



Promoting and Expanding **Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities** for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Strategic Plan

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Executive Summary

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is committed to facilitating and expanding opportunities for individuals with disabilities to fully engage in their communities. As part of this commitment, DHHS is transforming services and systems to support individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals. DHHS believes that all individuals have the right to work in integrated settings and earn competitive wages and benefits in Competitive Integrated Employment. Over the next five (5) years, DHHS will work in collaboration with individuals, families, caregivers, and guardians, as well as local, state and federal partners, providers, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders to implement the *Promoting and Expanding Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Strategic Plan* to help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities make informed choices, achieve their employment goals and to safely transition out of segregated and/or sheltered settings.

The *Promoting and Expanding Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Strategic Plan* (CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan) is a result of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with two disability advocacy organizations, Disability Rights NC (DRNC) and the Center for Public Representation (CPR). This MOU was created in response to a demand letter from DRNC and CPR alleging that the State of North Carolina violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead* by failing to serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in integrated employment settings appropriate to their needs by June 2020.

This document outlines the phased approach DHHS will take to promote and expand Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) opportunities for individuals with I/DD. Specific actions include establishing a clear pathway to CIE for people with I/DD; ceasing new admissions to services in Adult Developmental Vocational Program (ADVP) settings by July 1, 2022; completing employment assessments with people engaged in services in ADVP settings; providing individuals with I/DD with resources needed to make an informed choice about CIE; completing Career Development Plans with individuals who decide to pursue CIE or are undecided; making guidance, education, technical assistance and other resources available to providers; establishing core competency training and training requirements for providers; and ensuring collaboration between key DHHS divisions.

DHHS is excited to enter the next phase of transformation and build upon our history of supporting North Carolinians with disabilities as fully included members of the community. The CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan aligns with North Carolina's *Olmstead Plan* and reflects our commitment to advancing equity and inclusion. Recognizing that transformation can be difficult, our goal is to support individuals, families, caregivers and providers through this process through communication, education, and technical assistance, along with other supports and services, as outlined in this document. Full implementation of this plan is subject to the availability of funds, which DHHS will request from the General Assembly in support of these efforts.

Competitive Integrated Employment

Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) CIE means working in the community alongside other employees without disabilities, earning at least minimum wage and getting the same workplace benefits and opportunities as other employees doing the same job. CIE includes full-time and part-time employment, as well as self-employment and business ownership. CIE helps individuals become more fully engaged in their communities, enhance social connectedness, and be more empowered for self-driven decision-making.

CIE is for everyone. There are no minimum qualifications and even those with the most significant disabilities can work with the right job supports in place. Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 protects people with disabilities from discrimination in the workplace and requires employers to offer reasonable accommodations for the hiring process and on the job. Reasonable accommodations are individualized based on a person's needs in the workplace and can include things like interpreters for people who are Deaf, visual aids for people who are blind, accessible public spaces, and quieter workspaces.

CIE does not include work completed in sheltered, non-integrated settings, work that pays less than minimum wage, and work that does not offer opportunities for advancement. Examples of sheltered non-integrated settings include Adult Developmental Vocational Programs (ADVPs) and other day services offered in ADVP settings. Although these settings may provide some benefit, they do not fully realize the promise of CIE which promotes equal opportunity and an integrated life in the community for all, regardless of disability status.

Definitions

The following terms are commonly used throughout this document:

- **Adult Developmental Vocational Program (ADVP)** is a service that provides organized developmental activities for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) to prepare to live as independently as possible. ADVPs provide opportunities for enjoyment of leisure activities and the development of community living skills, vocational adjustment, work activity training, and personal skill development. ADVP services are generally provided in an ADVP setting and are paid for with state funds and through private pay arrangements.
- **Adult Developmental Vocational Program Setting** is the setting in which ADVP and other sheltered/segregated services are provided.
- **In Lieu of Services** are services and/or settings not covered under the Medicaid State Plan, but that are medically appropriate, cost-effective alternatives to services that are covered.
- **Day Components of ICF IID In Lieu of Service in ADVP Setting** is one part of a Medicaid- funded service that is provided in an ADVP setting. This service provides structured day services, including vocational and pre-vocational services. Other services associated with the ICF IID In Lieu of Service are not directly addressed in this plan.

DHHS Divisions

The CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan requires clear communication and coordination among many key players. All are important in helping us achieve our goal. Some important NCDHHS divisions include:

- **Division of Health Benefits (DHB or NC Medicaid)** provides health insurance to over 2.1 million North Carolinians. NC Medicaid manages NC's Medicaid and NC Health Choice programs, pharmacy benefits and behavioral health services. NC Medicaid provides integrated, community-based employment services for people with Medicaid through the 1915(b)(3) waiver, the NC Innovations waiver, and the NC Traumatic Brain Injury waiver.
- **Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS)** provides state funding for people I/DD to receive individualized, community-based supports and services, including employment supports and services. DMH/DD/SAS also provides funding to support prevention, treatment and recovery services for people with mental illness and substance use disorders.
- **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)** helps people with disabilities achieve their employment goals by providing direct and sponsored services. DVRS supports the development of individualized plans for employment (IPE) for those who are eligible, which may include a variety of employment services to aid in the achievement of CIE.

These divisions work collaboratively to advance shared objectives and efforts to expand and promote CIE for people with disabilities.

Informed Choice

Informed choice is based on the principle that everyone, regardless of disability status, is able to make choices if given the opportunity and support to do so. People are presumed competent to make decisions for themselves. Informed choice means that people make their own decisions based on complete and accurate information. It occurs when a person, with or without reasonable accommodations, understands all the options available to them, including the benefits and risks of their decisions. Additional components of informed choice, specifically related to vocational rehabilitation services, are defined within [34 CFR 361.52-Informed Choice](#). Informed choice is part of an ongoing process of engaging people in person-centered conversations about their goals. The process of informed choice doesn't have an end and doesn't just occur one time.

Informed choice is central to NC DHHS's plan to expand CIE opportunities for individuals with I/DD. Individuals, families, caregivers and guardians will be engaged regularly in conversations about employment goals and options. Information on all available options will be provided in a way that is easily understood and will include benefits, risks, and steps to move forward, if desired. Informed choice will include an opportunity to visit and observe people working in CIE and to talk with them about their experience. Choices are respected and individuals will not be forced to do something that they don't want to do.

