

Polk County Mental Health & Disability Services Region
2021 Community-Based Employment
Outcomes Evaluation



LAW, HEALTH POLICY & DISABILITY CENTER

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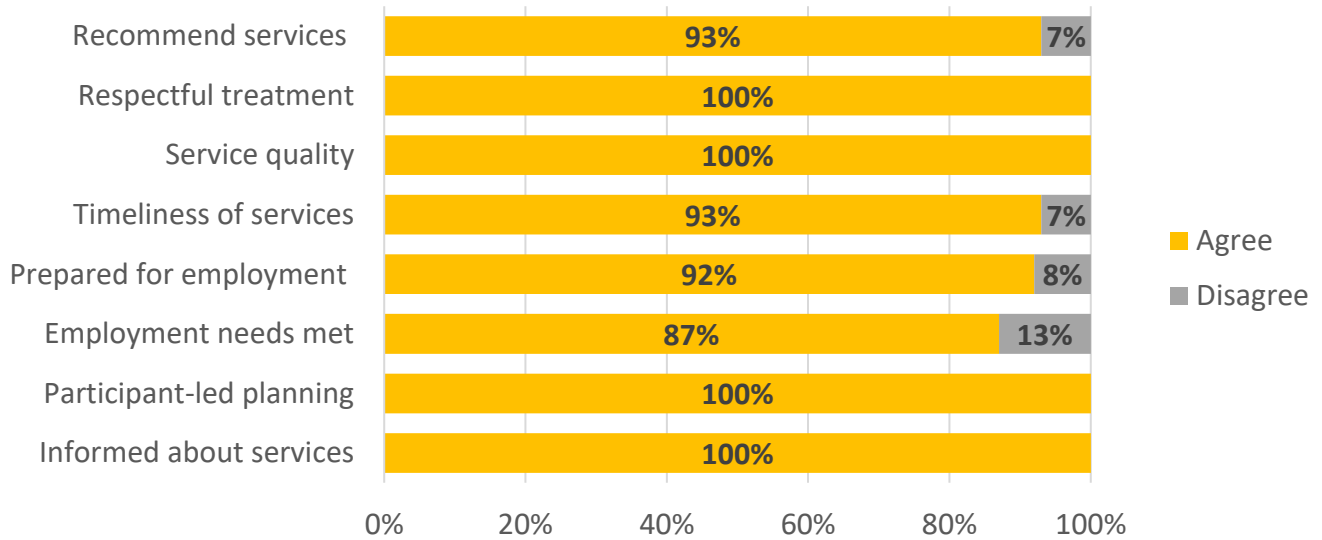
Appendix A. Individual Agency Summaries

Candeo

Table 5. 2021 Candeo Performance Summary

	Performance		Score	
	Candeo	System Average	Candeo	System Average
Level of Support	3.24	3.05	3	2
Barriers to Employment	4.39	4.2	NA	NA
Engaged Toward Employment	89%	84%	3	2
Working Toward Self-Sufficiency	23%	34%	2	3
Negative Disenrollment	0.00%	0.37%	4	4
File Review	100%	98%	4	4
Participant Satisfaction	96%	95%	4	4
Agency Overall Performance	83%	79%	3	3

Figure 1. 2021 Candeo Participant Satisfaction by Item Error! Bookmark not defined.



Participant Comments (N=15)

Services Delivered Effectively

Just good to have a fresh perspective of somebody who knows what kind of jobs are out there because I have found in my own experience that's one of the biggest hurdles out there because these companies out there, they have concerns. So it's nice to have someone who can be there and like [tell them] 'I know you have concerns but that's what were here for'.

They help and they respond right away. 'They make my job easier' is what I would tell them.

If there's an incident at work... they help me with that. They're working on keeping me safe.

Showing me how to print my pay stubs, help me with the tests, and stuff. They read the test if I need help and make sure I understand it.

Well, they check up on me to see how I'm doing, and they talk with my manager.

When I first started, they helped me make a resume and get me started.

It's helpful and supportive. Like if I'm not feeling good, if I need to go to the hospital, they're there.

They always do a really good job when helping me. Making sure that I do the job right and making sure everything's okay at work and trying to figure out what's best for me.

Positive Relationships with Agency or Staff

[I would say] that they are good to work with, and that they are very helpful, and that they have good attitudes when they work with their clients.

They're really nice, friendly, people

Well, they do a very good job. They're nice people and they have good service. I just like that I have a nice job at [BUSINESS NAME] and they help me very much and they help me a lot.

They treat me really nice and respect me. They're really sweet.

They're friendly on how they approach me and how they react. When they come to [MY PLACE OF BUSINESS] they seem to smile and are happy to work with me. They are never upset or unhappy. They have a good attitude and are very supportive as well.

They're always conscious of my time. They always make sure that when we meet it's a good time for me. They're just very professional and that's the best way to put it, I think.

Positive Impact of Services

[My job coach] has been with Candeo for a long time. [He] helped me with applying and getting a job. He helped me take time off when I needed it. My staff helped me last year so I could take

time off last December.

They helped me learn... learning and being patient with other workers and other guests at the same time. Observing and listening and communicating too.

Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs

Maybe the job coach. Not having her be on my [case] so much. Like telling us how to do our job when I already know our job. Sometimes she says I want another job when I don't.

I would want [to] change possibly the people I work with too. I just met the guy. They want me to go to the workshop at [BUSINESS NAME], I think. I don't want to do that. Because I don't get anything out of it, I don't think. And I don't really want to be there.

When we were setting up job employment, the meeting [was] quick and they told me what to do. Them following through with that is a different story. I've been waiting for these job services for about two years now and I still am not working.

There are times that I have to just keep reaching out to get things done when they should be getting in contact with me. My other job coach went to a different place and I called my site manager and I have been waiting on this for literally two years.

