

**SCPD EMPLOYMENT FIRST**  
**JULY 12, 2016**  
**SMYRNA REST AREA CONFERENCE ROOM, SMYRNA**

**Present:** Dan Madrid, Chair DVI; Marissa Catalon, Vice-Chair DDDS; Deb Bradl, DVI; Ellen Coulston, Parent; Jana DiCosmo, DOL; Nick Fina, SCPD; Emmanuel Jenkins, DDC; Pat Maichle, DDC; Dale Matusevich, DOE; Ron Sarg, DE Commission of Veteran Affairs; Lloyd Schmitz, Council on Blind/SCPD; Kristy Trudel, ServiceSource/Ability Network of Delaware (AND); Amber Rivard, Support Staff; and Jo Singles, Support Staff.

**CALL TO ORDER/Introductions/Approval of June Minutes**

Dan called the meeting to order at 9:36 am. Lloyd motioned for approval of the June minutes. Pat seconded the motion. The June 14, 2016 minutes were approved as submitted.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) Update**

Dan reminded everyone to save-the-date for Jennifer White and Abbey Cooper to provide training on October 19, 2016 and October 20, 2016. The first initiative is to conduct state-wide seminars focusing on Employment First topics and trainings. They will have different agencies representing from all aspects of employment including education and teachers who participated in a smaller group to develop the training. The training will be held at one location on the first day and then another location the second day. People will be given the opportunity to attend both trainings. The locations are unconfirmed because it depends on how much Employment First is willing to pay and the number of people interested in attending the seminar. Ellen asked if they could do a pre-registration with the Department of Education for their knowledge on Employment First. She suggested making a survey for collecting data on information gained and how they are planning to use it. She asked if higher education staff could teach in other areas of Employment First. Dan stated they want to expand the program further to other locations in the state. Someone asked if there will be talk about how WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) pairs with Employment First. Dan responded Abbey has been discussing how WIOA has impacted Employment First and sheltered workshops. Jennifer will be working on technology and video resumes for marketing. Dan stated they can provide videos of EFSLMP on the EFOC website to show how much Employment First could impact people with disabilities to gain a job. Lloyd commented updating the site should be done soon and suggested the due date be August 15, 2016.

The second initiative taken will be internal transformation of sheltered workshops in DHSS. Twenty five to thirty employees were working at the sheltered workshops from a year ago on different areas. After Nancy Gurney had recommended phasing out of the workshops, there were five employees left and they are no longer accepting new people into the program. People who

had been in the workshops now have been integrated into jobs in the community. A team consisting of a vocational expert, program manager and doctor, Patrick McGuffin, a psychologist for DPC created permanent positions with the State and found positions outside the state for people. The remaining five people in the sheltered workshop are provided with employment services such as vocational rehabilitation and DSAMH in order to find job placements in the community. The Industries for the Blind within the Division for the Visually Impaired have been discussing partnership opportunities with Dan. Sometime this winter, there will be progress with another partnership in the community and hopefully will be moving the industry off campus into an independent business. The business is proceeding well and at the end of the fiscal year, they were close to breaking even. Twenty-three individuals are still employed at the Industries for the Blind and receiving competitive wages within customer service, embroidery sales, and quality insurance departments. The main goal for transitioning DE Industries for the Blind is for it to become an independent business in the community, how integrated it can be and function like any typical business that can hire more people with disabilities.

Marissa provided another update to EFSLMP regarding Pathways. The Pathways Program is a new state plan amendment that includes a distinct set of services focused on helping individuals with disabilities obtaining employment. The program includes an employment navigator that can work together with a variety of stakeholders to assist students aged fourteen to twenty-five in their employment goals. Three sessions were held in New Castle County and two sessions in Kent County to discuss Pathways and how it related to the Governors Initiative for employing people with disabilities. The Secretary had detailed the outline of the program sharing how this is an initiative no other state is undertaking. The feedback Marissa received from DDDS was positive and they understood the aspects of the program. Lloyd asked how many people are using navigators at this time. Marissa responded that there is 228 people enrolled in Pathways and the majorities are in DDDS. The caseloads for navigators supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are around 45-50. One navigator is supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people with visual impairments. DSAAPD will have one navigator who is serving three people with disabilities and is not at capacity. They are currently searching for people who could be eligible for the program. Lloyd asked if there is anything the Commission can do to encourage DSAAPD to expand outreach. Dale commented they are working with DSAAPD and DDDS to ensure they are receiving accurate numbers and going through the Department of Education to ensure eligibility for the program. The major piece is going through the school systems to provide students with the information about the program. Pathways Program was approved December 31, 2014; however, the processes for marketing and funding have resulted in ongoing conversations with the staff in schools. Transitioning the information about the program to people in schools working with the students with disabilities has been a challenge. Lloyd suggested looking more into DVR services because DVR counselors have been working with students with disabilities to have them enrolled in the program. Dan commented there have been changes to Pathways on who is eligible to receive services. Students in the education system that were enrolled in DVR are eligible for Pathways. Conversations can be held with DHSS staff about going to DVR providers and figuring out how to provide and pay for service opportunities.

