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Working in the Community: the Status and Outcomes of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Integrated Employment – an Update

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Improving employment outcomes has been identified as a priority by self advocates, states, the National Governor’s Association, and federal policy makers. The recognition of the pivotal role that work can play in the lives of people with IDD is driving many state developmental disabilities agencies to adopt “Employment First” policies that prioritize employment in integrated settings as the preferred day service alternative.¹ The need for this policy shift is clear. While few policymakers, providers, families or advocates fail to recognize the benefits of employment for people with ID/DD, the outcomes have been difficult to achieve. Rates of integrated employment among people with ID/DD receiving services are low and have remained essentially unchanged for the past ten years.² Fortunately, the need to improve employment outcomes among people with disabilities receiving public support is being recognized by state and federal policymakers. Systems change efforts are underway in 30 states to address this issue through participation in the State Employment Leadership Network, a collaborative community of practice assisting state developmental disabilities agencies in changing their systems to improve employment outcomes.

National Core Indicators (NCI) data provide an important window on the employment and employment outcomes of people with ID/DD receiving services. This Special Issue Data Brief updates the Special Issue Data Brief from October 2012 and describes the employment status of individuals supported by state ID/DD agencies and compares participating states in terms of proportions of service recipients in different types of community employment.

SAMPLE

The information in this short report is drawn from the 2011-12 National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult Consumer Survey of 12,236 adults from 19 states and one sub-state entity³. 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. 11,803 adults remained in the data.

Approximately five percent of the remaining sample (4.6%%) lived in specialized institutional settings, over a third (39.0%) resided in community based residences (group homes or agency-operated apartment-type programs), over 10% (12.7%) in independent homes or apartments, and almost a third (32.6%) resided in a parent’s or relative’s home. The rest (11.0%) lived in other types of residential settings.

¹ Moseley C. (June 2009). *Community Services Reporter*. National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities. Alexandria, VA.

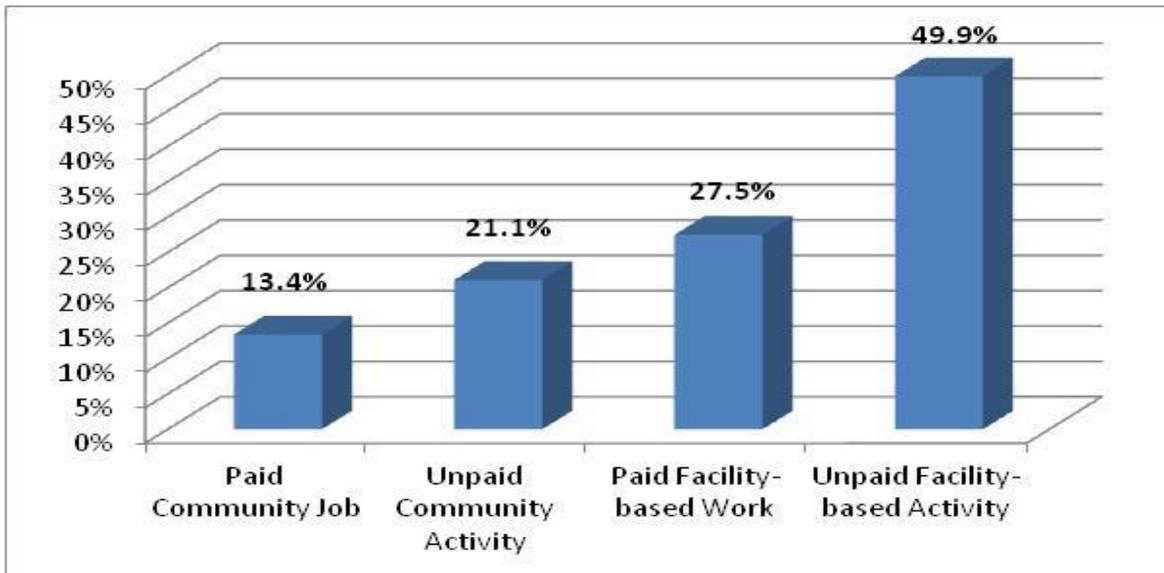
² Butterworth, J. et al. (2013). *State Data: The national report on employment services and outcomes 2012*. Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute on Community Inclusion. www.StateData.info

³ The 2011-12 NCI Adult Consumer Survey Report included: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Mid-East Ohio Regional Councils, Missouri, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina..

RESULTS

1) What do people do during the day?