Providers and direct support professionals play an important role in informed choice. They help ensure that the individual, family, care giver and/or guardian understand the breadth of options available, the benefits and risks of their choices, and the next steps needed to achieve their goals. Providers play an important role to help people connect with community resources that support accomplishing their goals.

Informed choice does not always result in a decision to pursue CIE. DHHS respects the informed choice of individuals who choose not to pursue CIE. DHHS will ensure that the informed choice process includes other options that are available to the individual.

DHHS will ensure informed choice through written policies and procedures, standardized assessment and career planning tools, provider competencies, training and technical assistance, and on-going monitoring. Each of these are discussed later in this document.

CIE Strategy

DHHS intends to update and reform its policies, procedures and practices to transition all funding for ADVP services and Day Components of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP settings to support only competitive employment in integrated settings by July 1, 2026. This is a big undertaking which will be embarked upon with a thoughtful and deliberated phased approach based on a solid foundation and history of work in this area.

Over the past decade, NC has taken significant steps to transform services and systems to support individuals with disabilities as fully included members of their communities. DVRS has long supported individuals with disabilities in their pursuit of CIE by providing a variety of vocation rehabilitation services needed to achieve one's vocational goals. This includes community-based assessments, internships and pre-employment transition services that have increased the number of people with disabilities employed in CIE. DVRS also provides career counseling to individuals known to DVRS who are employed in sheltered settings and receive subminimum wage and shares information to assist these individuals in making an informed choice about CIE.

State agencies have participated in various national training and technical assistance initiatives, and have ongoing conversations with other states, to design systems and supports that improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities in North Carolina. However, additional steps are needed to modernize support services and employment resources to create access to CIE for everyone.

This CIE strategy will be implemented over five (5) years. As implementation requires, the plan will evolve as needed. Considerable action is needed to ensure that each individual and family is engaged in the informed choice process and to support employment service providers during this transformation. The CIE strategy and plan will be implemented as funding is available. DHHS will be requesting funds from the NC General Assembly for implementation.

The CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan's phased approach highlights:

- Informed choice
- Clear pathways to CIE
- Stakeholder engagement and communication
- Training and technical assistance
- Alignment of Medicaid and State-funded Supported Employment services

Subject to the availability of funding from the North Carolina General Assembly and any other available funding sources, DHHS action to be taken over the next five years includes:

1. **Prohibition on New Admissions to ADVP Services and Settings** - Beginning July 1, 2022, there will be a prohibition on new admissions to ADVP services or any Day Component of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP settings.
2. **Employment Assessment** - By July 1, 2023, an employment assessment will be provided to Individuals who have received ADVP services or any Day Component of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP settings. Assessments will also be provided to individuals who accessed these services at any point between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 and are currently engaged with their Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO).
3. **Informed Choice About CIE** - Individuals who engaged in any of the services mentioned above on or after January 1, 2020 will be provided with the resources necessary to make an informed choice about CIE.
4. **Career Development Plan** - Individuals who engaged in any of the services mentioned above on or after January 1, 2020 and who decide to pursue CIE and those who are undecided will have a Career Development Plan completed by July 1, 2023. Career Development Plans identify an individual's employment goals and objectives, the services and supports needed to achieve those goals and objects, the people/agencies assigned to help the person achieve their goals, potential obstacles to CIE, and the services and supports needed to overcome obstacles.
5. **Guidance, Education, Technical Assistance and Other Resources** - Guidance, education, technical assistance and other resources will be made available to providers of ADVP services and Day Components of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP settings. These resources will include training, information and guidance on appropriate engagement of individuals around the promotion of CIE and benefits of the system transformation.
6. **Core Competency Training and Training Requirements** - Core competency training and training requirements will be established for provider staff who are responsible for the provision of supported employment and other services that allow people with I/DD to work in CIE.
7. **Clear Pathway to Employment** - DHHS will ensure and promote collaboration between key agencies (DMH/DD/SAS, DHB, DVRS, and DSOHF) and establish a clear pathway to employment for people with I/DD.
8. **Provider Transformation** - Guidance and technical assistance will be available to providers of ADVP Services, through nationally recognized experts, to assist them

with transforming their program and business models to become providers of, or to increase capacity within their existing, integrated employment services resulting in CIE. DHHS will seek financial incentives to further these transformation efforts.

What Does This Mean for People with I/DD?

Individuals actively receiving services in ADVP settings on July 1, 2022 – including ADVP services and the Day Component of the Medicaid ICF IID In Lieu of Service – can continue to receive those services until July 1, 2026. Subsequent to this date, DHHS will only fund CIE and no longer fund services in ADVP settings.

This means that people actively receiving services in ADVP settings on July 1, 2022 will need to transition out of these services. Most people will transition to other services and supports. This will be a big change. DHHS is working to ensure that each person with I/DD gets the support they need to make this transition safely and successfully.

Each person is unique and has different goals and preferences; therefore, these changes will mean different things for different people. Regardless, DHHS will ensure that people are given an opportunity to make an informed choice about CIE or other personalized day options.

Families, caregivers and guardians may also be concerned about what these changes mean. They may worry that their loved one will lose services or that there is no reason to change if they are already in a safe and stable environment. They may wonder how the individual will do at work in community settings.

Families and caregivers are key stakeholders for DHHS. We recognize the unique and critical role families play. Potential concerns experienced by families are critically important. DHHS will provide ongoing, accurate and up-to-date information to all stakeholders. Beginning in February 2022, DHHS will be hosting webinars, trainings and town halls to provide further details and ensure all questions regarding the transition are addressed. DHHS will be launching a CIE-specific web site with a virtual library of information and resources.

DVRS will continue to offer career counseling sessions at local ADVP worksites to all known workers with disabilities who are paid less than minimum wage. This career counseling focuses on the benefits of CIE and pathways to achieve CIE. This is based on Federal Requirements outlined in Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA). These requirements supplement, and do not replace, requirements of section 14(c) Certificate under the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#). More information regarding the WIOA requirements can be accessed [here](#).

DVRS will enhance career counseling services over the next year by including a peer-involved process, increasing the frequency of career counseling sessions, and developing additional written materials to be made available to individuals and families on these topics.

Each person is unique and will be supported to follow their unique path to CIE. There are, however, several steps that most people will experience along their path:



Informed Choice

Each person with I/DD will be engaged in an ongoing informed choice process, where complete and accurate information about employment options will be provided. This will include discussion about personal goals as well as benefits, risks, potential barriers, and steps to move forward. This also includes visiting and observing CIE in action and talking to people in CIE about their experiences. This process will occur regularly, as people’s interests and personal goals change over time. Reasonable accommodations will be provided as needed for the individual to participate in the informed choice process.

