Employment First Collaborative Team Meeting/Conference Call

Tuesday, April 8, 2014
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.
124 Marriott Drive, Suite 203
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions
The meeting began shortly after 1:00 p. m. Shelia welcomed everyone and quick introductions were made around the table

I SELN and ICI "Words of Wisdom"
John described SELN and explains its purpose and how it works; noting that being a part of the Network helps APD. He noted Florida's progress and the possibilities ahead on its current course in getting people with disabilities employed.

Shelia noted that SELN will help APD in building capacity, and the need to keep focused on cross-agency, cross-disability needs in terms of Employment First. She added that other states had to learn to be cross-disability in their approach, rather than focusing certain ones exclusively as many did initially.

John noted that the better states showed a consistency of strategy and of messaging. When asked for examples, he pointed out that the percentage of people receiving services and also working is anywhere from 4% to 16%, while the national average is around 13%. Washington state and Oklahoma are the strongest in this area, with between 55% and 60% of those receiving services also employed, which is close to the overall employment rate. Their programs are solely directed towards employment. He added that by contrast, Hawaii seems to be stuck on day services.

When Shelia asked about American territories, Allison said that they were just beginning to collect data on the territories. Jean noted that these usually don't have traditional-style Med waiver programs.

Allison noted that Florida was at 13% employment for people receiving services.

II Baseline Data and Targets for Improvement

Shelia suggested that we need to look at existing data reports to establish a baseline of where we are in order to measure progress. She noted that she had talked to the Governor's Commission about getting greater access to data for sharing among agencies.

John noted that the question before them was, 'Where do you want to end up?,' and that the challenge was that every agency has an inherently different perspective, be it based on a 'closure of case/end product' model, or a 'long-term/outcome' model.

Shelia noted that we needed to establish baseline data for each agency, and have it reported annually. John suggested that we look to the State Data Book to understand how to best capture outcome data from multiple sources. This resource is AIDD funded. He noted that the main statistics recorded there represent participation in services, with some shown as in or out of work.

Shelia suggested that we should look at that for our baseline, but also look at other data. Jennifer noted that we would need to build a comprehensive database. She added that providers report work hours for pay, not for compliance or completion.

Shelia pointed out that this is a systems change initiative that might take three to five years, but that we still need to monitor the data available in order to see change. Dehryl affirmed this, noting that we have to measure things to see the change, and wondered if we could have access to wage data. Diane pointed to the issue of self-disclosure versus Social Security data.

Shelia asked if we could use Federal PIT data.

John suggested we start with what we have, put it on paper. This then starts the conversation on where we are and where we need to go. Also on how to handle different data definitions.

Steve wondered how we should handle duplication of who is served by each agency. Kirk suggested looking at how multiple served changes over time using Social Security numbers.

Steve asked in the agencies represented in the Children's Cabinet have data-sharing agreements, and how far down the information goes in terms of detail. Also, if there are other agency agreements that allow it.

John noted that if Florida could map the overlap and outcome it would be helpful in showing progress over time. Shelia suggested that we could be in a position to do it. Dehryl noted that

we can find what location an individual is working. John added that we can break it down by area, or region.

Shelia noted that Fed PIT has lots of capability to provide and process data, for example, providing employment outcomes by population, to help refine efforts. The questions we should be asking are: What do we want? What do we need? Why?

Shelia added that we need to determine county-by-county performance. Kirk noted the need for tracking individuals in military families, and others moving from, or to other states.

Shelia noted that we should also further pursue data sharing to determine who is helping who, and catch overlap, duplication, and potentially complimentary service provision. She noted that we need to know what do we already have? What is put into reports?

John noted that we need both broader-based data, as well as agency-based data. Celeste noted this should be for both cross-agency and agency goals, Shelia adding this should be the work of the first year.

John noted that Florida has the capacity to do this. Jenny noting that this would help us map where the dollars went.

Shelia expressed concern that we were getting close to the deadline. We need to focus on establishing a baseline, and establishing targets for improvement for each agency. Kirk noted that most agencies have lag data – data reported from a fiscal year or more before the date of the report. He added that we would have use data consistent with what agencies are reporting anyway.

Dehryl suggested setting a year for the baseline. Then followed discussion on what year this should be, with the consensus ultimately being fiscal year 2011-12. Kirk noted that some agencies have different lag times, or even none. Shelia suggested using the latest year for each agency as a base. Nancy pointing out that this would be off in terms of comparisons.

