National Core Indicators©: Data on the current state of employment of adults with IDD and suggestions for policy development

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Abstract
BACKGROUND: Rates of integrated employment among people with IDD receiving services are low and have remained essentially unchanged for the past ten years. National Core Indicators© (NCI) data provide an important window on the employment and employment outcomes of people with IDD receiving services.

OBJECTIVE: To use NCI data to describe the employment status of individuals supported by state IDD agencies, to compare outcomes of those in and those not in integrated employment, and to propose policy suggestions to increase the numbers of individuals with IDD receiving services in integrated employment.

METHODS: NCI data from 2012-13 were analyzed to look at the demographics, outcomes and employment status of NCI respondents.

RESULTS: The data highlighted in this article illustrate the employment, employment support, employment type, wages, hours and selected employment outcomes of individuals with IDD who receive public services.

CONCLUSIONS: Improving the level of participation of people with IDD in integrated employment and the quality of employment outcomes in terms of choice of job, individual or group supports, rate of pay and type of work must continue to be a priority for states.

Keywords: Intellectual disability, developmental disability, integrated employment, policy

1. Introduction

Improving employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) has been identified as a priority by self-advocates, state public managers, the National Governors Association (National Governors Association, 2013) and federal policy makers. While most policymakers, providers, families or advocates recognize the benefits of employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), expanding work opportunities has been difficult to achieve. Rates of integrated employment among people with IDD receiving services are low and have remained essentially unchanged for the past ten years (Butterworth et al., 2014). In order to meet this challenge, many state developmental disabilities agencies have adopted “Employment First” policies that prioritize employment in integrated settings as the preferred day service alternative (Moseley, 2009).

The juxtaposition of advances in policy and practice against the reality of unrealized integrated employment outcomes creates a crossroads for the field of
The introduction of Employment First policy in over 30 states makes an important contribution to raising expectations, improving outcomes, and increasing self-sufficiency (Hoff, 2014). Yet, while these policies provide a vision for practice and expectations, they do not guarantee the success of Employment First practice, nor do they improve individual and family access to, and navigation of, services and information (Blacher, Kranmer, & Howell, 2010; Kiernan, Hoff, Freeze, & Mank, 2011). Research suggests that integrated employment outcomes only improve if all policies and practices are aligned to support employment as the first goal for service recipients and if individuals and families have clear and useful access to information and supports (Butterworth et al., 2014; Hall, Butterworth, Winsor, Gilmore, & Metzel, 2007; Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe, & Winsor, 2011).

Federal and state policy continue to pave the way and support opportunities for people with disabilities to have meaningful jobs in their communities (NACDD, 2011; Nord, Luecking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013). For example, the July 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requires that each state public vocational rehabilitation program focus on transition services and pre-employment services, coordinate with the state agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid Plan and with state IDD agencies, and focus on the general workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers. In 2011 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released guidance clarifying their commitment to individual integrated employment as a preferred outcome of employment-related services under the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver program (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2011) and will release guidance related to the assessment of community based employment settings by the end of 2014 (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2014). Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Justice has extended enforcement of the Olmstead decision to address employment outcomes in states including Rhode Island, Oregon, Georgia, and Virginia.

Other federal initiatives that support employment outcomes for individuals with IDD include the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities’ multi-year systems change grants to support states in cross-system collaboration to address increasing employment outcomes for youth and young adults, the Office of Disability Employment Policy’s Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program, and the 2013 award of six Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE) grants designed to improve the education and career outcomes of low-income children with disabilities, ages 14–16, who receive Supplemental Security Income.

