

What's the DEAL? with Supported Employment!

We all know that we cannot begin a plan with a consumer for supported employment unless there is a realistic expectation of long term support. For many years supported employment has been provided using a patchwork of county long term support services. Often the county provider had a long wait list and could not commit to providing the long term support needed. DVR would then make an attempt to secure long term support from other sources: family, Social Security plans, grants etc. Sometimes this worked, sometimes it didn't.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services has rolled out Family Care with the promise to reduce wait lists and provide a more secure source of long term support. Wisconsin is in the middle of this roll out and in some places, services remain unchanged.

In other places there are many changes taking place and not only has long term support changed but the terminology and methodology as well. So that DVR staff can speak with consumers and other partners in an informed way, the following glossary has been developed to explain the changes, differences and trends.

ADRC - Aging and disability resource centers (ADRCs), designed to be a single entry point where older people and people with disabilities and their families can get information and advice about a wide range of resources available to them in their local communities.

Blended Funding - An approach utilizing negotiation and coordination with providers of Family Care services to determine the funding source of services for mutual consumers. Since there may be more than one funding source for a needed service, this approach allows for individualizing payment for services. As a rule of thumb if a service is in support of employment DVR can assist with payment in whole or in part.

Care Management Organization (CMO's) or Managed Care Organization (MCO's) - These terms are used interchangeably and represent DHS contracted providers which manage and deliver the new Family Care benefit, which combines funding and services from a variety of existing programs into one flexible long-term care benefit, tailored to each individual's needs, circumstances and preferences.

Customized Employment - A modified supported employment approach using a unique set and sequence of pre-employment services that assess consumers' innate abilities and traits along with customized job analysis and placement. The approach differs from traditional supported employment in that job trials are not typically used to make determinations about possible job placement.

Employment First Initiative - The Wisconsin chapter of the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) has begun an initiative to provide training and resources to consumers and advocates that allows them to consider employment first when developing a plan of services under family care.

Evidence Based Practice - Practices whose effectiveness has been confirmed by systematic research or expert consensus. This approach has been used to incorporate employment as an element of treatment for consumers diagnosed with chronic mental illness. The DVR Counselor is a member of the treatment team and assists in providing expertise in job skill requirements and local labor market information.

Discovery - This is a milestone assessment step in customized employment where information is gathered about consumers' innate skills and abilities. These innate skills and traits are used as the basis for a job match and job customization.

Integrated Employment - Supported Employment in DVR is integrated in that it occurs in the community and for wages above minimum wage. The terminology was developed as part of Family Care to assist providers of sheltered employment in understanding the difference between working in integrated community environments versus working in conglomerate settings for less than minimum wage.

Peer Support - These are services typically provided by a mentor as a person with a disability to provide ongoing support to a consumer in work and in the community. These services are provided as part of family care. Peer support providers can be found in Wisconsin Independent Living Centers and other providers of long term supports.

Person Centered Planning - Person-centered planning strategies are used throughout Wisconsin in Family care to help determine the interests and preferences of people with developmental disabilities. The supports are developed in response to the identified interests, needs and preferences to help people get lives that make sense. DVR has used this approach for many years as part of our overall philosophy of providing consumer choice in decision making throughout the DVR process.

Supported Self-Employment - In a process that is a hybrid between self-employment and supported employment an individual is assisted in completing a business plan that includes support from others in the short and long term for reaching their IPE and business goals. There is a new chapter to the self-employment toolkit that explains the process involved in securing self-employment for someone with supports.

Vocational Futures Planning - A consumer directed, team based comprehensive service package including: job search assistance and preparation, benefits counseling, coordination of Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP) and ongoing support and coordination of medical, long-term care and employment services. This service is provide to consumers receiving Medicaid and may include participation of DVR.