People who are receiving services in ADVP settings will begin to engage in an informed choice process about employment options beginning in 2022. This will include written and verbal information from DHHS, LME/MCOs, and future Behavioral Health I/DD Tailored Plans (BH I/DD Tailored Plan) and providers. DHHS will be hosting webinars and stakeholder meetings to provide information on this transition, services and supports available and informed choice. DHHS is available to answer questions along the way and will ensure that LME/MCOs (and future BH/IDD Tailored Plans) and providers engage each person in an informed choice process.

DHHS embraces informed choice. DHHS recognizes there will be people who choose not to pursue CIE. DHHS will ensure that people who make an informed choice not to pursue CIE receive information on other available options.

Employment Assessments

Each person with I/DD will be engaged in employment planning. Employment assessments are individualized assessments that describe a person’s strengths and interests in employment. Everyone who receives services in ADVP settings will receive an employment assessment by July 1, 2023. This will be done during the next Person-Centered Plan (PCP) or Individual Support Plan (ISP) update. DHHS will facilitate this process by ensuring that tools are available to LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and providers, by providing training and technical assistance, and through direct monitoring.

Anyone who received services in an ADVP setting at any point since January 1, 2020 – even if they stopped receiving services in an ADVP setting since then – will be contacted by the LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) to participate in the informed choice and employment assessment process.

The employment assessment will be provided by the professional that typically helps the person with their PCP or ISP. This will either be the LME/MCO Care Coordinator (future BH/IDD Tailored Plan Care Manager) for people with I/DD receiving a Medicaid-funded service or the service provider for people with I/DD receiving a State-funded service. If the provider is unable to complete the employment assessment and the individual does not have Medicaid, a referral will be made to DVRS to complete the assessment.

This assessment will describe the strengths and interests of the individual. It provides the foundation for employment discovery activities. Families, caregivers and guardians will be engaged in the employment assessment process during the PCP or ISP process as well.

LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) will be responsible for providing oversight of the Career Development process in their provider networks. DHHS will facilitate this work, provide training and technical assistance, provide tools to complete the assessment and will monitor progress, as described later in this document.

Career Development Plans

Each person with I/DD will have a Career Development Plan, which will become part of the person's Individual Service Plan (ISP) or Person-Centered Plan (PCP). Career Development Plans include:

- A person's employment goals and objectives
- Services and supports needed to achieve employment goals and objectives
- The people, agencies and providers that will assist the person in reaching their employment goals and objectives
- Obstacles and barriers to CIE
- Services and supports needed to overcome obstacles and barriers to CIE.

Everyone who completes the employment assessment and chooses to seek CIE will work with their LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) if they have Medicaid or their current provider if they are receiving State-funded services by July 1, 2023. This will be done during the next Person-Centered Plan (PCP) or Individual Support Plan (ISP) update if currently receiving services. If the individual is not receiving any Medicaid or State-funded services, DHHS will facilitate this process by ensuring that tools are available to LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and providers, by providing training and technical assistance, and through direct monitoring.

The employment assessment and Career Development Plan will be facilitated and developed by a qualified employment professional or the LME/MCO Care Coordinator (future BH I/DD Tailored Care Plan Manager) who has been trained in employment services

and has achieved core competencies on CIE for Care Coordinators/Managers. The Career Development Plan will identify employment goals, the people (including agencies and providers) who will help the person achieve their goals, and the services and supports necessary to achieve the goals and will become part of the PCP or ISP.

The Career Development Plan is highly individualized, so next steps will vary greatly depending on the individual. Services and supports will be put into place based on the Career Development Plan. The LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) and/or provider will assist the individual along the way. Obstacles and barriers will be addressed to ensure a safe and successful outcome.

DHHS will provide a Career Development Plan template and a Career Development Planning Assessment by Spring 2022 for use by LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and providers. DHHS will provide live and recorded training for all users, including individuals and families in Summer 2022. DHHS will ensure that LME/MCO Care Coordinators (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans Care Managers) are trained in the use of the Career Development Planning Assessment and the completion of Career Development Plans.

Individuals referred to DVRS and found eligible will follow the VR process, as appropriate, which includes:

- Comprehensive Assessment
- Development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- Service Implementation
- VR Case Closure

Services and Supports

Individuals with I/DD will receive the services and supports necessary to pursue CIE and overcome any barriers to CIE based on the Career Development Plan and funding availability. This will vary greatly from one individual to the other. Many of the supports and services available are outlined in the Pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment section below.

Competitive Integrated Employment

Each person who chooses to pursue CIE will be supported on their pathway to their goal of achieving CIE. However, it is important to note that informed choice does not end once someone obtains CIE. All individuals receiving Medicaid or State-funded supports and services will be engaged in the informed choice process.

Support is also available to help people with I/DD maintain employment, advance in employment or find new employment. For eligible individuals, additional support is available through DVRS to acquire new job skills through training, college and career readiness programs, or other post-secondary education opportunities in pursuit of CIE.

What Does This Mean for Providers?

Providers of ADVP services and Day Components of ICF IID services provided in ADVP settings will need support and guidance to transform into new service models or increase capacity in existing Individual Supported Employment services that move people with I/DD toward CIE.

ADVP providers will play a critical role in assisting individuals and families to understand and engage in CIE. DHHS will make guidance and technical assistance available to providers of these services through nationally recognized experts. DHHS will also provide training and technical assistance to certain LME/MCO staff, including Care Coordinators (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plan Care Managers).

Additional information on support for providers will be added to the [DHHS CIE web pages](#) as it becomes available.

Pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment

DHHS will ensure that there are clear pathways to CIE. It is important to note that there is **no wrong door** to pursuing CIE. People with I/DD can start exploring CIE from wherever they are.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)

The primary pathway to CIE for most North Carolinians with disabilities is through DVRS. These services are available statewide assist individuals with disabilities in achieving their CIE goals. DVRS can provide employment counseling and guidance, education, training, job placement assistance, assistive technology and many other services, depending on what is required to meet the goal of CIE.

For more information, check out these publications:

- [Value Realized: Partners on the Path to Your Career](#)
- [The VR Advantage](#)

Anyone can make a referral to DVRS, including individuals, guardians, family members, service providers, LME/MCO or Tailored Plan, and health care professionals. Individuals can begin to receive Medicaid or State-funded Supported Employment services through their LME/MCO or Tailored Plan while working with DVRS to pursue CIE.