In addition to federal programs, at least 44 states have some form of Employment First initiative and 32 have a formal state policy or directive (APSE, 2014), which is nationally recognized as a policy path towards integrated employment for people with IDD. Employment First policy establishes clear guiding principles and practices promulgated through state statute, regulation, and operational procedures. Employment First represents a commitment by states to the convictions that all individuals with IDD (a) are capable of performing work in typical integrated employment settings, (b) should receive, as a matter of state policy, employment-related services and supports as a priority over other facility-based and non-work day services, and (c) should be paid at minimum or prevailing wage rates (APSE, 2014; Kiernan et al, 2011; Moseley 2009). In addition to federally funded initiatives, systems change efforts are underway in almost 30 states to address this issue through participation in the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a collaborative community of practice assisting state developmental disabilities agencies to improve employment outcomes (State Employment Leadership Network, 2014).

Employment supports are provided within a context of state and federal disability policy, workforce development policy, income maintenance and healthcare policy, and an array of supports including transportation, housing, welfare, and childcare. Core supports are funded by state IDD and vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies, local education agencies, and employment supports are provided by a network of over 5,000 Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs).

State IDD agencies remain the primary source of long-term funding and service coordination, supporting over 600,000 individuals in day and employment services (Butterworth et al., 2014). They provide, fund, and monitor a wide range of services including employment supports, facility-based options (sheltered workshops and non-work day habilitation programs), community integration services, and self-directed opportunities.

The majority of funding for day and employment services managed by state IDD agencies is provided through the Medicaid program. Medicaid is both a primary source for health care for individuals with IDD and the largest federal source of funds for day and employment services under the HCBS waiver program. While historically there has been no clear preference for
integrated employment in Medicaid funded services. In 2011 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a policy bulletin that provides guidance for the development of employment and employment related service definitions in 1915(c) waivers. Incorporating language for service definitions developed by the State Employment Leadership Network (SENL), this guidance establishes individual integrated employment as a priority goal (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2011).

State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies provide services to over one million people annually, closing approximately 600,000 cases in each fiscal year. In FY2012, 8.2% of those case closures can be identified as individuals with ID, a person with a primary or secondary impairment code of intellectual disability, and 13% as individuals with IDD (person with a primary impairment of mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, or autism (Butterworth et al., 2014). Policy under the Medicaid HCBS program requires that individuals access VR for employment support prior to receiving Medicaid waiver funding. However, collaboration is impeded by a wide range of systemic barriers, including lack of agreement about target populations and differences in culture and resources (Timmons, Cohen, & Fesko, 2004).

Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) and their staff are the primary source of day and employment supports for people with IDD. Estimates suggest that over 5,000 CRPs nationwide offer vocational services to individuals with disabilities (Haines, Domin, & Butterworth, 2013). The majority (over 70%) of those served by CRPs are individuals with IDD (Domin & Butterworth, 2013; Metzel, Boelzig, Butterworth, Sudevski, & Gilmore, 2007). Over two thirds of CRPs provide both work and non-work services (Domin & Butterworth, 2013).

The movement towards providing supports and services in the "most integrated setting feasible," as defined in Olmstead et al. v. L.C. et al. (527 U.S. 581) has had implications for the employment of individuals with IDD. Work crews, and enclaves were early alternatives to more segregated work settings such as activity centers and workshops for people with severe disabilities (Munk, Rhodes, & Bellamy, 1986). However, it was quickly found that in these settings, wages, and participants' level of integration in the community were lacking. Nevertheless, community rehabilitation providers report that only 19% of individuals with IDD work in individual jobs, while 9.5% work in mobile work crews or enclaves and 25% work in facility based employment settings. Over a ten year period the largest growth has been in non-work services (Domin & Butterworth, 2013). On a systems level only 12.6% of state IDD agency day and employment service funds were used for integrated employment in FY2012 (Butterworth et al., 2014).

National Core Indicators (NCI) data provide an important window on the employment and related outcomes of people with IDD receiving services. This article describes the employment status of individuals supported by state IDD agencies and compares participating states in terms of proportions of service recipients in different types of community employment. Policy implications are described.