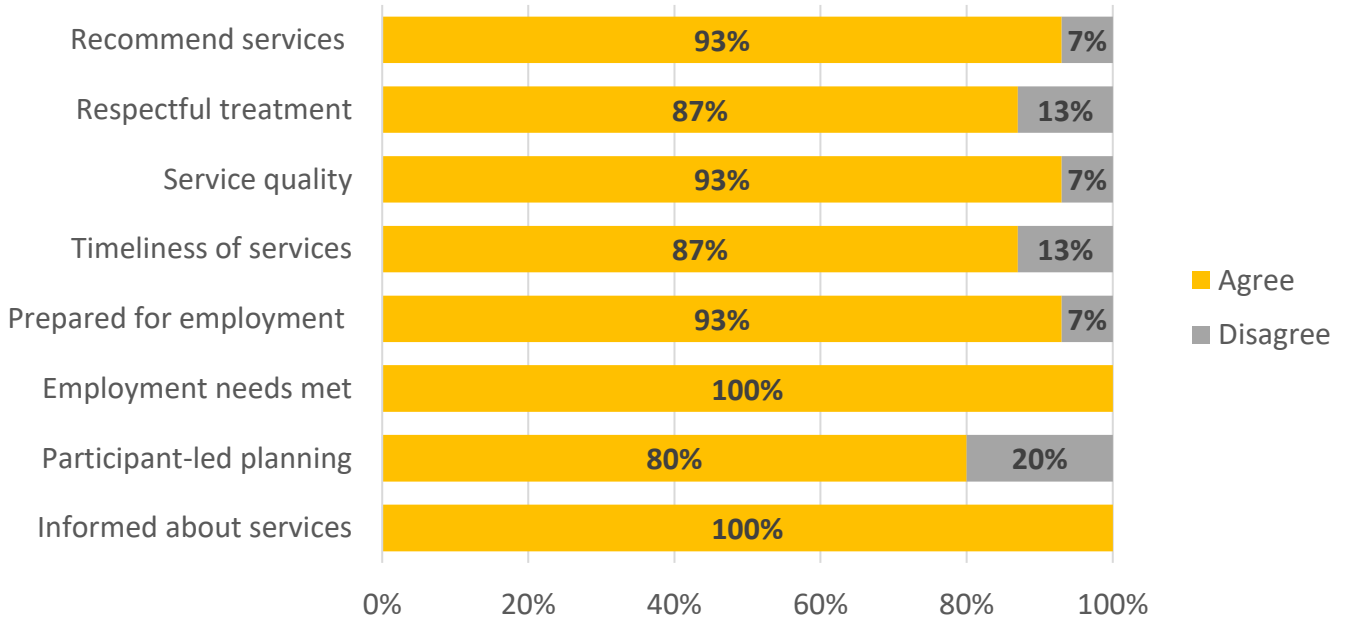
We did all the job-shadowing, and they take in consideration my mental [needs] and interests but they do drop the ball with communication and following through.

EasterSeals

Table 6. 2021 EasterSeals Performance Summary

	Performance		Score	
	EasterSeals	System Average	EasterSeals	System Average
Level of Support	2.77	3.05	2	2
Barriers to Employment	4.02	4.2	NA	NA
Engaged Toward Employment	83%	84%	2	2
Working Toward Self-Sufficiency	45%	34%	4	3
Negative Disenrollment	0.46%	0.37%	4	4
File Review	98%	98%	4	4
Participant Satisfaction	91%	95%	3	4
Agency Overall Performance	79%	79%	3	3

Figure 2. 2021 EasterSeals Participant Satisfaction by Item Error! Bookmark not defined.



Participant Comments (N=15)

Services Delivered Effectively

They can easily help you find the proper training for the employment you want and help you through the interview, prepare you for work and what to expect on the job.

I actually sat at a table with them and the boss at Easter Seals. They asked me what I wanted to do about my services. They check in with me, like [what] I wanted. And I called and [they did] help me with applications.

They always, always, put their clients first. When it comes to the clients and the jobs they want, and if the job isn't a good fit, they can always go back to square one and look for a new job that fits. And they can always go back to looking for a new [job] for a client at a different place.

When I was looking for a job, they asked me what kind of kitchen jobs I wanted. And I said I wanted to work at a [BUSINESS NAME], and he got me an interview at one.

Positive Relationships with Agency or Staff

They treat me like an average person. They don't do anything mean. They respected my boundaries and who I am.

I would say that if you're having [trouble] funding employment, Easter Seals would be willing to help anyone. At least that's my view on it. They let you be you. And if ever you need anything from anyone, they're always there for me when I need it so there's no reason they wouldn't be there for anyone else, in my opinion.

Whenever there is a situation, they listen and they don't pry into it but they try to help, which I really appreciate.

They always ask me how my day's been and how work's been going and if there's any issues with work and I'll just have a talk with them about it. And they [go] off to talk with my boss and get us on the right page as far as what's been going on.

Positive Impacts of Services

It really helps me because in some situations, that can be a bit stressful, they help me find ways to manage the stress or find other options. [They] help me realize I can do the important tasks first and not worry about everything that needs done.

Mom and dad enrolled me because they thought it would be a good support group and it helped. It was much more than the support group I expected. Help with activities and daily living not just being around other people with [disabilities].

Basically, plan ahead if the weather looks bad or how to handle situations with unruly passengers or people who are having a bad day. How to handle stressful situations in a positive way.

Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs

They say they will get back to you in 24 hours but make you wait three days. They put us on the backburner which is wrong because they work for them not the other way around. We don't work for them.

Seems like the staff don't care about the clients' attitudes, just want us to walk around and act all nice, like children.

We don't know where to call.

They were supposed to visit work yesterday but didn't. I don't remember their name.

I would have people check in with me a bit more often. Right now they are strapped for people and I haven't heard from my job coach in a while. It'd be nice if someone could check in more regularly to make sure things that might be bothering me don't become problems.

Depends on the situation. If they get treated like I get treated then no, if they get treated with respect then maybe. It all depends on the situation.

They have to schedule social things so they don't interfere with jobs.

