for CWG members to present to their stakeholder groups and get feedback. The CWG is looking at how their recommendations may fit with managed care and are taking a more holistic view of the different systems that impact individuals lives and how that might interface with DD Services. For example: housing, food stamps, etc. They hope to create a "lessons learned" document about past systems change efforts and what worked well for stakeholders in that process and what didn't. Members and their various stakeholder groups have also been asked to identify their "pain points" to build a list of what is problematic in the current system. The group also decided to enhance the work of the CWG Steering Committee.

The CWG also discussed the IEFC recommendation to change statute related to the "health and safety" limitations on Medicaid budget requests. The CWG suggested that some of their members and some members of the IEFC form a workgroup to address this statute during an upcoming legislative session. Art Evans (Medicaid) asked that the group also provide some suggestions for parameters to be followed related to approving additional dollars for Medicaid budgets beyond health and safety.

A past request of the CWG to the IEFC is to recommend inventory of needs questions related to employment goal/outcome so that we are building the inclusion of employment-related services on the front end rather than just addressing it as an addendum or additional request after the fact.

Tracy shared the discussion at the CWG meeting related to the IEFC response to comments from CWG members about #5 that they suggested read "*All services and supports for people who have a vocational goal lead to specific employment outcomes.*" Tracy shared with CWG members that the IEFC decided adding those underlined words gets us farther away from our intended focus and the expectation that adults will work. A discussion in the CWG was to review the language again to better align with our intended meaning.

The IEFC felt that recommendation #2 reflects our desire for the employment discussion occurring with every individual and we could emphasize that more. We could also change the language in #5 to better reflect the meaning related to a focus on services that lead to employment outcomes (pre-vocational etc.). Tracy will work

on a draft and send to the group soon so that an update can be provided to the CWG at their next steering committee meeting.

Karen brought up the idea of informed choice for individuals when thinking about employment. People with disabilities need to experience some kind of work to have a better perspective and information to make decisions about their work goals. Think about community-based work experience as a way for individuals to gather the information they need to make informed choices. What other kinds of information do people need in that decision making process?

Karen also mentioned the Indiana Top 100 – they post 100 photos of people who have gotten jobs and a small bit of information about each. The state group sets a goal of a certain number of people to get jobs and be featured. ICI has a College of Employment Services that is at [Directcourseonline.com](http://directcourseonline.com). Individuals can pay on their own to take the course or a state can sponsor many participants and track learners. The link is: <http://directcourseonline.com/employmentservices/>

### **Progress on Activities - Workgroup Reports:**

IEFC Self-Advocate Advisory Committee: Noll Garcia reported on his work to establish a Self-Advocate Advisory Committee for the IEFC. He is set up in the DD Council office and has developed a recruitment flyer and application that he has distributed through email. He has also made phone calls to people who can get the word out. He hopes to start getting calls and emails from people who are interested and will be providing additional information as requested.

The group discussed that travel to Boise for meetings may be a barrier to them applying for the committee. Are there other ways we can get feedback and input from people with disabilities? Tracy shared that she Noll and Marilyn discussed the idea of going to a certain number of communities to hold a “town hall meeting” or focus group to get input from more people. It is possible the IEFC may decide that this process may be a more effective way to gather information.

Take Your Legislator to Work: Lori reported that an invitation letter and toolkit were sent to Community Rehabilitation Providers around the state. There are 12 CRPs participating and they have legislative district assignments. All districts are covered except 1 and 35. Those folks will be working towards outreach to 50 legislators with individuals they serve. They are shooting for these activities to occur the week of October 7<sup>th</sup> but some may do things later in the month. We should follow-up and ask for photos/stories so the IEFC can promote the activities and build awareness. Monique mentioned the possibility of giving some of the new Able to Work tote bags to folks who participated as a thank you. An announcement and the TYLTW Toolkit will be posted on the Employment First webpage of the ICDD website by next week.

Data Workgroup: We are at a point where the IEFC needs to spend some time to decide what outcome data we want – what do we want to measure? The group has identified current data and sources. Creating a table of what is available from different sources and when it is available would be helpful for the full group. Karen mentioned when thinking about data collection it is good to include age parameters – transition-age youth, 35-65 etc.

The group recounted the comments by John Butterworth (ICI) about keeping data collection simple and about individual work outcomes, not just measure services ie: what we have provided, for how long, and how much it cost. Look to recommendations

from the Phase 2 report on data collection and refer to State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) for information. We could also bring this up as a topic for a future ELC Community of Practice discussion with peer states and national experts.

Work Incentives: Held the first benefits planners network call. Used technical assistance from VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University) to figure out what to discuss on the call. The group would like to have a best practices and guide for benefits counseling. Also an issue to work on is reimbursement for counseling. Monique has shared information from Wisconsin about possible rate structure for counseling/planning services funded by VR. (Tracy will send out to group.) Some of the ELC states are putting benefits planning in their Medicaid waiver or include it as part of the person-centered planning process.

There is a Social Security Administration contract with a call center to take calls nationally. The call center will provide base information about SSI work incentives and then provide a referral to a local WIPA entity. In Idaho that is Disability Rights Idaho – Scott Hoover. The workgroup talked about benefits planning beyond SSI and SSDI related to food stamps, housing vouchers, etc. Scott said that they do make referrals to Centers for Independent Living for some of that. DB101 – disability benefits planning was mentioned. Suggestion to look again at the CMS policy guidelines about who can provide benefits counseling and be reimbursed.

**ACTION Items from this Meeting:**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Participate in September 25 <sup>th</sup> ELC Community of Practice webinar, Tracy will send notice Topic: rate setting/structure for employment services	All members who have knowledge, or want to learn about, rates & rate structures
Gather quantitative and qualitative information about effect of Medicaid budget cuts to individuals who use services for work	Service Providers, Jean, Howard, others
Share information about IDEAM activities: Take Your Legislator to Work, Disability Mentoring Day, etc	Everybody – Tracy lead
Gather information from Take Your Legislator to Work activities, DMD	Cassie, Russ, Lori Tracy, Lori - DMD
Toolkits for Presenters – Business Focus – identify IEFEC members and others to work with Trina	Trina Balanoff – others?
Recruit self-advocates for advisory committee	Noll Garcia w/help from all
Follow up on website development with Access Idaho	Tracy Warren

**Next Meetings:**

- **Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> has been canceled.**
- **Please look at your calendars for either November 7<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup>**
  - Tracy is unavailable on the afternoon of Nov 7<sup>th</sup> but could be there throughout the morning.

**Possible Agenda Items for November meeting:**

- Data collection discussion – identify data points
- Discuss business outreach efforts
- Reports from IEFC Workgroups and CWG
- Outcomes of October IDEAM activities
- Others?