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Connecticut's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant: State Agency Employment Services Process Maps Update

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Acknowledgments

Thank you to the four participating State Agencies and their project leaders and teams for their willingness and cooperation during the evaluation follow-up phase of the project to meet with the UCONN evaluation team and to complete the follow-up interview.

Thank you also to the Connect-Ability staff for supporting the evaluation team by permitting access to information, and answering questions about the project.

State Agency Employment Services Process Maps Update

I. Background

The Connecticut Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) (Connect-Ability) and the University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC) contracted with Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) in 2006 to develop employment services process maps for the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB). The 2006 employment services process maps identify state agency processes associated with moving consumers with disabilities into employment. PCG focused on agency work processes for assisting consumers with preparing for, accessing and obtaining employment. The full 2006 PCG State of Connecticut MIG State Agency Employment Processes narrative report can be accessed at: http://www.connect-ability.com/media/pdf/research/Final_PCG_Agency_Process_Report_May2006.pdf, and the 2006 process maps can be accessed at: http://www.connect-ability.com/media/pdf/research/consolidated_maps.pdf.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation was to update the four agency employment services process maps as part of the Connect-Ability 2011 Needs Assessment.

III. Methodology

The UCHC Connect-Ability evaluation team created a questionnaire based on the interview guide constructed by PCG for the 2006 process maps. UCHC distributed the questionnaires to representatives of each identified agency to review and prepare responses. A follow-up interview with the UCHC evaluation team and the agency representatives occurred within four weeks of the questionnaire distribution where the agency responses to the questionnaires were reviewed and changes were identified on the respective maps.

The questionnaire included core information about each agency's processes that was summarized in the report and employment services process maps from 2006 including: client referral, eligibility, planning services, and success determination. The agency representatives were asked to identify any process changes in their respective agency based on the employment services process maps from 2006. In addition, the agency representatives were asked what impact Connect-Ability had on their agency's process and services. The questions utilized for this evaluation can be found in Appendix A.

The following sections outline the findings and illustrate the changes in the employment processes adopted by each agency.

IV. Agency Employment Process Narratives and Maps

A. The Bureau of Rehabilitative Services

Employment Process Map Changes

The majority of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) employment process is mandated by Federal law. Nonetheless, BRS has implemented several new initiatives to enhance the employment process for consumers and increase the likelihood of a successful BRS experience, with the ultimate goal of employment.

Connect-Ability Referrals

One change from the 2006 employment process map is the addition of Connect-Ability referral sources. The Connect-Ability technical assistance center, which can be accessed by telephone or email, is a referral source that did not exist before the MIG. During the years 2007 to 2010, an average of 46 percent of consumer calls to Connect-Ability from job seekers were referred to BRS. In 2010, 53 percent (182 out of 346) of consumers who called Connect-Ability were referred to BRS. The callers referred to BRS fall into two groups: 1) those who did not know that BRS existed, and 2) and those who previously worked with BRS. While this is not a major source of referrals for the agency, it is an opportunity to introduce the former group to appropriate services, and to help the latter group navigate the employment process with BRS better. In addition, BRS supervisors and directors use the consumer feedback they receive through Connect-Ability to outline themes as to why consumers have not stayed involved in the BRS employment process and to address these issues.

Employment Division

In addition to the new referral source for consumers, employers who contact either BRS or the Connect-Ability technical assistance center are referred to the newly-created Employment Division within BRS. The Employment Division, consisting of nine rehabilitation counselors working directly with businesses and the employment consultant overseeing the division, takes a “dual customer” approach that integrates the needs of both employers and job seekers. It offers employers services such as pre-screened applicants, on-the-job-trainings, risk-free trial working interviews, and tax-credit program information.

Several other new vocational rehabilitation services have become available to BRS consumers since 2006, including:

- A Prep Rally Series,
- The Community Rehabilitation Provider Database,
- The Transition Initiative, and
- Interview Preparedness.

Prep Rally Series

The Prep Rally Series is designed to assist consumers to sharpen their interviewing skills, perfect their resume and prepare for upcoming job fairs. Workshops focus on interview preparation and mock

interviews. There is also a free networking lunch. Opportunities to have resumes reviewed and/or produced are available throughout the event.

Community Rehabilitation Provider Database

The Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) database was developed through Connect-Ability as a partnership of state agencies, families, youth and adults with disabilities to assist people with disabilities and those who help them to find independent living and workforce supports and services. Consumers use the database, which is available through the Connect-Ability website, to: learn about community rehabilitation programs that can help with independent living, job training, and other workforce assistance; find out about the school to work transition services and options offered by CT Community Rehabilitation Providers; and search for a specific program/provider or search by area served, type of service, groups served, or funding agency the provider works with.

Transition Initiative

BRS has established the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC)/State Education Resource Center (SERC) Transition Resource Counselor Initiative. This initiative is a collaborative partnership between BRS, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), the six Regional Educational Service Centers, the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), and SERC. Each RESC and SERC has hired one Transition Resource Counselor to support this initiative. The seven Transition Resource Counselors collaborate with all of the initiative partners to identify supports and services available to youth with disabilities through BRS and other adult service agencies (DMHAS, DDS, BESB, and DPH).

Interview Preparedness

BRS consumers have access to materials through Connect-Ability and experiences that prepare them for job interviews. Workshops at the Prep Rallies focus on interview preparation and mock interviews. Individualized and group Interview Preparedness is available as a purchased service through many CRP's and is now routinely utilized by BRS as a precursor to placement into a job site.