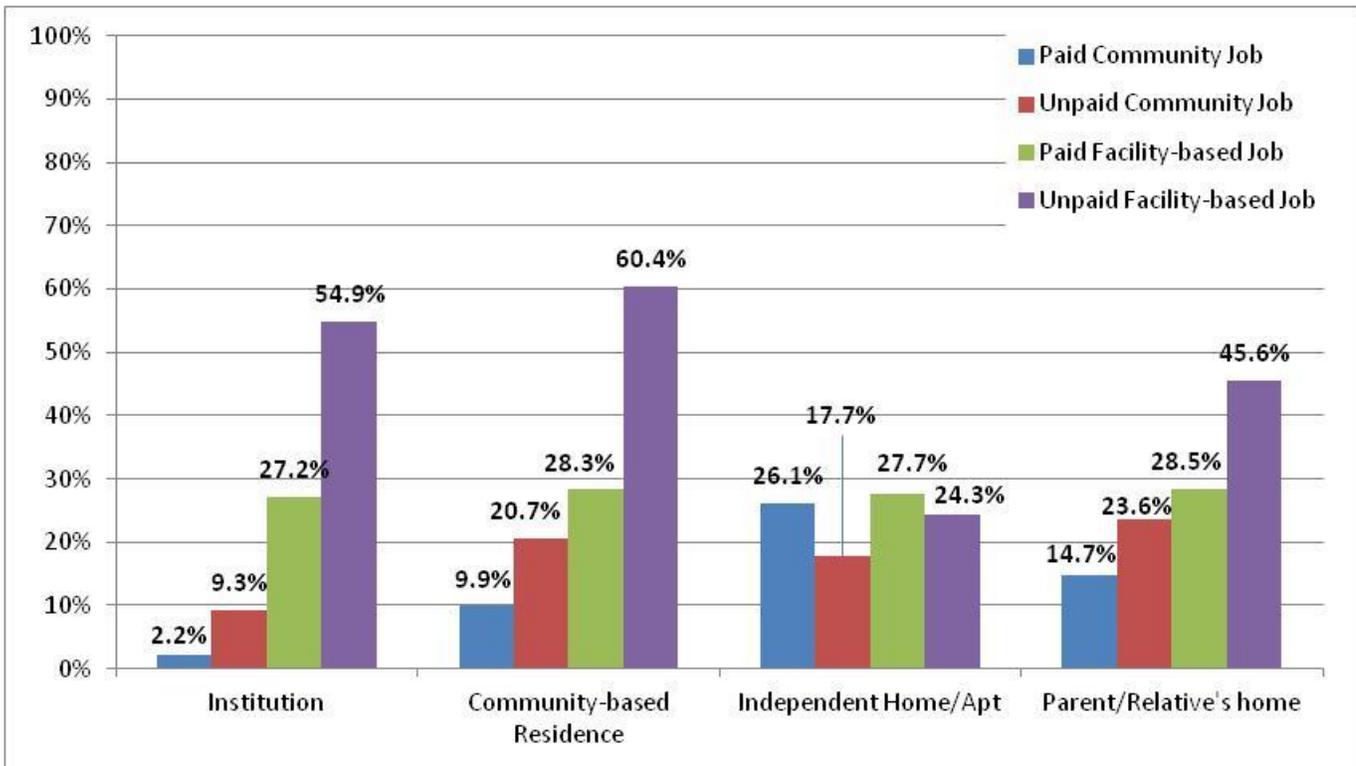
As shown in the graph below, almost half of service recipients participated in an unpaid facility-based activity during the day (49.9%) (Does not include “don’t know” responses and missing data). Over one quarter (27.5%) were in a paid facility-based job. Approximately twenty percent (21.1%) took part in an unpaid community-based activity during the day, and only 13.4% 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, 52.1% 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: 29.4% were also in an unpaid community activity, 18.1% also had a paid facility-based job, and 22.6% were in an unpaid facility-based activity. Of those who had a paid facility-based job, 38.2% were reported to also be engaged in an unpaid facility-based activity, 13.7% also participated in an unpaid community-based activity and 8.3% had a paid community-based job. Of those in an unpaid community-based activity, 53.6% were also in an unpaid facility-based activity.

