

County Program: _____ FY _____ County Plan

THE SUPPLEMENTAL PLAN TO PROMOTE COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

GUIDELINES

Background

In the Spring of 2009, the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) formed a representative Workgroup to develop state strategies to expand the availability of evidence-based practices, particularly supported employment, that assist people with psychiatric disabilities to engage in competitive employment in community settings.

The creation of the Workgroup reflected the goals of OMHSAS' March 2008 Call for Change: Employment-A Key to Recovery (http://www.parecovery.org/services_employment.shtml) and its goal of "significantly increasing the number of persons served by the behavioral health system who are competitively employed," itself a response to the continuing high rate of unemployment among those with psychiatric disabilities and the slow development of evidence-based practices to address the employment aspirations of consumers. The Workgroup recommended that OMHSAS require each of the County Mental Health Programs to file, as part of each year's Mental Health Plan or Update, an annual Supplemental Plan to Promote Competitive Employment.

The County Supplemental Employment Plan should: a) reflect an inclusive planning process at the county level; b) provide an overview of the current status of employment services in the county; and c) address the county's strategies to increase competitive employment through: orientation of the county mental health system toward employment outcomes; staff training; new data collection protocols; and shifting current dollars and/or accessing new funding for supported employment.

In developing the County Supplemental Employment Plan, counties should utilize the SAMSHA toolkit definition and principles of Supported Employment for persons in recovery (<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/communitysupport/toolkits/employment>) and their evidence-based focus on employment. Supported Employment programs:

- attach primary importance to consumer preferences;
- identify competitive employment as the goal;
- work toward mainstream jobs in community settings;
- seek jobs that pay at least minimum wage;
- find work settings that include people who are not disabled;
- focus on persons with the most severe disabilities;
- provide follow-along supports that are continuous;
- base eligibility on consumer choice;
- integrate employment services with clinical treatment; and
- begin job search activity as soon as a consumer expresses interest in employment.

_____ (County/Joinder) _____ (Date)

1. Inclusiveness of the Planning Process.

a. Please briefly describe the planning process for this Supplemental Plan: including stakeholder involvement, leadership roles, meeting schedules, the establishment or expansion of a local Employment Transformation Committee, data and information sources, etc.

b. Please indicate the number of individuals or group representatives who were involved in this planning process in each category below:

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| (#) | _____ Consumers | _____ The District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation |
| | _____ Family members | _____ Local Workforce Investment Boards |
| | _____ Provider agencies | _____ Educational organizations |
| | _____ Managed care organizations | _____ Local business groups |
| | _____ CSP representatives | _____ Individual employers |
| | _____ Criminal justice organizations | _____ Advocacy organizations |
| | _____ Drug & alcohol / mental illness dual diagnosis groups | _____ Others (please describe _____) |

2. Current Service Delivery Data.

Please review the attached tables compiled from the County Income and Expenditure Reports and CCR POMS data for FY 2007 – 2008, which identify the numbers served and dollars spent within the two existing vocational cost centers for your county and answer the questions below. (Definitions of these two vocational cost centers are provided with the Expenditure Reports.)

a) Confirm the accuracy of the data. Please adjust any data and explain any corrections made.

- Check here if the data is accurate.
- Check here if the data should be adjusted, as follows:

- Community Employment and Employment Related Services
 - _____ Number of individuals served
 - _____ Funds expended
- Facility Based Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - _____ Number of individuals served
 - _____ Funds expended

b) Additional Expenditures for Employment Services. If there are additional mental health funds expended by the county for employment services that are captured in other cost centers, please indicate below the cost centers used, the expenditures made, and the number of individuals served:

- Cost center in which expenditures appear _____
- Total additional Expenditures for employment services _____
- Numbers of additional individuals served _____

c) Indicate the percentage of current county funding for employment as a percentage of overall current county funding.

\$ _____ Overall county funding
\$ _____ County funding for employment services
% _____ percentage of overall county funding for employment services

d) Indicate the percentage of overall employment funding expended on facility based versus community services.

\$ _____ Total employment funding
% _____ percentage of total employment funding for facility based services
% _____ percentage of total funding expended on community services

e) Describe any changes you plan to make in total employment expenditures or percentages allocated to facility vs. community based services. Also, please report on other funds (e.g., Health Choices, etc) spent on employment.

3. Funding for Supported Employment.

Please indicate the amount of vocational funding that the County anticipates will be spent in the next year specifically for Supported Employment programming, and whether those funds are currently in the Community Employment Services or Facility Based Services cost centers, or represent new dollars for Supported Employment. Supported Employment is defined above (Background).

Total dollars to be expended on SE services \$ _____

a) % of those dollars within the cost centers of:

- Community Employment and Employment Related Services _____%
- Facility Based Vocational Rehabilitation Services _____%

b) % of new dollars to be expended on SE services _____%

4. Prior County Activities to Promote Supported Employment. Please indicate the activities undertaken by the County in the past two or three years that have been designed to promote Supported Employment programming.