The information in this article is drawn from the 2012-13 National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult Consumer Survey of 13,157 adults from 26 states and one sub-state entity. The NCI program is a voluntary collaboration between the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, the Human Services Research Institute, and participating state developmental disability agencies (Bradley & Moseley, 2007). The project's aim is to support state developmental disabilities authorities in developing and implementing performance/outcome indicators and related data collection strategies that will enable them to measure service delivery system performance. The project provides tools and data to improve system performance and thereby to better serve people with IDD and their families. The data collected as a part of the National Core Indicators project also allow for analysis of critical issues pertaining to service delivery and circumstances of service users.

2. Method

This study utilized 2012-2013 data from the National Core Indicators (NCI) Project. The NCI Project is a voluntary collaboration between the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) and state developmental disability agencies of participating states. The Project began in 1997 as an effort to provide states with valid and reliable tools to use in support of their efforts to improve system performance and to better serve people with IDD and their families. NCI currently includes approximately 100 performance and outcome indicators that aim to provide reliable and valid information about individuals with developmental disabilities receiving services.
The current participation in NCI consists of over 40 states, as well as the District of Columbia and several sub-state regional entities. There is a common set of data collection protocols to gather information about the performance of service delivery systems for people IDD. The data used for this study is collected via NCI’s Adult Consumer Survey (ACS) – a survey specifically designed to be administered in a face-to-face interview with adults with IDD and people involved in their lives.

The ACS consists of three sections – Section 1 where only the individual’s responses are allowed, Section 2 where proxy responses are also allowed, and the Background Information Section. The Background Information Section collects information on the individual such as basic demographic information, residence type, health and preventive health care, employment, etc. These data are generally derived from existing records and are usually collected by case managers. Section 1 includes questions that require subjective responses and are therefore only asked to the individual receiving services. These questions assess elements such as personal feelings of safety, satisfaction, and relationships. Section II includes questions that are more fact based, and can therefore be answered by a proxy respondent who is familiar with the individual receiving services. The analyses in this article look primarily at questions from the Background Information Section, along with two questions from Section 1.

2.1. Sampling

The following states participated in the ACS in 2012-13: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and the sub-state entity Mid-East Ohio Regional Councils. Each participating state is instructed to complete a minimum of 400 surveys with a random

| Table 1 |
|---|---|---|
| NCI variables on employment/day activity | Questions | Response options |
| Paid job in a community-based setting (e.g., competitive or supported employment, enclave, work crew) | -Was this person engaged in this activity during the two week period? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Number of hours worked or spent at this activity during the two-week period. | [text box] |
| | -Total gross wages (before taxes or deductions) earned at this activity during the two week period. | [text box] |
| | -Does this person get publicly funded services or supports to participate in this activity? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Is the job or activity done primarily by a group of people with disabilities? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| Unpaid activity in a community-based setting (e.g., volunteer activities, skills training, community experience) | -Was this person engaged in this activity during the two week period? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Number of hours worked or spent at this activity during the two-week period. | [text box] |
| | -Does this person get publicly funded services or supports to participate in this activity? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Is the job or activity done primarily by a group of people with disabilities? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| Paid work performed in a facility-based setting (e.g., workshop, activity center) | -Was this person engaged in this activity during the two week period? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Number of hours worked or spent at this activity during the two-week period. | [text box] |
| | -Does this person get publicly funded services or supports to participate in this activity? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Is the job or activity done primarily by a group of people with disabilities? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| Unpaid activity in a facility-based setting (e.g., day habilitation, prevocational, seniors programs) | -Was this person engaged in this activity during the two week period? | No, Yes, Don’t Know |
| | -Number of hours worked or spent at this activity during the two-week period. | [text box] |
sample of individuals over the age of 18 who are receiving at least one publicly funded service in addition to case management. Most states draw an over-sample greater than 400 in order to account for refusals and surveys that may potentially be deemed invalid. Sample selection is randomized so that every person in the state or service area that meets the criteria has an equal opportunity to be interviewed. There are no a priori exclusion criteria and no pre-screening procedures.