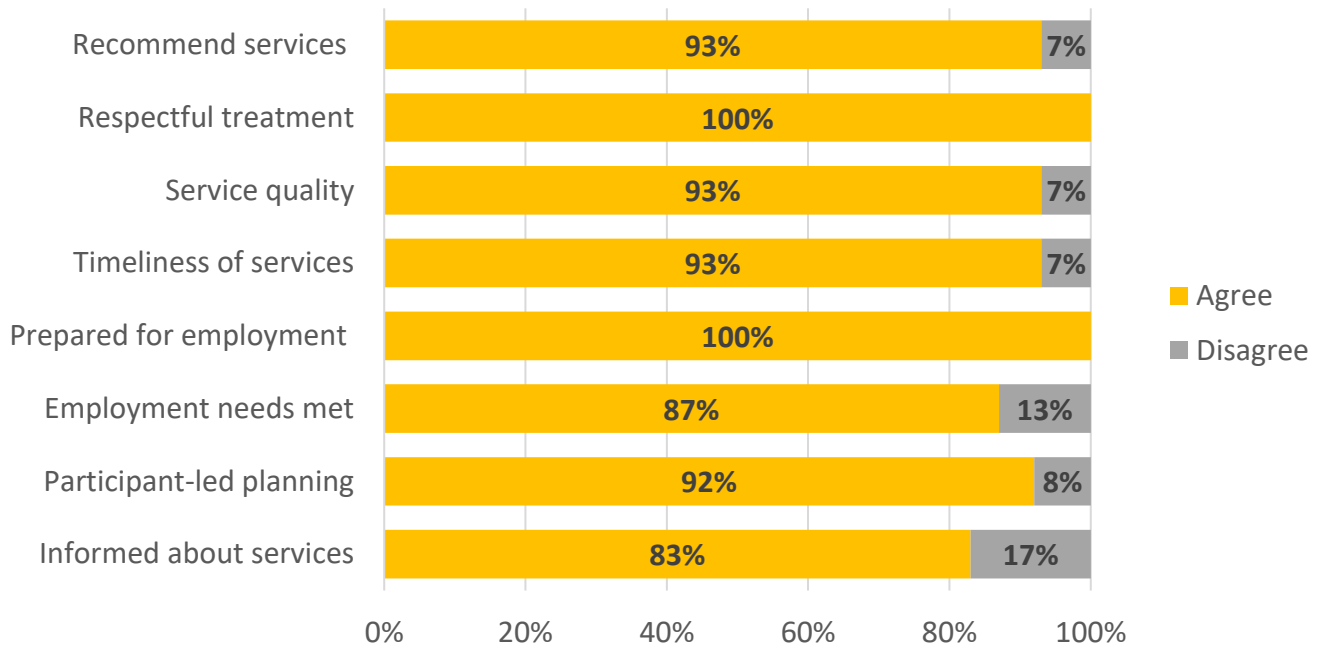
When a client calls them, the client expects the staff to call back immediately. I always say ASAP when I call them. If they call clients when clients call them, clients will be more positive.

Goodwill

Table 7. 2021 Goodwill Performance Summary

	Performance		Score	
	Goodwill	System Average	Goodwill	System Average
Level of Support	3.21	3.05	3	2
Barriers to Employment	4.77	4.2	NA	NA
Engaged Toward Employment	76%	84%	2	2
Working Toward Self-Sufficiency	32%	34%	3	3
Negative Disenrollment	1%	0.37%	3	4
File Review	96%	98%	4	4
Participant Satisfaction	93%	95%	3	4
Agency Overall Performance	75%	79%	3	3

Figure 3. 2021 Goodwill Participant Satisfaction by Item Error! Bookmark not defined.



Participant Comments (N=15)

Services Delivered Effectively

I go to the day program [during the week], and they are good at telling me what the schedule is and what is for lunch, letting me know what is going on and what to expect.

Yeah, we made a plan together: making sure [I'm] concentrating during work and being respectful, professional. I do a pretty good job of that too.

They gave me advice and they are good about following up with me if I have questions. Or if they have time, they'll answer questions and come help me at work. My goals are making sure I get to work on time and look presentable and not call-in last minute if I need work off because I'm sick or can't make it into work.

When I worked at [BUSINESS NAME], they helped me when I had to take my classes, and stuff, they helped with that. My job now I'm rolling silverware and they help me when I first get there. He helps me clock in and then gets my stuff for me and then when I'm done rolling they help put the silverware into the bucket and when I'm done working they help clock me out.

Positive Relationships with Agency or Staff

They are very helpful. If I need help, they help with my schedule and they're willing to work with me and help me change my hours, help me put the new hours in. Or if I need to go in early, they help me get the hours with my manager.

Well, they're always truthful and honest and they always call me when they're coming in. I think they're really nice people and they know what they're doing with mentally handicapped people, people with disabilities.

When my worker, [Staff], he doesn't talk too fast, and I understand them really well and they're really nice. And if I tell them I don't understand them, they'll repeat it.

Well, they respect me, and they treat me like a regular person. And if I do something wrong, they tell me what I did wrong and how to do it the right way. Just love and compassion and understanding.

They need to go get a job there and Goodwill's real nice. They're real nice people to get along with. I like working with Goodwill and my job coach.

Positive Impacts of Services

If it wasn't for Goodwill, I wouldn't have my job. When my job coach is there, we talk and he keeps me informed and helps me when I need help.

I just keep doing what I'm doing, keep working, keep doing better. The more I do on my own, the better.

Employment needs: do what's expected of me, whatever they need me to get done, just do it. Do by the rules, like if I want to get time off, two weeks' notice. Following the rules and being

treated like everyone else. The boss mentioned since he started that when he'd seen what I'd done that I needed the least assistance and that was another plus.

Goodwill prepared me for my job by helping me get it and keep it.

Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs

[It] would be nice to meet with them. [I] only met with them once in my life and I had my job for a year.

They make you wait, and they don't respond.

[The participant worked with Goodwill for four or five years, he thinks. Has a job coach but can't remember his name and said that they don't contact each other. He said his job coach just shows up at his work.]