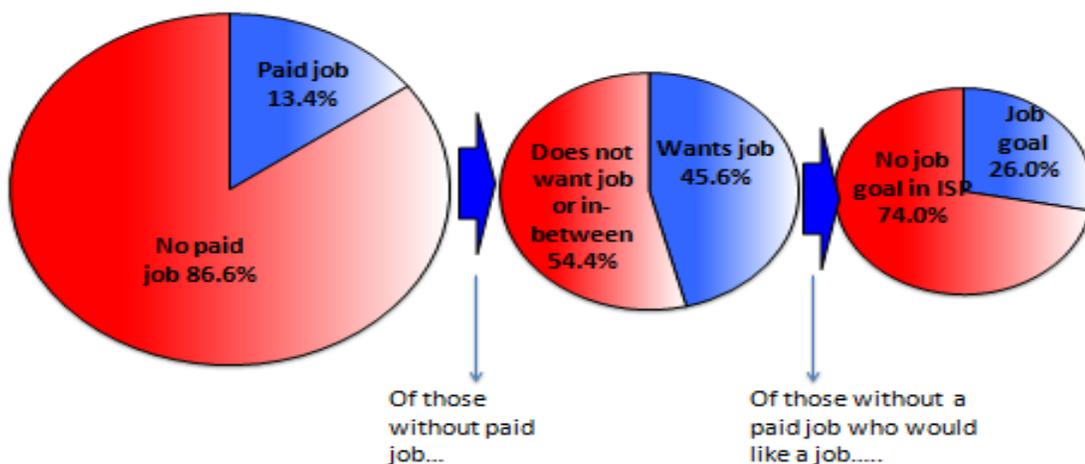
2) Are there differences in what people do during the day based on where they live?

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 (26.1%), whereas people living in institutions had the lowest rates (2.2%) of community employment. 14.7% of people living with parents or relatives and 9.9% of people living in community based residences (group homes or agency-operated apartment programs were reported as having a community paid job (see graph 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?

Almost one half (45.6%) 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 13.1% of those without a community job had employment identified as a goal in their individual service plans (ISP). Furthermore, only 26.0% of people who did not have a job and stated that they would 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 data brief. 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 (not shown in graph above). Total number of people remaining in the data is 10,555.

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?

	N	Percentage of 10,555	Percentage of total number in integrated employment (N=1,406)
In integrated employment	1,406	13.3%	100.0%
In individual jobs (individually supported + competitive)	782	7.4%	55.6%
In competitive employment	361	3.4%	25.7%
In individually-supported	421	4.0%	29.9%
In group-supported	305	2.9%	21.7%
Type of employment not specified	319	3.0%	22.7%

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. The table above shows that 13.3% 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*). 7.4% had individual jobs, 3.4% were in competitive employment, 4.0% were in individually-supported employment, and 2.9% were in group-supported employment. For 3.0% 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 the table below, 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*).

	% in group-supported	% in individually-supported	% in competitive employment	% in individual jobs (individually-supported + competitive)
Community-based residence	32.3%	39.3%	28.4%	67.7%
Independent home/apt	20.7%	39.8%	39.5%	79.3%
Parents/relatives home	29.8%	37.7%	32.6%	70.3%

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. The next table 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.

	N in community residences	% in Integrated employment	% in Individual jobs	% in Competitive employment	% in Individually-supported	% in Group-supported
AL	429	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
AR	307	11.1%	7.8%	6.2%	1.6%	0.7%
AZ	347	19.3%	8.4%	4.9%	3.5%	4.0%
CT	333	38.1%	9.9%	3.3%	6.6%	19.2%
GA	521	14.4%	12.1%	5.2%	6.9%	1.7%
HI	413	7.0%	5.6%	3.9%	1.7%	0.5%
IL	342	6.1%	5.0%	2.3%	2.6%	0.9%
KY	393	8.1%	6.6%	4.6%	2.0%	0.3%
LA	376	11.7%	5.6%	3.7%	1.9%	3.2%
MA	495	21.6%	11.7%	3.0%	8.7%	8.7%
ME	310	22.3%	15.8%	5.2%	10.6%	1.9%
MEORC	365	14.2%	8.8%	4.7%	4.1%	3.0%
MI	377	15.1%	6.4%	3.7%	2.7%	4.2%
MO	454	9.0%	3.7%	1.3%	2.4%	2.9%
NC	675	15.0%	9.5%	2.7%	6.8%	1.8%
NJ	425	6.4%	2.4%	1.6%	0.7%	2.1%
NY	2334	12.0%	6.9%	3.0%	3.9%	1.6%
OH	390	14.9%	8.2%	3.3%	4.9%	3.6%
PA	914	13.2%	9.0%	4.7%	4.3%	1.2%
SC	355	16.9%	3.7%	2.5%	1.1%	7.3%

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 (28.5%), retail such as sales clerk or stock person (14.1%), and food preparation and service (21.2%). Less common were office jobs such as general office and administrative support (4.4%), assembly and manufacturing jobs (7.6%) and materials handling and mail distribution (2.1%).

The types of jobs within which individuals worked varied depending on whether they were in competitive employment, individually supported employment, or group supported employment. Retail jobs and food prep and 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 (44.5% of people in group-supported employment) (see table below).