Several variables from the background information section were used to assess employment status of individuals being surveyed. For the questions regarding employment or daily activities, the respondent (typically a case worker responds to Background Information Section using existing records) is asked to provide data for the "most typical two-week period possible." In addition, the following definitions of "community-based setting" and "facility-based setting" are provided:

- Community-based setting is a place where most people do not have disabilities.
- Facility-based setting is a place where most people do have disabilities.

See Table 1 for the description of employment/day activities variables and response options.

Type of paid community employment support is assessed in the background information section using the following two questions:

- Does this person get publicly funded services or supports to participate in this activity?
- Is the job or activity done primarily by a group of people with disabilities?

If it is indicated that the individual receives publicly funded services or supports to participate in the activity and the job or activity is not done primarily by a group of people with disabilities, it is categorized as a "competitive job." If it is indicated that the individual does not receive publicly funded services or supports to participate in the activity and the job or activity is not done primarily by a group of people with disabilities, it is categorized as a "group supported job."

Type of job is also assessed in the background information section with the question:

- What type of job does this person have? (check one option that best fits)
  - Food preparation and food service
  - Building and grounds cleaning or maintenance
  - Personal care provider
  - Retail job such as sales clerk or stock person
  - General office and administrative support
  - Farming, fishing, forestry worker
  - Construction or repair occupation
  - Assembly, manufacturing, or packaging
  - Materials handling, mail distribution
  - Management, business, or financial operations
  - Professional or technical occupation
  - Self-employed
  - Other

The Adult Consumer Survey also collects background information on place of residence. This information was used to create the following residential categories: institutional settings, community-based residences (group homes or agency-operated apartment-type programs), independent home or apartment, parent’s or relative’s home or other. Approximately 4% of the sample (4.4%) lived in specialized institutional settings, over a third (34.0%) resided in community based residences, almost 15% (14.6%) in independent homes or apartments, and over a third (37.1%) resided in a parent’s or relative’s home. The rest (9.8%) lived in other types of residential settings.

For the purposes of these analyses people under the age of 22 who were enrolled in public schools (or for whom this information could not be determined) were excluded; 12,720 adults remained in the data.

The analyses in this data snapshot were performed using SPSS® version 18. We performed crosstabulations, chi-squared analyses and T-tests to answer the following research questions and assess significance:

1) What do people do during the day?
2) Are there differences in what people do during the day based on where they live?
3) How many people do not have community jobs but report that they would like to have one? Out of those that want a job, how many have this goal in their ISP?
4) Out of those with community-based paid jobs, how many are in competitive, individually-supported, and group-supported employment? Do these proportions differ by where people live? By state?
5) What are the most common community jobs?
6) How much do people work in community jobs?
7) How many people report that they like where they work, or that they want to work elsewhere? Are there differences by the type of employment support?
8) How many people receive benefits at their community jobs?
9) How long have people been working at their community jobs?

This article concludes with policy recommendations and best practices.

3. Results

1) What do people do during the day?
As shown in Fig. 1, slightly less than half of service recipients participated in an unpaid facility-based activity during the day (44.3%) (the denominator does not include “don’t know” responses and missing data). Over one quarter (27.0%) were in a paid facility-based job. Slightly over 20% (22.6%) took part in an unpaid community-based activity during the day, and only 14.7% engaged in a paid employment in the community (the numbers add up to more than 100% because some people may be involved in more than one type of activity).

Overall, 46.1% of people who were reported to have a paid community job were also reported to take part in at least one other kind of day activity/employment: 29.1% were also in an unpaid community activity, 16.6% also had a paid facility-based job, and 22.3% were in an unpaid facility-based activity. Of those who had a paid facility-based job, 42.5% were reported to also be engaged in an unpaid facility-based activity, 15.4% also participated in an unpaid community-based activity and 8.8% had a paid community-based job. Of those in an unpaid community-based activity, 47.3% were also in an unpaid facility-based activity.