Early-Stage Development Activities. The County has:

- Developed consensus around both the importance of employment and the use of evidence-based employment interventions
 - Provided basic training and technical assistance to provider agencies on the delivery of evidence-based practices
 - Established a funding framework for the development of new evidence-based employment services
 - Provided supportive information to consumers and families on the effectiveness of evidence-based employment practices
 - Familiarized county and local program staff with the elements of supported employment fidelity measures
 - Other activities: please describe
-

Middle-Stage Development Activities. The County has:

- Established new evidence-based employment services in one or more service sites in the county
 - Provided information to consumers/families and providers on work incentives
 - Developed evidence-based employment practices to focus on the types of employment in the local job market
 - Provided detailed training and technical assistance to providers on the delivery of evidence-based employment services
 - Developed evaluation mechanisms to insure a focus on appropriate consumer outcomes in competitive employment
 - Assisted programs in using the supported employment fidelity measures to shape and assess service delivery approaches
 - Other activities: please describe
-

Later-Stage Development Activities. The County has:

- Further expanded the availability of evidence-based practices to all consumers in the County
 - Developed resources to provide benefits counseling to consumers who are returning to work
 - Supported providers who can serve as a 'model' of evidence-based employment practices in other sections of the Commonwealth
 - Improved the quality of jobs (re: income, benefits, tenure, promotion) obtained by graduates of evidence-based programs
 - Integrated supported education opportunities into the delivery of evidence-based employment practices
 - Used the supported employment fidelity measures to assess and improve program delivery
 - Other strategies: please describe
-

5. Proposed County Activities to Expand Evidence-Based Employment Services.

In the Excel chart attached, please list each of the strategies the county plans to use to promote and expand the use of evidence-based employment practices over the next year, using the following seven categories ('A' through 'H' below). The examples provided in each section are offered only as a starting point for your consideration of those approaches best suited to your county. For each strategy, indicate the anticipated outcome or outcomes over the next Plan year.

A. System Orientation To Employment Outcomes

Indicate the county's strategies to ensure that employment is recognized throughout the county's mental health delivery system – in both treatment and rehabilitation settings – as a core aspect of the recovery process. *Examples:* In the past, some counties have: sponsored system-wide training on supported employment approaches and the value of work to recovery; targeted county-sponsored training on employment for therapists/doctors, provider board members, consumers and family members, and/or residential program staff; and established county policies/procedures regarding the involvement of all provider agencies in supporting consumer employment outcomes.

B. Staff Training and Technical Assistance

Indicate the county's strategies to provide training and technical assistance to provider staff directly implementing evidence-based employment practices. *Examples:* In the past, some counties have: funded provider staff participation in both on-site and web-based supported employment training; required providers to meet SE Fidelity standards and conducted SE Fidelity Scale Reviews with providers; monitored SE providers in the county with regard to their consistent use of the six principles of supported employment; and implemented regular Employment Network Meetings for local employment service providers.

C. Funding for Employment Services

Indicate the county's strategies for increasing funding for evidence-based employment practices for people with psychiatric disabilities. *Examples:* In the past, some counties have: slowly shifted funds from sheltered workshops and day programs to more evidence-based employment practices; used reinvestment funds, and/or Medicaid Infrastructure Grant dollars to initiate training; helped agencies to explore use of the SSA Ticket-to-Work and Work Incentives programs for service delivery dollars; worked with OVR to shift contract dollars to evidence-based practices; and collaborated with providers in seeking national, state, and local foundation funding for start-ups.

D. Responding to Local Workforce Needs

Indicate the county's strategies for helping providers access and respond to information about local workforce needs and employer requirements for new workers. *Examples:* In the past, some counties have worked collaboratively with the Pennsylvania Business Leadership Network (PA-BLN) and both local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and CareerLink offices; established working relationships with local Chambers of Commerce; encouraged providers to establish their own business advisory groups; and developed county-wide Business Advisory Councils to help providers better understand the workforce needs of local employers.

E. **Educational Opportunities**

Indicate the county's strategies to involve local educational organizations in the preparation, training, and certification of consumers with psychiatric disabilities seeking self-sustaining careers in the competitive labor market. **Examples:** In the past, some counties have: worked with local schools to ensure access to ABE/GED programs for consumers; established more formal 'Supported Education' programs; developed collaborative relationships with community colleges offering a variety of career training programs; and developed a 'resource guide' to existing academic training programs in both non-profit and for-profit career training settings.

F. **Utilizing Peer Specialists**

Indicate the county's strategies to utilize the experience of both certified peer specialists and other consumers in providing evidence-based employment practices. **Examples:** In the past, some counties have: funded 'employment peer specialist positions' with employment provider agencies, to work with individual consumers returning to the competitive labor market; relied upon peers to develop and operate employment support groups for working consumers; funded Consumer-Directed Services to develop evidence-based employment practices within their operations; and asked providers to develop employment-focused WRAP plans for interested consumers.

G. **Data Collection**

Indicate the county's strategies for improving the collection of data with regard to the employment status, progress, and success of consumers in evidence-based employment practices. **Examples:** In the past, counties have requested that local Consumer/Family Satisfaction Teams specifically survey Supported Employment participants; asked employment providers to report on program outcomes using the Employment Reporting Grid in the Evidence-Based Practices Toolkit (from SAMSHA); and sought information on the differential use of treatment and rehabilitation services for those who are involved in evidence-based practices and those who are not.

H. **Work Incentive Counseling**

Indicate the county's strategies for grappling with consumers' fears of losing financial and/or medical benefits as a result of the income earned from competitive employment. **Examples:** In the past, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has sponsored 'Work Incentive Planning Assistance' delivered through Community Work Incentive Coordinators who have been trained and certified by SSA; some county agencies and provider groups have made good use of these resources to maximize resources for beneficiaries who are working or are planning to work in the future; and some counties are planning to devote their own funding to an expansion of these types of work incentive counseling programs.