

EmploymentFirstMaine

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Draft Version

Date of Meeting: Friday August 1, 2014
Time: 9am – 11:30am
Location: MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta
Facilitator: Betsy Hopkins

Present

Name/Affiliation	Name/Affiliation
Betsy Hopkins, VR	Rick Langley, DRC
Chris Robinson, VR	Lisa Sturtevant, OADS
Debbie Gilmer, Syntiro, APSE	Jan Breton, DOE
Brad Strause, Alpha One	Elaine Ecker, NAMI
Denise Adams, MCD	Karen Fraser, BRS
Fail Fanjoy, KFI	Leticia Huttman, SAMHS
Kim Moody, DRC	

Discussion and Issues

- Facilitated Discussion re Policy Ideas – What is bubbling up from the groups? What are the themes we’re seeing in advance of the September EFM policy discussion?**

Debbie/Capacity Building work group:

Have reviewed their survey in detail. Some recommendations have come up in that process. More than 50 percent of work support and CRPs made up the respondents and made recommendations.

Every person. Every talent. Every opportunity.

First and foremost: “Employment 101” training needs to be available to everyone, in multiple formats. Identified need for professional development, everyone needs to learn what we mean by “Employment First.” Need opportunity to learn not just the “how” but the “why” of EF – the discussion around values and serious commitment to integrated, real work. Capacity Building members are working on an outline of such a training, hopefully can create an archived webinar, etc.

Chris: This is huge re values and roles in this process – what’s your role in employment in the mental health service system? What are your values around folks we serve, their worth, importance of employment?

Debbie: Definite theme that we need more CRPs, and need work support providers to become CRPs.

Service providers that run day hab with no employment piece to them – need to look at them.

Need iwaiver on mental health side? Systems issues there to address.

Training, technical assistance, mentoring needed. Educators are part of this discussion, or need to be.

Schools need to have a dedicated transition person. Secondary education people should be certified as employment providers.

Other theme: addressing myths and fears. Need benefits counseling, and a benefits 101 training perhaps for HS educators? Need to address automatic presumption about enrolling in SS.

Capacity building can prepare a written report, with Maine examples, etc., as a way to share the message of “EF 101”

Jan/Transition work group:

Themes they’ve seen so far: the need for employment education to families and schools. Need to increase family and student knowledge re transition and barriers to successful transition.

Another issue is around cross departmental information sharing. DOE, DHHS, DOL – all need cross EFM 101 info. Can’t assume that EFM principles are trickling down and informing everyone’s work.

Debbie: Is employment specific certification needed for educators? It's not currently required of them.

Jan: also, do children's case workers at DHHS know to raise employment issues? Children's case workers are going to transition meetings, but nothing is necessarily expected of them now. Joint work needed to bridge the school/adult worlds.

Lisa: Challenge is raising expectations for individuals – seeing more for people than day programming. Important to figure out where families come in, and how do we intersect with them early?

Debbie: part of our challenge is countering what systems have told families.

Policy challenge; addressing the low expectations and systems biases that interfere with employment opportunities. Need to think about intersecting with medical establishment, and CDS.

Jan: opportunity for joint training among DHHS, Labor, DOE. Team approach to meeting with high schools. Part of a professional development theme?

Gail: also, should enlist people with success stories to back to schools, show where their life is now.

Data work group:

Themes: Vision Quest project supports the importance of data collection and validates what we already know: we need compelling, measurable data to sell EF and make it successful.

Karen: need to get to agreement, and we're working on that, about what is valuable to us, what are the data points we need to assess.

Debbie: would really like to see EFM follow the spending on employment. Spending reveals our priorities. When you look at the incentives provided to day programs versus employment support, would like to flip that.

That money and percentage of one type of support versus another is a crucial data point. Transforming those percentages that dis-incentivize employment is of course a core goal.

Lisa: Theme of expanding on provider expectations. 400 people in Maine paid less than minimum wage. Currently tracking that data, seeking to drop that number.

Leticia: Re performance based contracting – that seems to create an opportunity for employment related performance measures.

Debbie: Maybe a recommendation re a “report card” – A tool by which to inform parents about employment and work successes by provider. Maybe posted on line. Who’s doing what, doing it well, etc. Similar to school district report cards. Could seek to identify money spent across offices, departments.