2) Are there differences in what people do during the day based on where they live?
The rates of participation in the four types of day activities/employment (paid community job, unpaid community activity, paid facility-based job, unpaid facility-based activity) varied by the type of residence people lived in. People living in independent homes or apartments had the highest numbers of community-based paid jobs (24.3%), whereas people living in institutions had the lowest rates (1.4%) of community employment. 16.2% of people living with parents or relatives and 11.1% of people living in community based residences (group homes or agency-operated apartment programs were reported as having a community paid job (see Fig. 2 below).

3) How many people do not have community jobs but report that they would like to have one? Out of those that want a job, how many have this goal in their ISP?
In Section I of the survey, which may only be completed by the individual receiving services, the survey asks: “If you do not have a job in the community, would you like to have a job in the community?” Almost one half (47.1%) of people interviewed who were reported to not have a paid job in the community indicated that they would like to have one. However, only 14.6% of those without a community job had employment identified as a goal in their individual service plans (ISP). The background information section includes a question on whether the individual has community employment as a goal in his/her ISP. Furthermore, only 30.0% of people who did not have a job and stated that they would have a job in the community indicated that they would like to have a job in the community.

![Fig. 1. Percentage of sample participating in different day activities/employment.](image-url)
like work had this goal documented in their service plans.

Because so few people living in institutions had community-based paid jobs, only people living in the community are included in the rest of this article. For the purposes of remaining analyses, living in community includes the following types of residence: those living in community-based residences (group homes and agency-operated apartments), in independent homes or apartments, in parents’ or relatives’ homes and in foster care/host home. Total number of people remaining in the data is 11,635.

4) Out of those with community-based paid jobs, how many are in competitive, individually-supported, and group-supported employment? Do these proportions differ by where people live? By state?

A community-based job can be of one of three types: an individual job without supports (competitive), an individual job with supports (individual-supported) and group-supported. All three are types of “integrated” employment. Individually-supported employment and competitive employment make up “individual” jobs. Table 2 shows that 14.8% of people living in the community worked in integrated employment (Note: people who had missing information for whether they had integrated employment are included in the denominator). 8.1% had individual jobs, 3.8% were in competitive employment, 4.3% were in individually-supported employment, and 3.6% were in group-supported employment. For 3.1% the type of employment was not specified.

The proportions of people with different types of employment support in community jobs varied somewhat depending on the locations where people lived. As shown in Table 3, those living in an independent home or apartment were more likely to have individual community jobs (either competitive community jobs or individually-supported community jobs) than were those living with parents or relatives or in a community-based residence (group homes or agency-operated apartment programs) (Note: only people who had enough information to determine the type of employment support are included in the denominator).

The proportion of people employed in integrated community jobs as well as proportions with different types of employment support for their jobs also varied by state of residence. Table 4 shows the percentage in integrated employment as well as the type of community employment for each participating NCI state. The proportion of people engaged in integrated community employment varied widely by state, from only 0.9% in Alabama to 38.1% in Connecticut (Note: people who had missing information for whether they had integrated employment are included in the denominator). States’ percentages of people with different types of employment also varied. For example, the proportion of people in group-supported jobs varied from almost 0% in a number of states (e.g. Alabama, Kentucky, etc.) to a high of 19.2% in Connecticut. On the other hand, the proportion of people in individual jobs ranged from 15.8% in Maine to 0.9% in Alabama.
Table 2
Percentage of sample participating in integrated employment with different supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage of total sample (N = 11,635)</th>
<th>Percentage of total number in integrated employment (N = 1,719)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In integrated employment</td>
<td>1,719</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In individual jobs (individually supported + competitive)</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In competitive employment</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In group-supported</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of employment not specified</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Participation in integrated employment by type of support and residence type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence type</th>
<th>% in group-supported</th>
<th>% in individually-supported employment</th>
<th>% in competitive jobs</th>
<th>% in individually-supported + competitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-based residence</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent home/apt</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Participation in integrated employment by state and support type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>N in community residences</th>
<th>% in integrated employment</th>
<th>% in individual jobs (individually supported + competitive)</th>
<th>% in competitive jobs</th>
<th>% in individually-supported jobs</th>
<th>% in group-supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KY</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME/NC</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
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5) What are the most common community jobs?
For people working in paid community-based employment, the three most common types of jobs were: building and grounds cleaning or maintenance (32.4%); retail, such as sales clerk or stock person (14.7%); and food preparation and service (20.4%). Less common were office jobs, such as general office and administrative support (4.7%); assembly and manufacturing jobs (6.8%); and materials handling and mail distribution (2.5%). This is shown in Table 5 below.
The types of jobs held by individuals varied depending on whether they were in competitive employment, individually supported employment, or group supported employment. Retail jobs and food prep and food service jobs were more common for those in individually-supported positions and those in competitive employment, whereas building and grounds cleaning or maintenance jobs were most common for those with group-supported employment (50.5% of people in group-supported employment).