They could come by and visit me at work more often.

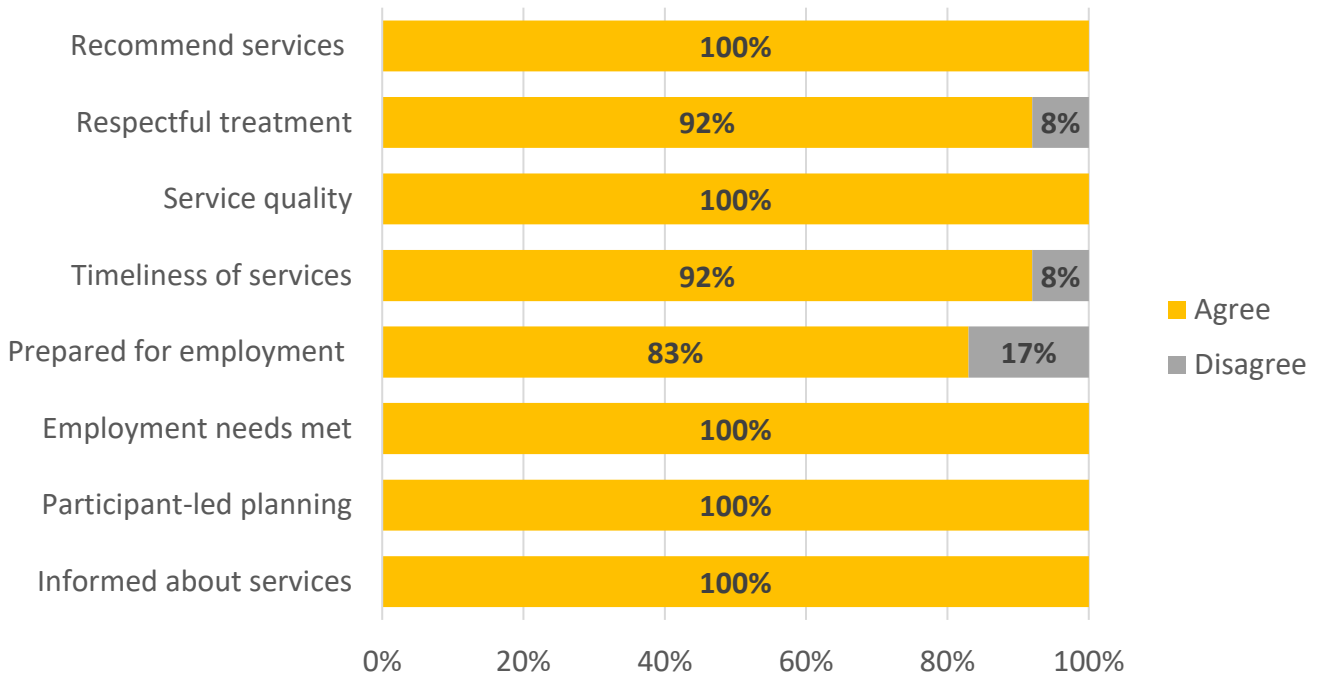
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HOPE

Table 8. 2021 Hope Performance Summary

	Performance		Score	
	HOPE	System Average	HOPE	System Average
Level of Support	2.77	3.05	2	2
Barriers to Employment	1.46	4.2	NA	NA
Engaged Toward Employment	83%	84%	2	2
Working Toward Self-Sufficiency	43%	34%	4	3
Negative Disenrollment	0.00%	0.37%	4	4
File Review	98%	98%	4	4
Participant Satisfaction	96%	95%	4	4
Agency Overall Performance	83%	79%	3	3

Figure 4. 2021 Hope Participant Satisfaction by Item Error! Bookmark not defined.



Participant Comments (N=13)¹

Services Delivered Effectively

[My job coach] is helping me do better now [when starting a new job]. She helped me get prepared for interviews and the questions and stuff. I get nervous I'll say something wrong, and they won't hire me.

They helped me find a job and they helped me get it. They helped me look for a job and helped me apply for it.

I like that I'm able to get done what I need, like my employment, and they're helping me with my finances. If I have something that I need that involves insurance and medical, like if ... I need to know [if it will be covered], they will help me.

When I had an emergency appointment last year one of my providers went above and beyond to get me there and move their schedule around to help me.

They were really good at helping me out. They would call me a lot and were supportive. When I first started with them, they would come to my house a lot and recommend jobs and they would just help me look for jobs. They've been really great with helping me out at work if I have problems basically just been really great with helping me.

Positive Relationships with Agency or Staff

I like that I can have someone I can talk to about work stuff. [My job coach] helped me get more hours because they cut everybody's hours after Christmas.

I spoke with [my job coach] last week. She gets back to me quickly when I have problems. I had problems with my ride last week and she helped.

[My new job coach] is really nice and listens.

There would be nothing I would change. They're very nice people to work with so I wouldn't change anything.

They listen to my ideas, listen to my goals.

They're very nice people. They just watch me, watch what I do. And if I have a question about [work] then I ask them or my boss.

They're really nice people and they keep you on task and they're kind and they help you out. They're all nice people as far as I'm concerned.

[My job coach] is very good with if you need something she'll answer the phone because she'll talk with you and help [you] calm down. I always call her because she always answers the phone. I know she's human but sometimes I wonder. She's just a great person.

¹ Interviewers were not able to reach the 15-participant goal for completion, so only 13 interviews were completed for HOPE

They're very helpful. They're a really great group of people to work with.

They always give me honest feedback of how they think I'm doing at work. They always treat me well and like I'm an adult.

Positive Impact of Services

At the beginning [they helped me] write a resume, decide what areas to work in, find a job, practice interviewing. Once [I] got the job, [my job coach] would come once a week and talk to the boss. They come less often [now] because I'm doing good.

Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs

No comments fit the definition for Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs category

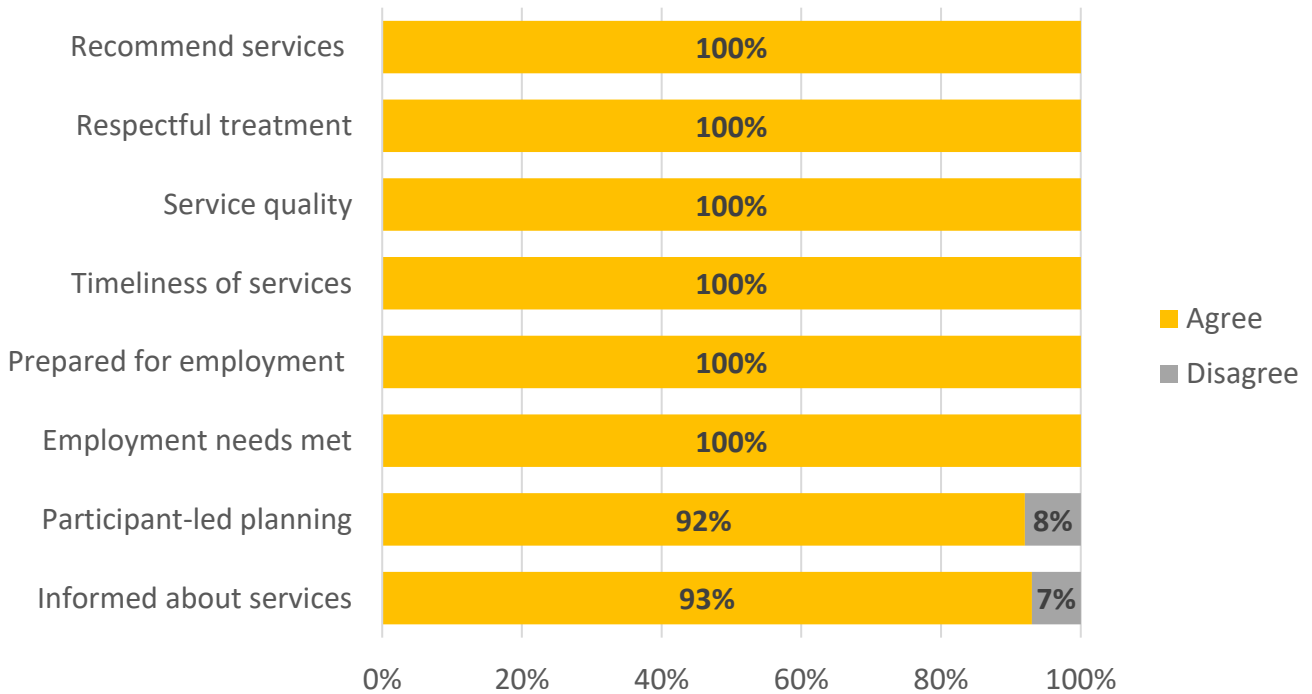
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Link

Table 9. 2021 Link Performance Summary

	Performance		Score	
	Link	System Average	Link	System Average
Level of Support	3.27	3.05	3	2
Barriers to Employment	5.56	4.2	NA	NA
Engaged Toward Employment	90%	84%	3	2
Working Toward Self-Sufficiency	22%	34%	2	3
Negative Disenrollment	0.00%	0.37%	4	4
File Review	100%	98%	4	4
Participant Satisfaction	98%	95%	4	4
Agency Overall Performance	83%	79%	3	3

Figure 5. 2021 Link Participant Satisfaction by Item Error! Bookmark not defined.



Participant Comments (N=15)

Services delivered effectively

[Before my first day of work] they helped address my needs and talked to the resource manager.

They helped me to get a job and keep it.

They helped me find a job and they helped me with applications.

We ride the bus. We worked on interviews. With [my job coach] we had to do the computer and stack groceries and [learn] what goes in sacks and stuff then I really got trained by cashiers.

Positive Relationships with Agency or Staff

They have excellent mentors.

Communication... They're supportive, keep me on track.

They're very helpful. [They] can help you find a job, help you prepare.

I like working with [my job coach] because he helps me look for a job out in the community. Other staff help me with other things too. He would tell me like to practice my interviews and what to say in interviews about school and stuff.

They help me real good. They see if I can do better...do stuff by myself every day.

They have great help. And they take care of you excellently.

They listen to me, and they give feedback to me. And if I'm having a good day or bad day, they cheer me up if I'm having a bad day.

They like give me space when I need it. They help me when I need it.

They treat us equally like nice and stuff like that. We treat them nice, and they treat us like really respectful.

Positive Impact of Services

Nothing. I wouldn't change [anything]. It's perfect the way I like it. I love Link. Ever since I came, they help me do things on my own. There was no help in [another MHDS Region]. [I found] Link about 10 months ago.

My goal was to get a job, which I did, and to keep the job, which I have been.

Suggestions for Improvement and Unmet Needs

Sometimes I want to get mad at them and I have a job coach and I want to talk to them, but I get that they're under-staffed. Sometimes I need job coaches and sometimes I need to talk to somebody right away and sometimes it's hard to do that at work.

Appendix B: Employment Barriers Definitions

Measure to assess the number and types of barriers to employment

Child Care: requires access to child care in order to participate in training or employment program and this child care cannot be provided by the immediate family

Criminal Background: convicted of three or more misdemeanors, a serious misdemeanor or any felony.

Education: did not graduate from regular high school or has a special education certificate

Financial Disincentive: recipient of public financial assistance (AFDC, GA, Unemployment Comp) or disability benefits (SSI, SSDI, Worker's Comp, or private insurance)

Homelessness/Lack of Stable Housing: homeless or risk of homeless is defined as living on street, in shelter or living with someone else, but not paying rent {This does not include individuals living with family members} or considered a temporary situation. Lack of stable housing is person who has moved more than twice in a year's period.

Limited Work History: has never held a (one) competitive job for at least six months (does not include facility-based, enclave, or non-paid employment).

