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Kelly Haines

University of Massachusetts Boston, kelly.haines@umb.edu


Heike Boeltzig

University of Massachusetts Boston, heike.boeltzig@umb.edu

Jean E. Winsor

University of Massachusetts Boston, jean.winsor@umb.edu

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Examining Collaboration between State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies and State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

By: Kelly Haines, Heike Boeltzig, and Jean Winsor

Since Fiscal Year 1988, the Institute for Community Inclusion has administered the National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies' Day and Employment Services. The FY 2009 survey included a module to assess the ways in which state intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) agencies collaborate with their state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to support integrated employment outcomes for adults with IDD. A total of 40 agencies responded to the module. Their responses provide a broader understanding of the relationship between the two types of state agencies, and the ways in which they work together to provide integrated employment services.

IDD agencies were asked about the type of collaboration they have with their state VR agency. Thirty-seven IDD agencies reported that they deliberately collaborate with VR. Agencies were also asked to classify their collaborations as formal or informal. Twenty-one IDD agencies reported that they collaborated with VR in both formal and informal ways, ten IDD agencies reported that they collaborated with VR only in formal ways, and six IDD agencies reported that they collaborated with VR only in informal ways.

Table 1. Areas of Collaboration between State IDD Agencies and State VR Agencies

Area of Collaboration	Yes	No
Cross-agency planning (n = 33)	28	5
Integrated employment services for individuals are coordinated across agencies (n = 33)	26	7
Cross-agency training (n = 34)	22	12
Intake and eligibility information for individuals is shared (n = 30)	21	9
Data on individual employment outcomes is shared (n = 30)	19	11
Blending and braiding of funds to support individual employment outcomes (n = 33)	14	19
Combining funds to support shared initiatives to improve integrated employment outcomes (n = 32)	11	21
Shared monitoring of employment provider services (n = 30)	8	22
Shared employment provider certification (n = 31)	5	26

IDD agencies were asked about the specific ways in which they collaborate with their state VR agency (Table 1). State IDD agencies most frequently reported collaborating with VR to conduct cross-agency planning and to coordinate integrated employment services for individuals across agencies. State IDD agencies that reported collaborating with VR in both formal and informal ways on average engaged in a greater number of collaborative activities with VR ($m = 4.95$ activities) than IDD agencies that only had formal ($m = 4.00$ activities) or informal ($m = 1.67$ activities) collaborative relationships.

The reported number of collaborative activities, IDD agency participation in integrated employment services, and the VR rehabilitation rate for closures with IDD all vary from state to state (Table 2). Future analysis will focus on whether IDD agencies that have high rates of people served in integrated employment engage in a greater number of collaborative activities with their state VR agency than states with moderate and low levels of integrated employment. Further analysis will also explore the relationship between areas of IDD and VR agency collaboration and the VR rehabilitation rate for all closures with IDD.

The results of this module indicate that most state IDD agencies collaborate with their state's VR agency to support employment outcomes for individuals with IDD. These findings provide insight into the quantity of collaborative efforts. However, further research is needed to measure the quality and depth of collaborative efforts between IDD and VR agencies.

Table 2. Participation in Integrated Employment Services and Areas of Collaboration Between State IDD Agencies and State VR Agencies

State	IDD Agency Percent Served in Integrated Employment Services ^a	VR Rehabilitation Rate for all Closures with IDD ^b	Number of Areas IDD Agency Reported Collaborating with VR ^c
AK	29%	72%	2
AL	5%	71%	3
AR	4%	46%	7
AZ	20%	48%	5
CA	15%	63%	6
CO	24%	60%	5
CT	54%	46%	4
DC	28%	55%	8
DE	-	66%	-
FL	12%	35%	-
GA	25%	53%	3
HI	8%	26%	-
IA	-	59%	-
ID	5%	68%	0*
IL	10%	56%	1
IN	31%	47%	5
KS	18%	60%	2
KY	11%	39%	5
LA	47%	41%	2
MA	29%	57%	4
MD	39%	77%	3
ME	-	62%	0*
MI	23%	45%	4
MN	18%	53%	8
MO	7%	64%	-
MS	-	62%	-
MT	12%	55%	7
NC	21%	62%	2
ND	-	72%	-
NE	-	63%	-
NH	46%	54%	4
NJ	-	53%	-
NM	36%	52%	5
NV	22%	58%	6
NY	13%	52%	5
OH	20%	46%	5
OK	60%	44%	6
OR	24%	54%	1
PA	22%	54%	-
RI	-	65%	-
SC	23%	45%	-
SD	28%	65%	4
TN	19%	57%	-
TX	-	51%	3
UT	34%	66%	8
VA	21%	54%	0*
VT	38%	75%	8
WA	88% ^o	64%	6
WI	18%	44%	6
WV	-	64%	-
WY	21%	83%	1

^a Percentage of individuals served in integrated employment services of all individuals receiving day and employment services. This number is not indicative of the number of individuals the IDD agency supported in integrated jobs.

^b Rehabilitation Rate = (# of closures in employment) / (# closures in employment + # closures with an IPE not in employment).

^c The maximum number of areas for IDD–VR collaboration a respondent could choose was 9.

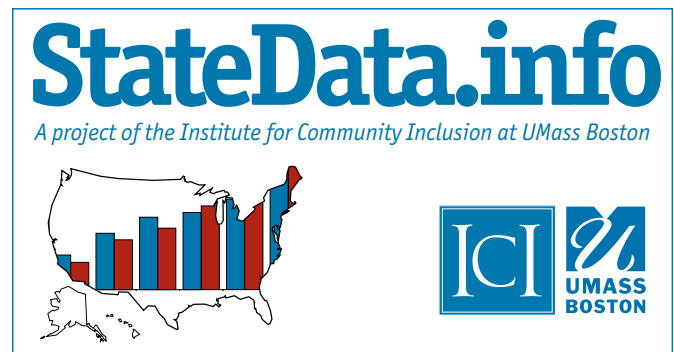
- Data not reported.

* State reported collaborating with VR either formally and/or informally but did not indicate collaboration in the areas listed in the survey module.

^o 4,866 (59% of total) are in paid employment.

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