Dan updated on the PROMISE Mental Health Waiver that has similar services to the Pathways Program. There is still work to be done on services, enrolling providers, marketing,

communication, and enrollment in the program. There will be similar discussions of how to speed up delivery of services and supporting employment.

The last updated objective is on social determinants of health. In terms of marketing, there have been on-going conversations on the connection between poverty, disabilities and health outcomes. People with disabilities have double the poverty rate in Delaware and the employment rate is 20% nationally. Their health outcomes are at double rate versus others. The data shown should concern everyone in the government, non-profits, private citizens and advocates. There was a discussion on how to gather information to research the connection between disabilities, health outcomes and poverty. Abbey Cooper was involved in a small workgroup that started to discuss research; however, they decided to stop the research and focus on delivering services to people by using financial coaching models, people who have medical complexities and managing medical complexities. Abbey had mentioned in a discussion about other states that were using financial coaching models. There was discussion on delivering financial coaching to people with medical needs and to help them manage a plan for the financial aspects of having complex medical needs. The plan would involve partnering with the Libraries of Delaware by delivering it through innovation bases, and providing forms throughout this year. Dan stated they will provide more information in the fall.

The project year will end in October 2016 and will be opened up for more discussions in future meetings about other aspects of the EFSLMP. Discussion was made to promote the importance of marketing on the EFOC website for public awareness, how helpful Employment First can be for people with disabilities to gain employment, and educating the younger population in schools through usage of Facebook and videos on YouTube.

### Metrics/Data

Dan stated Metrics/Data will be an ongoing discussion. He and Marissa discussed what can be further discussed for meaningful informative data points to measure their progress. Dan suggested a future discussion with Dr. George Sharpley, representative of Labor Market Information for the State. Dr. George Sharpley is knowledgeable in the pros and cons of using different metrics. At a population level perspective, they want to state if they are driving to a system change, how to measure the progress of fewer people in poverty levels and keeping track of the people becoming employed with less poverty levels in Delaware. This will be discussed more in upcoming meetings. Pat commented the sooner they have a discussion with Dr. George Sharpley, the sooner they can decide what data needs to be collected. Dan stated he is planning to invite Dr. George Sharpley to the next Employment First meeting held in August.

### Planning for Possible Subminimum Wage Legislation

Dan stated in a previous meeting, there was discussion on a possibility for subminimum wage legislation. The legislation in Maryland was strict and opened up to few organizations for additional subminimum wage certifications to providers in Maryland. Questions such when will infrastructure process will start, will there be transformation grants involved, and any focuses on resources on transformation workshops in Delaware are open for discussion. Pat suggested they invite Representative Heffernan to a meeting to discuss the legislation. Marissa stated there have

been shared perspectives from CMS. In a webinar from CMS, someone stated as long as a person has a job opportunity, then it counts as inclusion. Dan commented Maryland had accepted the subminimum wage legislation separate from integration because it provides two components: integration in the workforce or workplace and the wages to pay people. Marissa added that the legislation has to combine helping individuals with their families, the providers and providing resources for both. At the end of the five years, there is a requirement the State has to complete the adjustments made in compliance.

Discussion was made on making certain there are plenty of resources to support the possibility of the subminimum wage legislation. Dan added the Commission can discuss in further detail on creating subminimum wage legislation. Someone asked about obtaining researchers for researching information on the subminimum wage legislation. Saint John's has been partnering with individual providers on transformation for employment related purposes. Lloyd suggested contacting the National Employment First group to provide assistance to numerous states tackling a similar issue.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On June 30, 2016, there were a few legislation bills that passed. State-Use Legislation passed which is a new law providing services and commission of products for supporting individuals with physical disabilities. Discussions were made by AND about the new law opening up a broader spectrum to other organizations for employment opportunities and state contractors to provide services. The bill includes adding a member from Vocational Rehabilitation to include other organizations in assisting with finding employment for people with disabilities. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit for the State was another bill that passed. In addition to the Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit, there is a State Tax Credit available to businesses that want to employ a person with a disability with approval from either of the two Vocational Rehabilitation facilities in Delaware.

DDDS, in partnership with DVR, had been working with a smaller workgroup on a new policy about training for providers of employment services. It was reviewed by the Day Service Provider Advisor Committee. The final draft will be reviewed and approved by the Division Director. Included in the new policy are expectations shared by DVR and DDDS for training of providers. It requires specific courses pertaining to different training supports, and a requirement after a three year period to gain certification through APSD as a certified specialist. Deb suggested students should have this opportunity through the DE Jobs for Delaware Grads Program.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:04 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Rivard  
Administrative Specialist

Employment First/minutes 7-12-16