DVRS Eligibility

If you receive disability benefits – Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – from the Social Security Administration or have a have a “Ticket to Work,” you are eligible for VR services. If you are not an SSDI/SSI beneficiary, you may be eligible for VR services if you:

- Have a disability that affects your ability to find a job, keep working or advance professionally
- Require VR services to overcome a disability-related barrier to employment success

There is no cost to apply or to find out if you are eligible. VR services are available statewide through a network of local offices. Contact a [VR office](#) near you for more information or to apply for services.

Benefits Counseling

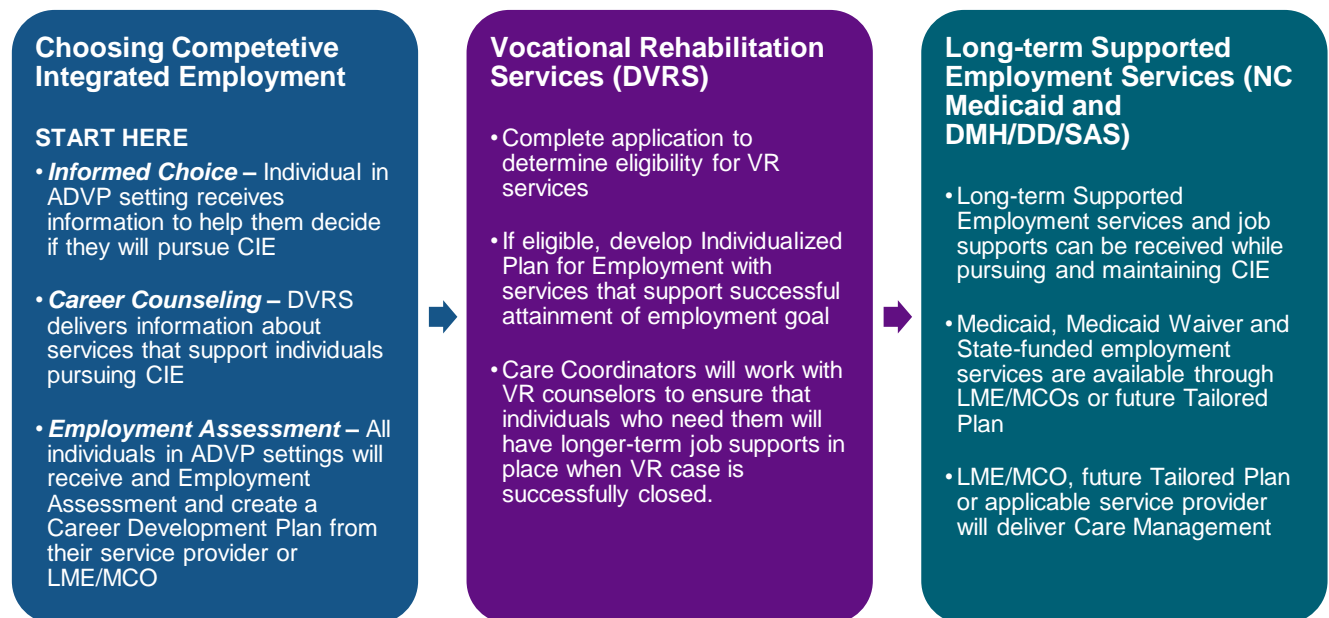
Understanding how earned income can impact medical and cash benefits is key to making an informed choice about pursuing CIE. Benefits Counseling program includes:

- Information on the impact of earned income on your public benefits, medical insurance, and financial independence
- Overview of Social Security’s [Ticket to Work](#) program
- Explanation of [Work Incentives](#) that help you transition to CIE
- Planning assistance to help you achieve your goals for CIE
- Referral to support services as needed

For more information on benefits counseling, visit:

- [DVRS Work Incentives and Benefits Counseling](#)
- [North Carolina Benefits Counseling Services](#)

If an individual expresses interest in CIE through the informed choice process, they will be connected with a counselor in their local VR office for more information.



DVRS Employment Services

DVRS offers a variety of services and supports to help individuals with disabilities reach their employment goals. In collaboration with a VR Counselor, an eligible individual with a

disability will establish a goal for CIE based on their unique skills and abilities and develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), a person-centered plan that outlines the services and supports required to help the individual achieve their CIE goal.

The IPE may include some of the services listed below:

- Career assessments and counseling
- Job skills training
- Assistive technology evaluations, equipment and training
- Rehabilitation engineering services
- Internship, Supported Internship and other On-the-Job (OTJ) training
- Job placement assistance
- Job coaching
- VR Supported Employment
- Customized Employment
- [Individual Placement and Support \(IPS\)](#)
- Self-employment assistance

For more information, download the [IPE Handbook](#).

Each VR office will identify one or more I/DD liaison counselors who will serve as the point of contact for ADVP referrals and will facilitate a streamlined process for supporting individuals referred from ADVPs through application, eligibility and development of an IPE.

Individuals with most significant disabilities will not be deemed ineligible for services because of a need for long-term employment supports. Long term job support needs, providers and funding source must be identified through the LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) and included in the IPE. If such funding is not identified, the individual will receive a certificate of ineligibility and will access Supported Employment and other employment related supports through the LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan).

DVRS Employment Services to assist individuals with most significant disabilities in their pursuit of CIE may include:

JOB SKILLS TRAINING

If an eligible individual's chosen career goal requires additional training, such training may be included on the IPE. Such training might include training through a service provider (such as hands-on training through time-limited supported employment services or customized employment), through community college or university training (when required by the job goal) or through community-based internships.

VR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

A time-limited service provided by DVRS through community employment service providers that offers hands-on job training, and job coaching to help with learning and keeping CIE. Long-term support needs must be identified and funding confirmed before finalizing the IPE to ensure CIE success following DVR case closure.

Customized Employment

Customized Employment (CE) is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate or employee and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on identifying the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate or employee through a process of discovery. CE represents a specific set of techniques and strategies that differentiate it from other forms of community employment. CE is based on the fundamental elements of Supported Employment but differs in important ways. CE is not “better” than other approaches, but there are circumstances when CE is a preferred option, especially when an individual faces multiple and/or complex barriers to attaining meaningful work.

Customized employment is a personalized option that allows individuals with disabilities to engage with employers to negotiate job tasks/duties with a goal of improving overall production in the workplace. Employers are able to determine specific needs and meet such needs with a well-matched, qualified employee.

