



Wisconsin Findings and Observations

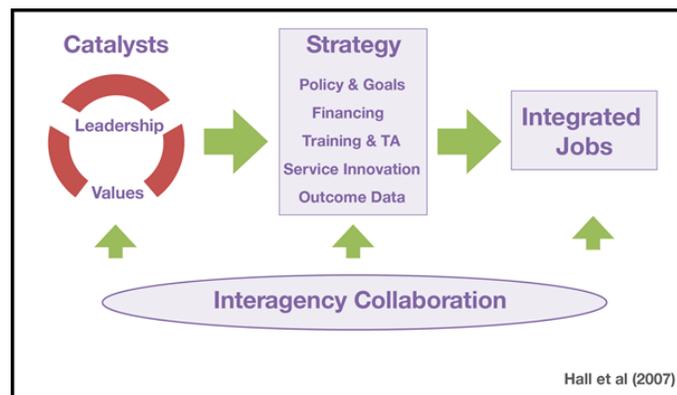
September 2017
Executive Summary

State Employment Leadership Network (SELN)

The SELN supports states to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes. It was launched as a joint initiative of the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The SELN is a membership-based network of state intellectual and developmental disability agencies committed to making changes in their service systems. The SELN is an active and engaged learning community where members meet to connect, collaborate, and share information and lessons learned across state lines and system boundaries. Participating state agencies build cross-community support for pressing employment-related issues, commit to work together and engage in a series of activities to analyze key elements in their systems to improve the integrated employment outcomes. States also have access to customized technical assistance to meet their unique needs, based on their current system of supports and goals for improvement.

Wisconsin initially joined SELN in 2006 as part of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG). In 2016, the State rejoined the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) for the second time. Upon re-joining the SELN, the Department completed the SELN State Strategic Employment Assessment. This tool provides an opportunity to describe and analyze the state's infrastructure and support for achieving integrated employment outcomes among persons with IDD enrolled in an HCBS waiver program.

The strategic assessment identifies the seven key elements essential to improving and achieving employment success as depicted below in the Higher Performing States Framework:



The SELN Findings and Observation report summarizes the results of the assessment process as “Key Findings” and suggests opportunities for improvement in “Potential Focus Areas.” The state agency and other partners may use the report as the basis for the development of a work plan detailing the outcomes, activities to achieve set goals, and strategies to pursue in the months and years ahead to improve individual, integrated employment outcomes for Wisconsin citizens with IDD.

Wisconsin invited stakeholders, partners and waiver participants to take part in online surveys and in-person focus groups to gather input on current perceptions and experiences from a wide range of perspectives. Participants who responded to surveys and focus groups contributed to the goal of developing a better understanding of the context for integrated competitive employment in Wisconsin. Information gathered throughout the process contributed to the Findings and Observations report prepared by SELN staff.

Process for Development of Findings and Observations Report

SELN reviewed:

- Wisconsin’s Department of Health Services, Division of Medicaid Services (WI DHS/DMS)
- SELN State Strategic Employment Full Assessment
- State policy documents and resource materials
- Participant feedback collected during the SELN Focus Groups with representatives from:
 - DHS Leadership / Internal Employment Steering Committee
 - Service providers
 - MCOs
 - ICAs
 - Legacy waivers
 - MCO leadership
 - Advocates
 - DVR /DPI
 - Individuals and their families
- Data sources from the following :
 - SELN Supplement survey (stakeholder) responses
 - National Core Indicators data
 - State Data: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes

After reviewing all of the Wisconsin documentation and attending each of the focus groups, the SELN project team compiled a findings and observations report. This report is intended to assist Wisconsin in establishing employment priorities that will become an employment work plan.

The SELN observation and key findings include these core themes:

1. There is a limited understanding of statewide policy and expectations along with highly variable implementation of services in Wisconsin
2. There is a lack of transparency in service definitions and funding
3. There is limited capacity building
4. There is a lack of an outcome focus on competitive integrated employment

Top 3 Priorities identified by the SELN

1. Establish DHS's leadership role in achieving integrated competitive employment outcomes
 - a. Communicating what is really expected and how accountability is addressed to demonstrate the Department's commitment to increasing employment options and outcomes,
 - b. Identifying staff with full time accountability for employment development and policy.

2. Clarification and Coordination of Services with Stakeholders
 - a. Clarify the Department's role while working with MCOs and ICAs, specific to contracting and rate setting.
 - b. Evaluate current services; review content, service definitions and outcomes. Develop guidance clarifying the definition and use of waiver service categories.
 - c. Assess the use of Performance Improvement Plans to incentivize competitive employment outcomes.
 - d. Review and revise the process for authorization of services in long term care programs (i.e. Resource Allocation Decision making tool (RAD) and Budget Amendments (BA)).

3. Provider Capacity Building including evidence based training for IDT staff and IRIS consultants
 - a. Strategically assist with provider transformation to change business practices.
 - b. Establish partnerships between DHS, DWD, MCOs and ICAs to expand provider capacity throughout the state and to provide seamless transitions from one funding source to another.
 - c. Develop a strategy and long term resource investment to support capacity building including training and technical assistance to advance IDT staff and IRIS consultants skills and competencies to promote employment.
 - d. Develop and communicate a focus on outcomes. Develop an employment outcome data.

State Employment Leadership Network



The State Employment Leadership Network is a network of state intellectual and developmental disability agencies working together to improve employment outcomes for individuals. The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

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