	Food prep and service	Building and ground cleaning/ maintenance	Retail
In competitive	30.7%	19.0%	18.5%
In individually-supported	27.3%	21.9%	18.7%
In group-supported	8.5%	44.5%	7.4%

The majority of people with office jobs were individually-supported (50.0%) or competitively (30.0%) employed. On the other hand, the majority of people performing assembly and materials handling tasks had group-supported employment (54.8% and 39.1% 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 27.2 hours in a two week period and earned \$211.33 or \$7.90 per hour (N=929). However, as shown in the table below, the number of hours that people worked and the amount they earned differed by the type of employment support they received.

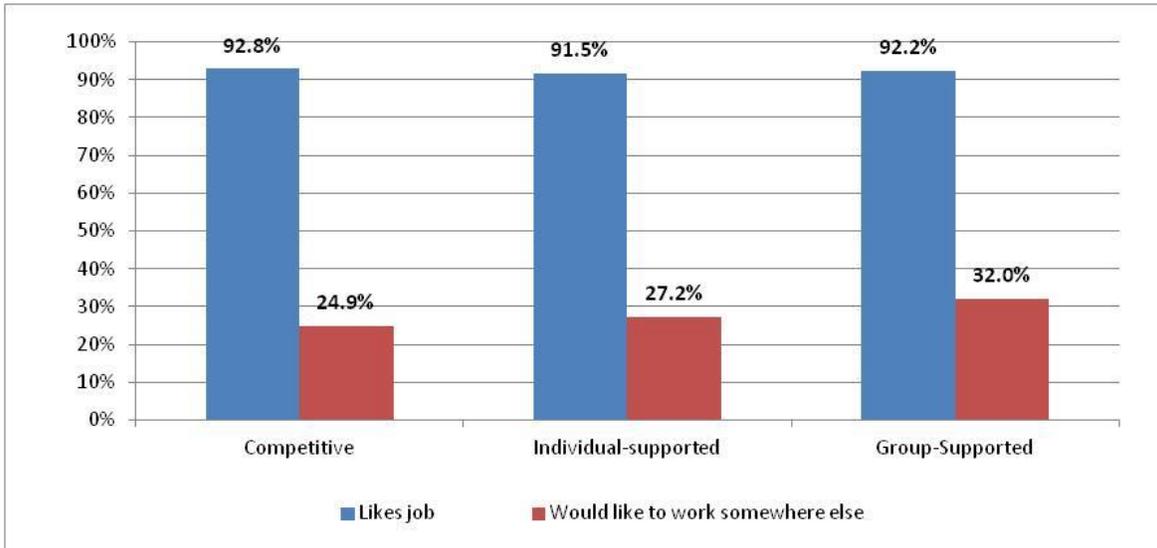
On average, people employed in competitive community jobs worked 27.8 hours over a two week period, earning a total of \$233.35 for an hourly wage of \$8.33. In individually-supported community jobs, people worked 26.2 hours in two weeks on average and earned \$229.40, making the average hourly wage of \$8.56. People employed in group-supported community jobs worked an average of 26.9 hours over the two-week period and earned less (average of \$161.68 in the same time period), for an average wage of \$6.56 an hour.

	Hours (in two weeks)	Wages (in two weeks)	Hourly wage
In Competitive	27.8	\$233.35	\$8.33
In Individually-supported	26.2	\$229.40	\$8.56
In Group-supported	26.9	\$161.68	\$6.56

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, 91.0% stated that they like their jobs. However, 29.1% 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 32.0% of individuals with group-supported employment wanted to work somewhere else, as compared to 24.9% of those with competitive employment and 27.2% of those with individually-supported jobs (see graph). 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?

Across all categories of community jobs, 32.3% were reported as receiving benefits. 33.2% and 35.4% of those in competitive and individually-supported employment respectively received benefits such as paid vacation and sick time, compared to 30.1% of people in group-supported employment.

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

The mean length of time people worked in their community job was 67.8 months. Those in individually supported employment worked an average of 65.5 months, while those in competitive employment worked an average of 70.3 months. Individuals in group-supported employment worked an average of 69.0 months.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Improving the level of participation of people with ID/DD 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 ID/DD working in integrated community settings. These data frame several priorities for current and future service design and delivery:

Development of employment first initiatives. The state-to-state variation in employment participation among people with ID/DD 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). States need to frame clear goals and take a holistic approach to building employment systems capacity.

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 ID/DD 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.

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.

Supporting career goals. The data suggest that almost half of individuals who are not working in the community want a job, but that only 26% 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.

Reference:

Hall, A. C., Butterworth, J., Winsor, J., Gilmore, D. S., & Metzler, D. (2007). Pushing the employment agenda: Case study research of high performing states in integrated employment. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 45*(3), 182-198.



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