Supported Internships

Supported internships are time limited, work-based experiences developed in competitive integrated work environments to allow an individual to explore jobs and make an informed choice about their employment goals.

DVRS is currently piloting two projects that offer work-based learning experiences with wages and supports funded by DVRS. In some cases, hiring requirements may be waived for those who have had a successful work experience.

Plans are in place for DVRS to expand service options available to individuals with the most significant disabilities. This will include a new service definition and policy for supported internships, as well as a method to evaluate and monitor supported internships.

In addition to services already available, DVRS will engage stakeholders to develop and implement a Supported Self Employment service by July 31, 2023, with a methodology for evaluation and monitoring of the service.

Additional information on stakeholder engagement will be made available on the CIE interactive website.

Additional Employment-Related Services

Other services are available to individuals seeking CIE including Medicaid and State-funded services that are accessible through the LME/MCOs and future Tailored Plans. In the spirit of no wrong door, individuals can contact their LME/MCO or future Tailored Plan or their provider agency to initiate services. Individuals are encouraged to first apply for DVRS services. Each of the Medicaid and State-funded services has specific eligibility criteria outlined in the service definitions.

DHHS continues to expand and update the available service array for employment and other meaningful day services to support informed choice and individuals who choose to pursue CIE.

Supported Employment

Supported Employment services are individualized, person-centered services that help people with I/DD explore, seek, choose, acquire, maintain, increase and advance in CIE. These services can be temporary or long-term as needed.

Supported Employment is currently funded by the NC Innovations waiver, the 1915(b)(3) waiver and/or State-funds. In the future, an 1915(i) waiver will replace the 1915(b)(3) waiver and will also include Supported Employment services.

DHHS has recently updated the State-funded Supported Employment service definition and will post the final version to the DHHS website by Spring 2022. A recorded webinar detailing this service will be posted as well. DHHS is also working to align the NC Innovations, 1915(b)(3), and future 1915(i) definitions with the State-funded Supported Employment definition so that individuals receive the same service, regardless of funding source. These definitions are slated to launch on December 1, 2022, with Tailored Plan implementation.

Information on these services will be made available on the DHHS interactive CIE website. Communication to individuals, families, providers, LME/MCOs (and future Tailored Plans) and other community stakeholders will include updates on service definition changes, service delivery expectations, program benefits, staff training and competencies, and expected service outcomes.

DHHS has plans underway to provide training to community service providers and LME/MCO employment services providers to be able to provide formal Customized Employment to reach CIE for those that need it. For additional information on customized employment in general, see ODEP's webpage.

Post-Secondary Education

DVRS currently supports and funds aspects of career-focused, post-secondary education for eligible individuals and will continue to explore inclusive post-secondary education with community colleges and other local colleges and universities in collaboration with the NC Post- Secondary Education Alliance. Options being explored include:

- Development of employment academies that provide short-term inclusive post-secondary education training on in-demand jobs and/or assistive technology
- Development of apprenticeships and long-term training opportunities
- Streamlining referral process to post-secondary education employment training
- Educating community stakeholders about funds available for individuals interested in inclusive post-secondary education

Apprenticeships and Internships

DHHS supports apprenticeships and internships for individuals that choose to pursue CIE. DHHS is exploring ways to promote these important activities and is researching the possibility of a pilot project through DMH/DD/SAS.

Updates and new resources will be posted to the DHHS interactive CIE website as they become available.

Employment-Related Supports

People with I/DD may experience obstacles or barriers to CIE. DVRS, LME/MCOs (and future Tailored Plans) and some providers can provide funding for or connect people with I/DD to employment-related supports. Some common employment related supports include:

Transportation

Transportation is essential for employment but can present a barrier for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DVRS, LME/MCO Care Coordinators (and future Tailored Plan Care Managers) and providers can offer information and resources, education to access transportation options, and assistance in identifying funding sources.

DHHS is researching solutions to address these barriers and is looking into the possibility of Medicaid transportation services. NC Medicaid will also explore 1915(i) waiver options for transportation services. Information and training on transportation resources will be made available as new resources are developed.

Community Living and Supports Service

Community Living and Supports (CLS) is a State-funded service that can help individuals with I/DD and TBI work on skills that increase their independence. Examples of these skills can include:

- Using public transportation for travel to and from work
- Purchasing items needed for work

- Preparing for work (meal prep, budgeting, etc.)
- Accessing community resources related to finances (banking, paying bills, etc.)

CLS can help a person with I/DD increase or maintain these skills and can be used to provide supervision needed to maximize self-sufficiency, self-determination and community participation. CLS can also provide technical assistance to others living in the home to help maintain the individual's skills. CLS can be accessed by contacting the LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan).

Work Incentives Benefits Counseling

Special rules make it possible for individuals with disabilities receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to work and still receive monthly payments and Medicare or Medicaid. Social Security calls these rules *work incentives*. Work incentives include:

- Continued benefits for a period of time while the person works
- Continued Medicare or Medicaid while the person works
- Help with education, training and rehabilitation to start a new line of work

Benefits counseling is a free service that explains how working affects federal and state benefits, including:

- SSDI and SSI
- Housing assistance
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/food stamps
- Healthcare benefits, including Medicare and Medicaid

Through benefits counseling, an individual may learn about additional federal and state programs for which they are eligible. The benefits counselor can then refer to other resources for assistance or help the individual apply.

For more information on benefits counseling, visit:

- [DVRS Work Incentives and Benefits Counseling](#)
- [North Carolina Benefits Counseling Services](#)

Provider Transformation and Support

DHHS is committed to supporting providers of ADVP services to transition to services that lead to CIE. DHHS recognizes the significant impact this transformation will have on ADVP providers and the people and families they serve.

DHHS objectives for provider transformation include:

- Increased provider capacity to support services that lead to CIE
- Ensure providers have timely and accurate information and resources to support transformation

- Provide technical assistance to providers on transforming business models to support CIE

DHHS will identify a vendor through a competitive bidding process (Request for Application/RFA) to provide direct, hands-on training and technical assistance to providers participating in transformation activities at minimal, if any, cost to the provider. Additionally, DHHS will research other options such as business acumen training and community of practice options that may help support providers during transformation.

DHHS will regularly update the interactive CIE website to include free or DHHS-sponsored trainings and resources on provider transition to services that support CIE, including up-to-date information on Supported Employment service definitions.