Paid Living Assistance: receives Supported Community Living (SCL) or other residential services; support services such as homemaker, meals on wheels (MoW), or CDAC for any combination of services for at least 40 hours per month. Use current hours (for MoW, each unit will equal 1 hour) authorized to determine. If the individual lives with their guardian and would require SCL if the guardian was not present, determine the number of hours of support & count toward paid living assistance hours.

Transportation: not travel independently and/or reliant on public transportation.

Work Limited: individuals with a chronic physical condition who are (a) unable to work at least 30 hours a week, or (b) regularly require personal care assistance on the job, or (c) require adaptations to the job (such as special equipment not including aids used outside of work)

Note: Consumer barriers are identified at program acceptance and not updated.

Measure: Average number of consumer barriers

Appendix C. File Review form

#{e://Field/ExternalDataReference} #{e://Field/RecipientFirstName}

Administrative

Q1.1. File Review Start Date

Q1.2. Reviewer

- Reviewer 1
 Reviewer 2
 Reviewer 3
 Reviewer 4

Q1.4. Member Identification

PolkMIS ID

Participant First Name

Participant Last Name

Alias

Agency

Q1.5. Are the Member ID fields above consistent with PolkMIS sample list?

- Yes
 No

Wage Reporting

Q1.6. Employment Status

End of Year Status from Polk MIS: #{e://Field/Program}

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Select all programs participant engaged in during CY 2021 and write in dates of active status

Employment (potential for wage reporting)

Employed, Supported Employment

Inactive employment

Job Development

Employment Prep

Accepted, not working/HOLD

Waiting List

Unemployed

Discharged

Exempt

Graduated, Independent

Unknown

Other

Q2.2. Does the participant's PolkMIS status indicate enrolment in Supported Employment in the spring (4/16/21 – 04/30/21) or fall (10/17/21 – 10/30/21) reporting periods?

Yes, spring reporting period

Yes, fall reporting period

No, neither reporting period

Q2.3. Hours worked and wages

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Hour and wage reporting

	Hours worked (over 2 week time period)	Wage (per hour)	Source(s)	Date verified
Spring Reporting Period (4/16/2021 – 04/30/2021)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Fall Reporting Period (10/17/21 – 10/30/21)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Q2.4. Wage and Hour reporting comments

Examples:

Dates active in each employment status

Change in job

Documentation inconsistencies

Q2.5. Wage and Hour reporting score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected (2 IF wages reported during both periods)	<input type="text" value="2"/>

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Job Development

Q3.1. Job Development Services

	Were services provided and documented?		
	Yes	No	NA
Did agency make direct contact with client (phone OK to sub for F2F due to COVID) and documented each calendar month during services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program enrollment dates consistent between PolkMIS and Agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant's employment preferences discussed with participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job search guided by participant preferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant involved in job placement (NA if not placed yet)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3.2. Notes

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q3.3. Job Development score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected	<input type="text" value="5"/>

Job Coaching (Supported Employment, Employed)

Q4.1. Job Coaching Services

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Were services provided and documented?

	Yes	No	NA
Did agency make direct contact with client (phone OK to sub for F2F due to COVID) and documented each calendar month during services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program enrollment dates consistent between PolkMIS and Agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant received support to meet job expectations (job specific skills, dress, aware of resources available)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Logistics addressed with participant (e.g. paperwork, compliances, scheduling, transportation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4.2. Notes

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q4.3. Job Coaching score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected	4

Waiting List

Q5.1. Wait List Services

Were services provided and documented?

Yes	No	NA
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4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Were services provided and documented?

	Yes	No	NA
Did agency make direct contact with client (phone OK to sub for F2F due to COVID) and documented each calendar month during services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program enrollment dates consistent between PolkMIS and Agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant notified of waiting list placement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant notified of estimated wait time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5.2. Notes

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q5.3. Wait list score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected	4

Unemployed

Q6.1. Unemployed Services

	Were services provided and documented?		
	Yes	No	NA
Did agency make direct contact with client (phone OK to sub for F2F due to COVID) and documented each calendar month during services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Were services provided and documented?

	Yes	No	NA
Program enrollment dates consistent between PolkMIS and Agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant plans to return to job development or employment prep were discussed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6.2. Notes

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q6.3. Unemployed score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected	3 <input type="text"/>

Employment Prep

Q7.1. Employment Prep Services

	Were services provided and documented?		
	Yes	No	NA
Did agency make direct contact with client (phone OK to sub for F2F due to COVID) and documented each calendar month during services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program enrollment dates consistent between PolkMIS and Agency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant completed a skills assessment (NA for structured programs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Were services provided and documented?

Participant's individual needs for employment-related skills were addressed
(Examples: hygiene, communication skills, coping skills)

Yes	No	NA
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7.2. Notes

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q7.3. Employment Prep score

Criteria met	<input type="text"/>
Criteria expected	<input type="text" value="4"/>

On Hold

Q8.1. On hold services

Were services provided and documented?

Staff and participant agreed on expectations for communication while in on hold status (e.g. participant will initiate communication, staff will check in at planned intervals or when reason for on hold status is resolved.)

Yes	No	NA
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8.2. Notes

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Qualtrics Survey Software

If "No" marked above, describe discrepancy

Q8.3. On Hold score

Criteria met

Criteria expected

Reviewer Notes**Q9.1. Finalize reviewer notes****Include details such as**

- Date of contact
- Method of contact (include location if face-to-face)
- Notable events related to participant circumstances (e.g. transportation, health, housing, major relationships)
- Change in program status (move from employment prep to job coaching, on hold status, disruptions in Medicaid eligibility)
- Job changes (change in wage or number of hours regularly worked)
- Notes about participant, but not direct contact (such as provider-to-provider communication, or MCO communication)

Note discrepancies such as

- Gaps in contact during a calendar month (notes as discrepancy and include dates of attempted contact when applicable)
- Repetitive notes (copied and pasted repeatedly)
- Notes do not match participant file
- Inconsistencies between PolkMIS documents and agency documents

4/26/22, 5:37 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

- Mismatch between serices and activities and partipant goals (when goals are provided)
- Logical inconsistencies
- Date inconsistencies
- Missing documentation

Q9.2. Final status summary

- No discrepancies to report
- Potential discrepancies to discuss or clarify
- Discrepancies present - scores affected

Q9.3. Please provide all information from your file review needed to understand the context and nature of discrepancies found

Include dates of case notes and how the file is discrepant. For example, how notes and PolkMIS event don't match, lack of documentation supporting requirements, or how notes indicate requirements have not been met.