Dehryl noted that wage and retention issues drive lag, and suggested that we define data elements and determine data cohorts. Jennifer noted that we need time to clean the data up and make the data useful. Steve suggested only reporting once a year.

Shelia added that we should also indicate targeted earmarks. She suggested having data for 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 to have an idea of our progress.

Jenny noted that the earliest should be used as a benchmark to show status before progress was made. Shelia noted that including an earmark for progress would also be beneficial.

Reed noted the possibility that better data collection might result in an apparent drop in the number of individuals employed initially. John noted that SELN could help the state do better in terms of redefining 'employment' and 'services.' Shelia noted volunteerism is not considered employment according to the Executive Order's definition.

Steve asked how we could tell who is on an educational pathway to employment. Shelia answered we could do that through course descriptions.

Kirk noted that there are different kinds of 'volunteers,' as some internships and even apprenticeships are unpaid, but still represent career experience. John noted that the focus should on outcome, not process.

Jenny noted that the data sharing (previously discussed) should include colleges in terms of looking for increasing numbers. Judy asked whether we would want to follow people over the longer term, as in three years out from initial employment.

Kirk noted the need to define the baseline in order to show changes different for each option (e.g.: postsecondary education and then work, versus work directly out).

Shelia asked participants to send their latest data with sources that where published to consider for baseline. She added that this collected data will be sent out to all.

Jennifer noted that they could provide all Government Appropriation reports for the last year (2013). This could be used to determine what the money did, if it met targets, and what each agency will do to improve. However, Shelia noted that we don't need much detail, just a good sense of the big picture – what the figures represent, and what they mean.

Kirk suggested using the 2011-12 fiscal year. However, Dehryl suggested using fiscal years 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 (if available). Shelia suggested that everyone should follow up later what they can do in that regard.

Celeste asked if we need percentages or just raw numbers. Shelia responded that we probably need both. Suzanne noted that we wanted to be able to show the increase over time based on the past. Jan reminded everyone of the likelihood that we would see an initial decrease before any increase, owing to the more complete and accurate figures available.

Shelia noted that the overlap in persons served was less important than the individual outcome improvement. She added that we needed to set targets, and understand why these were not reached to really understand the data.

III Confirm Priority Areas of Focus

Allison noted that we need to look at our biggest priorities – our top three collaborative goals: comprehensive training, comprehensive interagency collaboration, and strategic goals, which are related to the state policies which proceed from Employment 1st.

Shelia reframed these as: training and technical assistance, strategic goals and operational policies, and interagency collaboration. She also added data sharing and service innovation. She also noted that earlier versions of the document were not clear on collaboration and moving forward. She suggested narrowing the strategic plan to three top priorities, noting that there were other in the Executive Order that needed to be addressed. She also noted that the plan was something we wanted people to read.

Shelia also noted that if we have a mechanism to make things happen, we can get funding. She added that collaboration does not have to be so deep, but instead be about what we can do, and who else we can bring on.

IV Finalize Draft Collaborative Strategic Implementation Action Plan

There was much discussion on wording of the plan, as well as remarks made about how the whole should shape up. Among the latter:

Shelia noted that regarding strategic goals and operational policies, we need to ask, 'Can we do these collaboratively?' Suzanne noted that we also needed to ask, 'Can rules and laws change?'

Kirk asked if all can do things in the same way and on the same basis.

Shelia noted that we need to review our agency plans and revise them accordingly, as well as review the laws and advocate getting them changed and improved. She added that changes can be made based on our discussion, hashed out over time.

John noted that the structure of the document frames our priorities.

Shelia concluded by noting that we are now deciding what we are actually going to do.

V Employment First Status Updates and Calendar items

Shelia asked if May 6 was good for our next team meeting. As the discussion made this uncertain, she suggested that we do what we can do. She noted that a meeting of the Governor's Commission was coming up in Kissimmee. There was also a Partnership meeting on May 22, and a VISIONS conference (with an Employment1st presentation), April 30 through May 2.

VI Collaborative Partner Updates on Related Work and Initiatives

John noted that the next Grassroots webinar was scheduled for April 17 at 3pm. He added that the March 27 webinar, which was about 'Engaging Employers,' had a good turnout. He noted that the question asked there was, how can providers do this? Possible means include: Connecting with BLNs, HR departments, and meeting with employers.

Allison suggested creating and distributing a one-page summary on Employment 1st. Shelia noted that a detailed summary was sent to Judi for the Communications Subcommittee to use.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4pm.