Providers can initiate their transition to providing services that support CIE at any time. The process for initiating the transition to this service will be to contact the LME/MCO (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan). LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) will provide information to ADVP providers on Supported Employment service requirements, expected outcomes and process for adding Supported Employment services.

DHHS encourages ADVP providers to explore the feasibility of paying at least minimum wage to individuals currently enrolled in ADVP services until the services end by July 1, 2026. DHHS will offer incentives to providers that complete provider transformation activities as supported through future funding via the General Assembly.

DHHS will notify providers of any new Federal or State guidance issued around subminimum wages.

Online resources supporting provider transformation activities such as the [LEAD Center: WIOA Policy Development](#) are currently available to providers.

Competencies

The Supported Employment service definitions – including State-funded, Medicaid funded NC Innovations and TBI waiver, and the 1915(b)(3) waiver services – include a requirement that Supported Employment provider staff complete competency-based training in an evidence-based supported employment model. The evidence-based model must be endorsed and/or supported by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and/or DHHS. Additionally, at least one provider staff must have completed certification requirements of the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE), including ACRE with a focus on Customized Employment, or the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) (i.e., Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP)) with experience providing employment services.

DHHS will support providers by making competency training opportunities available. These opportunities will also be available to community service providers that provide employment

services leading to CIE. DHHS will provide a list of approved employment trainings on the CIE interactive website. DHHS is exploring options to potentially sponsor these and other trainings.

Customized Employment training is currently available to providers at no charge through a DMH/DD/SAS contract with NC APSE. DHHS is working on a “train the trainer” model that will include a cohort of provider staff who are trained to provide Customized Employment training to other providers. This cohort will be selected through an application process to ensure the most qualified candidates are selected.

DHHS will also be seeking one or more providers to meet ACRE approved Customized Employment training and conduct provider transformation activities through a competitive bidding process (Request for Application/RFA). The provider transformation activities will help prepare providers to meet the current and ongoing needs of individuals currently in ADVP settings. The first cohort of training will be focused on providers that provide DVRS, Medicaid and State-funded services.

Role of LME/MCOs

The Department will collaborate with LME/MCOs and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans on ongoing methods in which the Department can support engagement with individuals, families, and natural supports.

DHHS will host monthly Technical Assistance calls beginning by Feb. 28, 2022, with LME/MCO staff and future BH I/DD Tailored Plan Care Managers regarding the implementation of the Department’s strategic plan as it relates to:

- Data reporting and collection
- Career Planning and Development Assessments and Career Development Plans
- Informed Choice
- Identifying and mitigating barriers to CIE
- Stakeholder engagement
- Provider training and quality assurance activities (i.e., monitoring)

Understanding pathways to CIE and stakeholder engagement are key to the success of the CIE for IDD Strategic Plan. However, capturing data to track and assess progress is equally important. The following section details how ongoing quality assurance efforts will be utilized to track the Department’s progress towards supporting individuals in ADVP settings to realizing their CIE goals.

LME/MCOs and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans are responsible for authorizing services requested to support the individual. After services are approved, providers are responsible for delivering services as outlined within policy (i.e., Clinical Coverage Policy, State-funded Service Definition, etc.).

As a result of this LME/MCOs and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans are responsible for monitoring their providers to ensure they meet the criteria of the service definition as outlined in policy. This may be through onsite record review or desk reviews. If a provider fails to meet a requirement (i.e., staff training, Career Development Plan on file, etc.), the provider will be issued a plan of correction and expected to come into compliance in order to continue providing services. In conjunction to this, LME/MCOs and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans receive oversight and monitoring from DMH/DD/SAS and NC Medicaid.

BH I/DD Tailored Plans and Medicaid Transformation

DHHS is transitioning services from a predominantly fee-for-service delivery system to a managed care prepaid health plan. This is referred to as Medicaid Transformation and additional information about this work is housed on the [NC Medicaid website](#). The goal of transition to managed care is to improve the health of North Carolinians through an integrated and well-coordinated system of care. One component of the prepaid health plan is a Tailored Plan Care Management model implemented under the BH I/DD Tailored Plan.

BH I/DD Tailored Plans will cover benefits provided through future 1915(i) services, 1915 (c) Innovations and TBI Waiver, as well as state-funded services for populations with significant behavioral health conditions, I/DD, and/or TBI. The proposed implementation date for the BH I/DD Tailored Plans is Dec. 1, 2022.

The Tailored Plan Care Management Model will implement a whole-person care, team based, person-centered approach to services, which will provide face-to-face, community-based care management services. This model will offer a single point of accountability for all Medicaid services delivered including home and community based I/DD and TBI services. Tailored Plan Care Management will be responsible for navigating services across care settings, including coordination of services within a multidisciplinary care team. Screening, Comprehensive Assessment, Person-Centered Planning and ongoing Care Management are a part of the care management process flow to support referral and access to services that connect individuals to programs and resources that assist and support in seeking, obtaining, or maintaining CIE.

Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

Due to the complexity of this transformation and the impact on individuals, providers and families, DHHS has developed plans for robust stakeholder engagement and communication. This will help ensure the success and sustainability of the transition to CIE. In addition to individuals, families and providers, these plans also target community advocates and leaders, provider associations, legislators, LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and other stakeholders.

These plans will evolve over time in response stakeholder needs and concerns. Target audiences for stakeholder communication and engagement will include:

- **General Public** - General information will be shared with all North Carolina citizens regarding CIE.
- **Providers** - Ongoing engagement, technical assistance, training and supports
- **Individuals and families** - Ongoing engagement, town halls, webinars, printed information and training
- **LME/MCOs and BH I/DD Future Tailored Plans** - Ongoing engagement, operational changes related to CIE transformation, trainings, and technical assistance
- **Local DVRS Offices** - Ongoing engagement with local VR offices and providers
- **Legislature and Public Officials** - Ongoing engagement with legislators and other public officials to provide information and education on CIE, DHHS efforts, and funding needs.
- **Social Media** - Paid, targeted social media outreach, use of DHHS social media accounts and handles

Communication and engagement related to services that support CIE (such as Supported Employment) began in July 2021. Communication and engagement will continue throughout this transition and beyond.