Start each new discrepancy with ** to keep separate

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Appendix D. Participant Interview Items

Question number	Abbreviation	Full item
B1A	Informed about services	The staff at [agency] told me about the services that were available to me and answered my questions about the supported employment program.
B2	Positive experiences	What are one or two things about [agency]'s supported employment service that you liked the best?
B3	Areas for improvement	If you could change one or two things about [agency] supported employment service to make it better, what would they be?
B4A	Participant-led planning	I have participated in the selection of my employment goal and development of my individual employment plan.
B5A	Employment needs met	The services I received from [agency] were appropriate to meet my employment needs.
B6A	Prepared for employment	[Agency] adequately prepared me for employment.
B7 A	Timeliness of services	[Agency]'s supported employment services were provided to me in a reasonable amount of time.
B8A	Service quality	I was satisfied with the quality of services from [Agency].
B9 A	Respectful treatment	[Agency] treated me with courtesy and respect
B10 A	Recommend services	I would recommend the supported employment services from [Agency] to a friend

Appendix E. Qualitative Codebook

Positive and Satisfactory	Participant describes services, experiences, outcomes, interactions with staff and agency, relationships with staff, as positive, including supportive, respectful, informative, efficient, etc.
Positive Relationship with staff or agency	Talking about staff or agency in a positive way, "I like them," includes qualities such as accountability, supportive, person centered care, responsive, knowledgeable, kind, nice, friendly, helpful, respectful, would refer to friends
Impact of Services	Participants describe how services have improved their lives or certain aspects of life, such as mental health symptoms, increased independence, increased confidence, goal achievement, needs being met, more included in community, etc.
Services Delivered Effectively	Participants talking positively about services they received, such as help setting goals, care coordination (help making appointments, transport to appointments, pharmacy), medication management, financial support and benefits management, employment support, housing support (finding a place to live), help with various paperwork, improving access to the community and encouragement, emotional support (gives advice, someone to talk to). Includes communication with staff and agency (timely, clear, reliable, accessible), responsiveness to emergencies, crisis line access).
Concerns	Participant describes dissatisfaction with services, experiences, outcomes, interactions with staff and agency, relationships with staff, as negative such as slow or inefficient, not helpful.
Pandemic and Quarantine	Any pandemic or quarantine related comments such as loss of employment, changes in staff or services, changes to communication (e.g. transition to telehealth communication by phone, computer), less communication, describing agency protocols (e.g. no face to face contact or social distancing expectations, regular check-ins), includes reports of no changes during the pandemic.
Suggestions for improvement	Any time a participant describes unmet needs outside of scope of expected services or services they would like or benefit from, changes to how programming is run, agency changes, policy changes, benefit changes, staff wage changes etc.

Appendix F. Community-Based Employment Background

BACKGROUND

The benefits of employment are well documented. Working has been associated with reductions in mental health symptoms and hospitalizations, and improvements in medication compliance^{1,2,3}, as well as increased community integration,⁴ improved quality of life,^{5,6} and higher self-esteem and self-efficacy.^{7,8} Although wage equity is still lagging, the use of supported employment is a cost-efficient investment in regard to taxpayer expense.⁹

Table 1. Types of Community-Based Employment Services Reimbursed by the State¹⁰

Service Type	Description	Expected Outcome
Prevocational Services	Services to provide career exploration, learning, and work experiences, including volunteer opportunities, where the member can develop non-job-task-specific skills and strengths that can lead to paid employment in individual community settings.	Individual employment in the general workforce or self-employment, typically in community settings, where the member can interact with individuals with and without disabilities, to the same extent that individuals without disabilities in comparable positions interact with other persons. The member is compensated at or above the minimum wage, and not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities
Career Exploration	Develop an individual career plan and facilitate member's experientially-based informed choice regarding the goal of individual employment.	Written career plan that will guide employment services which may lead to community-based employment or self-employment for the member.
Individual Supported Employment	Services provided to, or on behalf of, members support the member in obtaining and maintaining an individual job in competitive employment, customized employment, or self-employment in an integrated work setting in the general workforce.	Sustained community-based employment or self-employment, paid at or above the minimum or customary wages and level of benefits paid by an employer, in an integrated setting, in a job that meets participant's personal and career goals. Successful transition to long-term job coaching, if needed, is also an expected outcome of this service.

SERVICE ENVIRONMENT

The delivery of Community-Based Employment services continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the 2021 reporting year. The following section outlines the policies and circumstances relevant to employment, people with disabilities, and the direct support workforce.

COVID-19 Event Timeline

Date	Event
1/2020	Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) declared ¹¹
3/2020	Iowa Public Health Emergency declared ¹²
3/2020	Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, citing Section nine of Iowa Code, suspends regulatory provisions requiring face-to-face interactions expanding telehealth services by providers, including HCBS ¹³
3/2020	Telehealth services detailed by Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) ¹⁴
4/2020	Medicaid systems telehealth codes and cost-share policies fully updated to allow billing for virtual care services ¹⁵
1/2021	HCBS managed care and fee-for-service rates increased by 3.55% ¹⁶
3/2021	President Biden signed ARPA, the American Rescue Plan Act ¹⁷
5/2021	Iowa governor announces June end of participation in federal pandemic-related unemployment benefits ¹⁸
11/2021	\$6.4 million in CARES Act funds distributed to HCBS providers ¹⁹
2/2022	Iowa Public Health Emergency ended ²⁰ (National Emergency still in effect)