The majority of people with general office and administrative support jobs were individually-supported (56.7%) or competitively (26.9%) employed. On the other hand, the majority of people performing assembly and materials handling tasks had group-supported employment (59.5% and 43.8% respectively).

6) How much do people work in community jobs? How much do they make?

Note: All figures are reported over the most recent two-week period at the time of data collection.

On average, people employed in paid community jobs worked 25.5 hours in a two week period and earned $184.25 or $7.77 per hour (N=1181). However, as shown in Table 6, the number of hours that people worked and the amount they earned differed by the type of employment support they received.

On average, people employed in competitive community jobs worked 25.5 hours over a two week period, earning a total of $202.94 for an hourly wage of $8.27. In individually-supported community jobs, people worked 23.91 hours in two weeks on average and earned $185.78, making the average hourly wage of $8.28. People employed in group-supported community jobs worked an average of 27.76 hours over the two-week period and earned less (average of $175.71 in the same time period), for an average wage of $6.80 an hour.

7) How many people report that they like where they work, or that they want to work elsewhere? Are there differences by the type of employment support?

Of those people who had a job in the community, 92.0% stated that they like their jobs. However, 29.5% said that they would like to work somewhere else.

While the percentage of people who reported that they liked their job did not vary by the type of employment support they received, the proportion of those wanting a different job did. Fully 36.6% of individuals with group-supported employment wanted to work somewhere else, as compared to 30.1% of those with competitive employment and 21.8% of those with individually-supported jobs (see Fig. 3). The higher percentage of people in group-supported employment stating that they want to work elsewhere may reflect the lack of choice in these jobs or a preference to work in a more integrated environment.

8) How many people receive benefits at their community job?

Receipt of benefits is assessed in the background information section. Of those in paid community jobs, 25% were reported as receiving benefits. 29.0% and 25.4% of those in competitive and individually-supported employment respectively received benefits such as paid vacation and sick time, compared to 25.3% of people in group-supported employment.

9) How long have people been working at their community jobs?

Length of employment is assessed in the background information section. The mean length of time people worked in their community job was 56.4 months. Those in individually supported employment worked an average of 61.4 months, while those in competitive employment worked an average of 67.5 months. Individuals in group-supported employment worked an average of 48.6 months.

4. Policy implications

Improving the level of participation of people with IDD in integrated employment and the quality of employment outcomes in terms of choice of job,
individual or group supports, rate of pay and type of work is a growing priority for states. These data illustrate the variation across states and the challenges that confront policymakers in their efforts to increase the numbers of people with IDD working in integrated community settings. These data frame several priorities for current and future service design and delivery:

1) Development of Employment First initiatives

The state-to-state variation in employment participation among people with IDD receiving publicly funded services suggests that state policy, strategy, and investments have a significant effect on the numbers of people who are working in integrated community settings. While current national discussions emphasize the benefits of state Employment First policies, case studies of higher performing states suggest that policymakers need to provide a consistent message prioritizing employment and the goal of achieving paid work in integrated settings across all major service system components including leadership, policy, financing, training and technical assistance, outcome and quality measurement, and interagency collaboration (Hall et al., 2007; Hall, Freeze, Butterworth, & Hoff, 2011; Nord et al., 2013). States need to frame clear goals and take a holistic approach to building employment systems capacity.