General Public Communication:

- Launch DHHS CIE web pages that provides a one-stop-shop for information, tools and resources related to the CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan.
- Issue public communication (bulletins, press releases, etc.) regarding launch of CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan.
- Post personal stories by self-advocates, family advocates and Peer Support Specialists that support CIE-related activities on DHHS CIE website by July 1, 2022. This effort will be in collaboration with Disability Rights NC (DRNC). Stories will also be posted on the DRNC website.
- Publish *A Guide to Competitive Integrated Employment* for all audiences and stakeholders to provide a comprehensive overview of the resources and services designed to help people with I/DD and TBI explore and achieve CIE. The guide will also explain how to access employment services in North Carolina by July 31, 2022.
- Regularly update written materials, as well as the DHHS CIE website, to reflect updates, changes and newly available resources.

Communications Related to Changes in ADVP Services:

- Develop and issue DHHS communication bulletin(s) to LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans), local DVRS offices, individuals, families, provider agencies and other community stakeholders regarding the end of new enrollments in ADVP services on June 30, 2022.
- Develop and issue DHHS communication bulletin(s) to LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans), local DVRS offices, individuals, families, provider agencies and

other community stakeholders regarding the termination of ADVP services on July 1, 2026. This communication will be completed by July 1, 2022, to allow sufficient time for individual informed choice processes and transitions to CIE related services and/or other meaningful day options.

- Develop letter for LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) to share with individuals who will be directly impacted by the termination of ADVP services. This letter will detail available options highlighting CIE related supports and services.

Stakeholder Awareness Campaign

- Stakeholder engagement and awareness activities will begin with the launch of CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan in January 2022 and will continue beyond the termination of ADVP services on July 1, 2026.
- CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan launch activities will include webinars targeted to individuals and families, providers and LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) to share DHHS's commitment to CIE and begin to highlight alternatives to services in ADVPs.
- Ongoing communication and engagement will include materials created for specific target audiences such as people currently receiving services in an ADVP setting and their families, transition age youth (ages 18 – 21), older adults (ages 55 and over), individuals engaged in post-secondary engagement, individuals seeking meaningful day options, individuals interested in CIE, etc.
- DHHS will hold live in-person and virtual Town Halls by July 1, 2022, to collect feedback from stakeholders. Town Halls will be open to the public, but specifically targeted to people receiving ADVP and employment services, families, advocates, providers and LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans).
- DHHS will provide a monthly Competitive Integrated Employment Training Series, starting on Feb. 9, 2022, and continuing indefinitely. The target audience includes people receiving ADVP and employment services, families, advocates, providers and LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans). Trainings will be provided by DHHS staff and other guest speakers. Topics will include:
 - Informed Choice and Supported Decision Making
 - Employment Competencies (including Discovery)
 - Best Practices for Self-Employment
 - Internships and Apprenticeships
 - Barriers to CIE and Resources to Overcome Barriers
 - Benefits Counseling

Data and Reporting

DHHS will collect data on progress toward expanding CIE opportunities for individuals with I/DD. This will help to ensure steady progress and identify any needed adjustments to the CIE for I/DD Strategic Plan and/or implementation efforts, including any additional services and supports that are needed to achieve the objectives.

Quarterly data will be collected on individuals who have received ADVP services and/or Day Components of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP settings* since January 1, 2021. This data will be collected by the LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and provided to DHHS to compile and analyze. DHHS will create a quarterly report on this data beginning in March 2022. The quarterly report will include aggregate data and will not include any personally identifiable information. The data will include:

- The number of people receiving ADVP services or Day Components of ICF IID In Lieu of Services in ADVP setting, including the provider, wages earned (if voluntarily shared by the individual receiving the service) and hours worked;
- Outcomes of individuals who have transitioned out of services in ADVP settings identified above, including information about individuals who have obtained CIE (place of employment, wages if voluntarily shared by the individual, and hours worked);
- Plans for individuals who continue to receive services in ADVP settings, including the number of people who have received an employment assessment, Career Development Plan, DVRS services, State-funded employment services, and other services leading to CIE;
- Information about individuals who decline to explore employment as part of the informed choice process, including the number of people who decide not to pursue employment, the LME/MCO (or future Tailored Plan) engaged with the individual, and the reason for this decision;

DHHS will also include in the quarterly report data from DVRS on individuals who have expressed interest in CIE that have been referred to DVRS, including the stage of engagement (i.e., eligibility, plan development, service provision, ready for employment, working, successful closure, etc.) and information on WIOA Career Counseling dates, participants and known outcomes.

**DHHS will collect data on all individuals enrolled in the ICF IID In Lieu of Service, as the Day Component may or may not be provided in an ADVP setting. People who receive this service in an ADVP setting will be included in the quarterly report.*

DHHS will begin collecting data on all individuals who access employment services beginning in July 2022. This includes employment services through the NC Innovations Waiver, the 1915(b)(3) waiver, the future 1915(i) waiver and State-funded services. Data will be collected through billing and claims information, using procedure code modifiers to track phases within Supported Employment. The data will be used to monitor service use across funding sources, provide additional communication to individuals, families and other stakeholders, and target technical assistance LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and providers.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

DHHS's commitment to expanding opportunities for CIE for individuals with I/DD requires DHHS to engage in rigorous monitoring activities to ensure systemic and individual

progress, as well as identify and mitigate risk. Further, DHHS intends for services and supports to be provided at the highest quality. DHHS will enhance existing and create new monitoring and quality assurance activities to support our ongoing success. Monitoring and quality assurance activities include:

Home and Community Based Services Compliance Monitoring

The Federal Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rule provides opportunities for Medicaid beneficiaries to receive services and supports in their own homes and communities rather than in institutional or facility-based settings. This includes employment services. Key components of the HCBS rule have been included in all Medicaid Supported Employment service definitions, as required, and mirrored in the State-funded Supported Employment service definition.

Amended HCB settings requirements, as outlined in the HCBS Final Rule published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2014, maximize opportunities for beneficiaries in HCBS programs to have access to the benefits of community living, receive services in the most integrated setting, provide alternatives to those services provided in institutions, and seek employment and work competitively within an integrated workforce, to the same degree as individuals not receiving Medicaid HCBS services. A setting that fails to meet any of the HCBS requirements, including the requirement for CIE alongside those of all abilities, is ineligible for HCBS funding.

To ensure North Carolina's statewide compliance with the HCBS Final Rule and support those seeking to achieve CIE, DHHS receives HCBS Provider Self-Assessments for all HCBS settings, including Supported Employment Corporate Sites (i.e., providers responsible for the delivery of the service), which address overall systems and provider practices. Each corporate site should have rules, policies, and procedures that are governed by HCBS requirements for ensuring compliance at each site, regardless of individual or group Supported Employment.