COVID-19 Impact on Employment of Individuals with Disabilities 2020-2021

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Nearly two-thirds of working-age Americans with disabilities were left out of the labor market all together.²¹ In other words, fewer than one-third of working-age people with disabilities had a job compared to almost three quarters of working-age people *without* disabilities who have jobs.²²

After March 2020

- The COVID-19 pandemic caused mass unemployment and it is estimated that, by the end of April 2020, one million workers with disabilities had lost their jobs, that is 20% of all working people with disabilities.²³
- The unemployment rate for persons with a disability, at 10.1% in 2021, decreased by 2.5 percentage points from the previous year but remains higher than in 2019, when it was 7.3%.²⁴

Ongoing Risks of COVID-19 Infection for People with Disabilities

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) notes some individuals with disabilities have a higher likelihood of becoming infected from COVID-19 because of the following risk factors²⁵:

- Underlying chronic medical conditions (adults with disabilities are three times more likely than adults without disabilities to have heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or a stroke).
- Congregate living settings
- Systemic health and social inequities

Increased Demand for Mental Health Services²⁶

Throughout the pandemic, significant increases in demand for mental health services have been documented across the general population. These changes across the general population can strain resources and symptoms experienced can have a compounded negative impact for people with existing mental health diagnoses.

According to a CDC report, which surveyed adults across the U.S. in late June of 2020:

- 40% of U.S. adults surveyed reported struggling with mental health or substance use in the prior 30 days, including experiencing significant emotional upheaval (anxiety, depression, trauma-related symptoms, increased substance use)
- 31% of respondents reported symptoms of anxiety or depression
- 13% reported having started or increased substance use
- 26% reported stress-related symptoms
- 11% reported having serious thoughts of suicide in the past 30 days
- 62% of Americans have reported feeling increased anxiety

Risk factors for reporting anxiety symptoms or suicidal ideation included:

- Food insufficiency
- Financial concerns
- Loneliness, isolation, and a lack of connection
- Challenges to daily life and well-being

Issues Impacting Employment Services Providers in 2021

- 1 in 4 (25%) essential workers have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder since the start of the pandemic.²⁷
- Despite being essential workers, the most recent hourly wage (adjusted for inflation) for direct care workers in Iowa has been estimated at \$13.23, an increase of only \$1.55 per hour since 2010 when the hourly wage was \$11.63.²⁸
- The living wage in Polk County, IA, for a single person with no dependents, is \$14.32.²⁹

- Demand for direct care services, including employment services providers, has far outpaced the available workforce.

Ongoing Employment Services Provider Shortage

In December 2021, the Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services (MHDS) Commission Annual Report recommended³⁰:

- The MHDS workforce shortage be addressed by including “the evaluation of the sufficiency of all Medicaid fee schedules”
- Increasing the maximum allowable fund balance for Iowa’s MHDS Regions
- Fully funding state appropriations annual regional mental health services

POLK COUNTY MHDS REGION

The Polk County MHDS Region advocates for people with disabilities to create lives undefined by disability. Employment and education are important ways to increase opportunities for all individuals, and the Polk County MHDS Regional Network supports individuals using an array of educational, training, and employment services. Employment is a means by which individuals can meet their basic needs and enhance their lives beyond the basic necessities. Workers strive to bring personal meaning and satisfaction to their lives, as well as benefits to the society around them. People have a need to work and to gain identity through that process. Currently, people with disabilities are largely unemployed or underemployed. Social isolation and poverty are two reasons that being unemployed is an unhealthy way to live. It is striking that adults with disabilities are the only group in the United States for whom not working is considered acceptable and who are not viewed as a significant economic resource. To end discrimination for people with disabilities, employment is crucial.

Employment is a strategic priority for the Polk County MHDS Region and is governed by the following values:

- Employment is not a choice; it is an expectation.
- Employment services are strengths-based where the individual is treated respectfully.
- Employment equals minimum wage or greater.
- Employment in the community is preferred; however, if the individual needs greater support, employment services in a group setting at or above minimum wage is an individual choice.
- All participants’ plans should address employment.
- Participants should both be employed and able to pursue their individual career goals.
- Businesses should employ people with disabilities as they would anyone else.

This evaluation of community-based employment services is a key component to measuring the effectiveness of employment services.

Evaluation period

2021 calendar year (January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021)

Report Structure

The report results are structured in three main sections:

1. Participant Demographics
 - a. Total census

- b. Disability Type
- 2. Employment Metrics
 - a. Average Wages earned (hourly and weekly)
 - b. Average hours worked per week
 - c. Employment Setting
 - d. Employment Retention
 - e. Employment Status
- 3. Outcomes
 - a. Level of Support and Barriers to Employment
 - b. Engagement Towards Employment
 - c. Working Towards Self-Sufficiency
 - d. Negative Disenrollment
 - e. File Review
 - f. Participant Satisfaction

This evaluation documents the Community-Based Employment providers' efforts to improve the quality of life of individuals served, as well as their commitment to providing responsive, efficient, and effective services.

Community-Based Employment Service Providers:

- 1. Candeo
- 2. EasterSeals
- 3. Goodwill Industries
- 4. HOPE Agency
- 5. Link Associates

Data sources

- 1. Outcome data that agencies provide to the Polk County MHDS Region
 - a. The agencies record employment and service data through the Polk County MHDS Region's electronic system, the PolkMIS interface.
 - b. At the time an individual is accepted into an employment program, the agency declares the types of services that the individual will be receiving (e.g., wait list, employment preparation, job development, supported employment, hold status).
 - c. Agencies report any changes in the type of employment services as they occur.
 - d. Biannually, agencies enter participants' earnings (hourly wages, hours worked, and job types) during a specific reporting period of two weeks (April 16 – 30 and October 17 – 30). These biannual data also become part of the network employment outcomes.
- 2. Reviews of agencies' files
 - a. The Law, Health Policy & Disability Center (LHPDC) checks a random sample of agency files for agreement with the electronic system and adherence to PCHS guidelines and expectations.
- 3. Interviews with program participants.
 - a. LHPDC also interviews a sample of community-based employment program participants to gather feedback and satisfaction information.

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