2) Planning for wrap-around supports

People working in individual jobs average less than 14 hours per week. This finding clearly underscores the need for states to develop policies and practices that encourage full time employment and increased economic self-sufficiency in order to expand individual work hours. It also suggests that state agency administrators, planners and operational staff must collaborate with community rehabilitation providers, home and residential support agencies and others in the development and implementation of holistic approaches to person-centered life planning that includes non-work hours. Typically, work takes place at all hours of the day throughout the work week and workers organize their lives and activities around their jobs, families and home responsibilities. People with IDD are frequently prevented from working nights and on weekends because of the lack of flexibility in the structure of their service delivery supports, living situation, and limited transportation options. Funding, regulatory and systems strategies need to support varied work schedules and non-work hours when needed. Currently over one third of individuals in paid community jobs also participated in another day activity, most often an unpaid day activity.

3) Prioritizing individual jobs over group supported employment

The data suggest that individual employment yields higher levels of income and a wider array of job choices than does group supported employment, despite the fact that people in group supported employment work more hours on average. Individuals in group supported employment were also more likely to report that they want to work elsewhere. The benefits and advantages of individual employment should be reflected in policy and operational practices that prioritize individual employment outcomes.
4) Supporting career goals

The data suggest that almost half of individuals who are not working in the community want a job, but that only about 30% of those who want a job have community employment as a goal in their service plan. A key component of employment first initiatives, and of state-specific efforts to improve employment outcomes, is a focus on ensuring that employment is identified as a priority during each individual’s person-centered service plan, and on the provision of training to case managers or service coordinators to enable them to become skilled in facilitating conversations about employment and in addressing individual and family concerns about community employment.

5) Implementation of best practices

The successful transition of job seekers to employment depends in large part on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employment support professionals to develop, match, and support jobs that meet both the job seeker’s and the employer’s interests and needs (Hewitt & Larson, 2007; Migliore, Butterworth, Nord, Cox, & Gelb, 2012). The literature defines a number of research based and promising practices including person-centered career planning and assessment (Callahan, Shumpert, & Condon, 2009; Klauesner, Taylor, & Bordieri, 2005); customized employment (Griffin, Hammis, Geary, & Sullivan, 2008); workplace culture analysis (Butterworth, Hagner, Helm, & Whelley, 2000; Carlson, Smith, & Rapp, 2008); using personal and professional networks (Luecking, Fabian, & Tilson, 2004; Owens & Young, 2008); and building and ensuring natural supports (Becker & Drake, 2003, Test, Sollow, & Flowers, 1998). Research suggests that employment consultants inconsistently use established promising practices (Migliore et al., 2012; Migliore, Hall, Butterworth, & Winsor, 2010). Findings also suggest that job developers have limited opportunities for effective practice (Migliore et al., 2012; Migliore, Hall, Butterworth, & Winsor, 2010). Competency among this group is critical as employment support professionals face complex responsibilities, ranging from meeting business demands to addressing the personal needs of people with disabilities (Test, Flowers, & Hewitt, 2004).

Although there has been increasing emphasis among states on supporting paid community employment for individuals with IDD in recent years, rates of community employment for individuals with IDD have remained unchanged (Butterworth et al., 2014). NCI data provide information on the experiences and outcomes of individuals with IDD who receive public services – both those in integrated employment and those who are not employed in the community. These data can aid policy makers and program designers in designing more targeted interventions to increase employment of individuals with IDD.

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