Definitely like to see a data point re percentage of state budget spent on employment versus day hab.

A report card would provide accountability, let families and individuals make informed choices. Provide “state of the state” type numbers?

The money spent discussion could drive talks with the legislature.

Gail: re report card, need to be specific about what an agency collects.

Maybe see Gail’s template re what she collects and finds important. Sally Sweeney is on data group, from KFI.

Betsy: Aware of challenges in collecting data, such as at VR. Need a mandated data piece in a bill with teeth? Fiscal component to this to consider?

Karen: Snapshot has many points re full, part time work, wages, etc. It’s an online document. Need to expand Snapshot platform to include DHHS numbers, CWRI doesn’t have access.

Debbie: Information by agency is critical, providers must report.

Elaine: Possible to not just collect data, but identify ways to help change happen? Incentives? Data may serve as guidance to who needs technical assistance, etc.

Jan: is there a way to drill down through Snapshot and other info that exists to get answers? Do we need to spend time and foster animosity in providers with a report card requirement?

Debbie: Providers are already required to collect this data, not suggesting a lot of new data elements. Providers will follow money if there is an incentive/expectation re the importance of real data.

Gail: What kind of data is collected now? CARF accreditation requires data be collected, doesn't feel like an imposition.

Need clarification re current reporting requirements.

Debbie: Schools report on indicator 13 and 14 – How well transition plans are written, and what students are doing a year after graduation.

Lisa/Business Engagement work group:

Currently looking across the departments at business involvement that is occurring, ie within DOL, DHHS, DOE. Talking to businesses about how they're currently involved, what's working, expectations, etc.

Trying to drive toward their needs. The employer survey had some specific ideas re education to businesses, training, etc. Things like Disability 101, job accommodations. Ideally we would have data piece on return on investment for businesses, ie what is the ROI for businesses that engage and hire, mentor someone. How can we help support diversity hiring in their company?

Kim/Policy work group:

Survey for EFM membership and friends of EFM re policy ideas is going live today for thirty days. The policy group is meeting September 5 to look at raw data.

Kim sending out WOIA overview.

Things are going on at the federal level that impact EFM. 503 changes, rehab act.

New CMS rules resulted in toolkit on community and employment services. Not out yet? Wage and hour complaints are happening nationally.

Debbie: EFM could recommend elimination of subminimum wage? Supersede federal law?

Re current Maine policies on employment. DHHS has one, is it needing updating? Or if it's a strong policy, a re-commitment to it, perhaps announced by Comm. Mayhew? Kim can ask re this.

Practice guidelines were to be created but so far only MH and DD have. Lisa will send this info to Kim.

Chris: Again, re the theme of “follow the money” - need to address the disparity between what we pay for long term support versus case management, and what that tells providers re what we truly value.

Miscellaneous things:

Waiver language re “first and preferred”

Rate setting under Medicaid – mysterious process

New SIS rate setting will flip day hab versus employment rates?

Debbie: DOL to stop using work crews paying subminimum wage?

Chris: Medicaid buy-in is under-utilized. One of the benefits counseling pieces that people don't know.

Karen/Communication work group:

Focus on maintaining web site and resources such as email list/Constant Contact to keep people informed. Looking at news blast ideas and newsletter info to share.

Anyone missing from our communication list?

2. Discussion re EFM Summit

One year anniversary and summit, in conjunction with DRC annual dinner on Oct 17.

Patty Cassidy is here that work doing technical assistance to Personal Genius trainees. Maybe Patty can do overview 101 on that day, share success stories.

Eve Hill presentation?

Intended audience: EFM coalition members, providers, people with disabilities, Justin Alford and legislators. Amy Volk co-sponsored.

Event during the day on October 17, 9am to 3pm. DRC dinner at 530. Need to check re Hilton garden availability, costs. Simple lunch, hope to have 200 people.

Planning group to discuss next steps: Kim, Betsy, Lisa, Debbie, Leticia, Rick. Scheduled to meet August 11 for 1pm conference call.

Leticia and Lisa to ask Commissioners to attend.

3. Hot Topic for next time

Betsy to talk about Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. How does it affect Maine?

Next Meeting: Full Coalition Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting	Friday, September 19, 2014
Time	11am to 1pm
Location	MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Frances Perkins Room