Through North Carolina's provider self-assessment process, a standardized process with a standardized e-Review tool and companion document for evaluation, the DHHS in collaboration with LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans), will assess and monitor compliance with the HCBS settings requirements, identify providers needing technical assistance to ensure compliance, and identify providers who may be out of compliance and their intent and capacity to comply with additional technical assistance.

DVRS Monitoring of Provider Services

DVRS providers will receive at least annual program monitoring to include case reviews, interviews with provider staff and VR staff to discuss service provision and identify training needs. DVRS will also conduct client satisfaction reviews of VR services to inform technical assistance and training needs.

DMH/DD/SAS Efforts

DMH/DD/SAS conducts clinical monitoring of the LME/MCOs (and will for future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) and providers of State-funded and federal block grant funded services on a rotational schedule. The DMH/DD/SAS monitoring team randomly selects and reviews records of individuals who received these services during the fiscal year being reviewed (determined based on claims data). The record review includes care coordination and/or care management notes, authorization requests, and Person-Centered Plans (PCPs) /Individual Support Plans (ISPs) to ensure that the individual meets eligibility requirements and that the service meets the needs of the individual.

This monitoring will be enhanced to include verification that a Career Development Plan was completed for all individuals identified by DHHS as having received ADVP services at any point since January 1, 2020, and that the plan reflects the individual goals and needs captured in the Career Development and Planning Assessment. The monitoring will also be enhanced to ensure the PCP/ISP reflects informed choice and goals that support CIE, if desired.

Monitoring results are primarily used to provide technical assistance to the LME/MCOs (or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) and providers, but in some situations may result in a financial penalty if findings are significant. DMH/DD/SAS will also establish ADVP service provider self-audits to help providers prepare for transformation. Guidance will be issued to providers on how to complete the self-audit. DMH/DD/SAS will work with LME/MCOs (and future Tailored Plans) to provide technical assistance to providers based on self-audit findings. DMH/DD/SAS will collaborate with national experts to establish ongoing competency standards and training.

DMH/DD/SAS will continue to collaborate to provide employment competency training for providers (of all disabilities) through the annual NC APSE contract (contracted per fiscal year).

DMH/DD/SAS will collaborate with NC APSE to develop an accredited/certified train the trainer model or training information that would continue the educational campaign efforts for the targeted groups listed above from accepted accreditation or certification entities like APSE, ACRE, or other similarly accepted organizations.

DHHS will continue to collaborate with nationally recognized disability-specific employment trainers (i.e., Griffin-Hammis Associates and Marc Gold and Associates) regarding employment training and state implementation plans.

NC Medicaid Efforts

NC Medicaid efforts are guided by the NC Medicaid Quality Management Strategy and Federal rules and regulations. The efforts that specifically support monitoring and quality assurance for Medicaid-funded Supported Employment services include:

Annual External Quality Review (EQR)

EQR provides an analysis and evaluation of quality, timeliness and access to services that the LME/MCOs (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plans) provide to Medicaid beneficiaries and results in an annual report. The EQR process includes a review of medical records and will be enhanced to include focused monitoring of Career Development Plans.

NC Innovations Waiver and NC TBI Waiver Performance Measures

NC Medicaid is collaborating with DMH/DD/SAS to develop performance measures that ensure that individuals are receiving supports and services consistent with their Career Development Plans and Person-Centered Plan (PCP)/Individual Support Plan (ISP), including confirmation from the individual that these plans include the support they need. Similar performance measures for the future 1915(i) Supported Employment definition are also under development.

Intra-departmental Monitoring Teams (IMTs)

The intra-departmental monitoring team (IMT) facilitates the development and implementation of the Medicaid Quality Management Strategy. The IMT includes representatives from DHHS, NC Medicaid and DMH/DD/SUS. NC Medicaid facilitates the IMT process and is responsible for ongoing oversight of LME/MCO (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) operations. The IMT monitors:

- Compliance with Medicaid waiver requirements, including the NC Innovations waiver, TBI waiver, 1915(b)(3) waiver and future 1915(i) waiver;
- Compliance with NC Medicaid and DMH/DD/SAS contracts;
- Findings from LME/MCO (and future BH I/DD Tailored Plan) performance monitoring reports;
- Corrective action plans;
- Service utilization and other metrics;
- Performance improvement activities.

IMT monitoring includes focused monitoring of critical DHHS priorities and will include focused monitoring of Supported Employment performance measures to help ensure success in expanding CIE opportunities for individuals with I/DD.

DHHS Ongoing Quality Improvement Efforts

DHHS will use data, including stakeholder feedback, to monitor progress and make necessary updates or enhancements to ensure the ongoing success of efforts to expand CIE. Some of these efforts include:

- Cross-Divisional MOU that outlines how DMH/DD/SAS, NC Medicaid/DHB, DVRS and the Division of State Operated Healthcare Facilities (DSOHF) will share and jointly use employment and other data to monitor progress, improve service delivery, and identify needs for training and technical assistance.
- Monitor Federal and State legislative and regulatory developments and update CIE plan accordingly.

- Identify and pursue grant funding opportunities that support DHHS’s efforts to expand opportunities for CIE.
- Explore and pursue State and Federal funding for full implementation of the CIE plan.
- Collaboration with the NC Department of Public Instruction to incorporate employment education practices into specialized education programs earlier.
- Increase staff resources within DHHS to assist in the full implementation of this plan.

Helpful Links

- [DHB](#)
- [DMH/DD/SAS](#)
- [DVRS](#)
- [DHHS Competitive Integrated Employment](#)

Acronyms

- **ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act
- **ADVP:** Adult Developmental Vocational Program
- **BH/IDD:** Behavior Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- **CIE:** Competitive Integrated Employment
- **CE:** Customized Employment
- **DHB:** Division of Health Benefits (also known as NC Medicaid)
- **DMH/DD/SAS:** Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services
- **DRNC:** Disability Rights North Carolina
- **DSOHF:** Division of State Operated Healthcare Facilities
- **DVRS:** Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- **ICF IID:** Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- **I/DD:** Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- **ILOS:** In Lieu of Services
- **IPE:** Individualized Plan for Employment
- **ISP:** Individual Support Plan
- **LME/MCO:** Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization
- **PCP:** Person Centered Plan
- **VR:** Vocational Rehabilitation
- **WIOA:** Workforce Innovations Opportunity Act



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