System 7

BRS recently implemented a new IT system using a web based case management platform called System 7. BRS is in the process of providing staff with the necessary technology to access System 7 from either inside their offices or remote locations. The database contains a comprehensive view of individual case records, as well as the ability to generate queries related to demographics, services provided and outcome information for all BRS consumers at both the individual and aggregate level.

Outcome Measurements

A broader set of national standards and indicators in the outcome measurements box is an addition to the 2011 DMHAS employment process map; however these measurements are not new and were used during 2006 though not included on that map. The full listing of standards and indicators is as follows:

Standard 1: To achieve successful performance on standard 1, state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies must meet or exceed four of the six performance indicators in the evaluation standard,

including meeting or exceeding the performance levels for two of the three primary indicators. The three primary indicators are indicators number 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.

- 1.1: Change in Employment Outcomes
- 1.2: Percent of Employment Outcomes
- 1.3: Competitive Employment Outcomes
- 1.4: Significance of Disability
- 1.5: Earnings Ratio
- 1.6: Self-Support

Standard 2: Minority Background Service Rate: The ratio of the percent of individuals with a minority background to the percent of individuals without a minority background exiting the program who receives VR services.

Planned Employment Process Map Changes

Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) Contracts

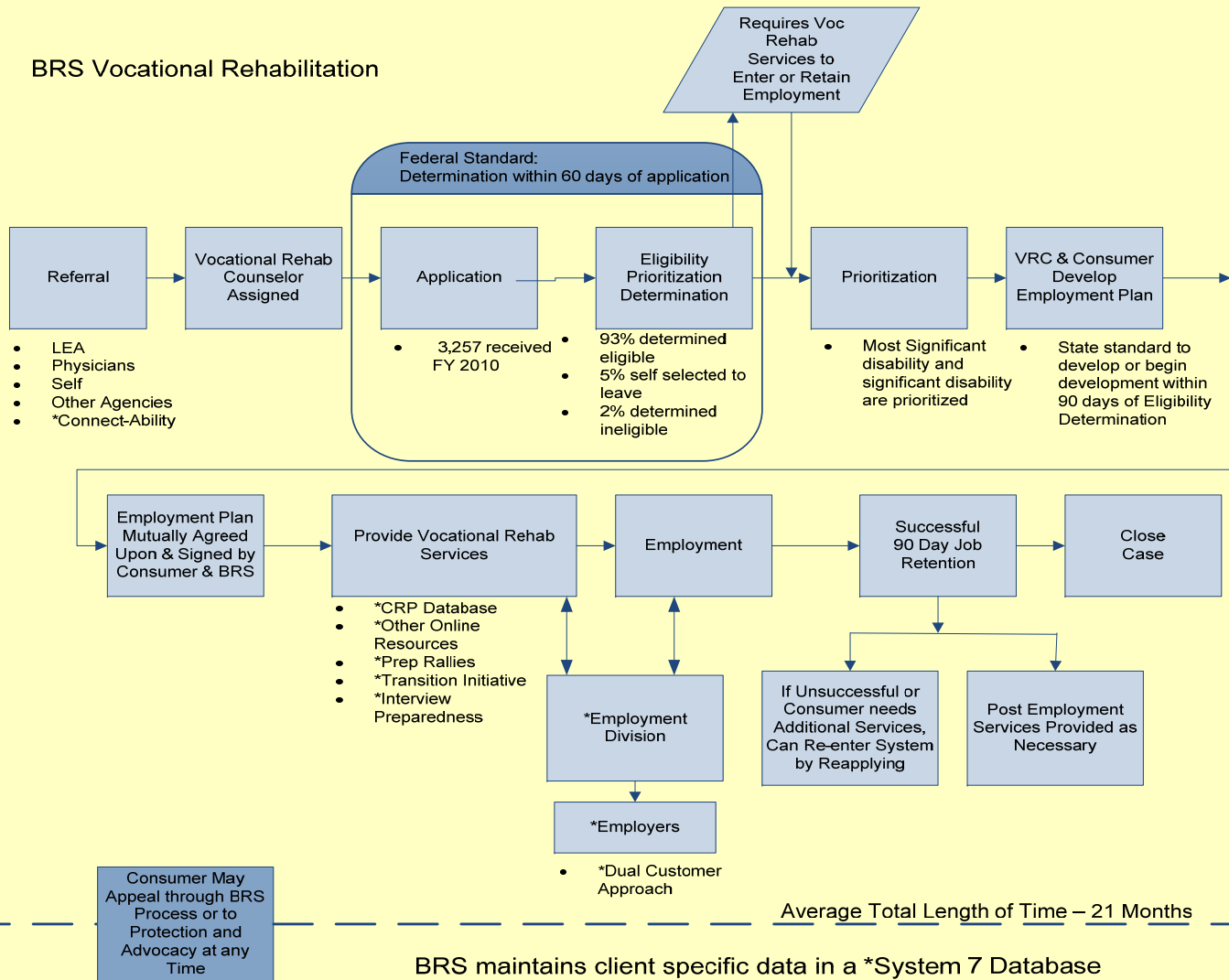
A noteworthy infrastructure change is the inclusion of performance evaluation methodologies in forthcoming BRS contracts with CRPs. CRPs will be evaluated qualitatively with respect to their performance across core CRP services. As data is collected, metrics and benchmarks will be established that will be utilized to objectively evaluate CRP production and timeliness in service provision. By the end of 2011, all BRS CRP contractors will have these new contractual requirements for benchmarks in qualitative performance measures in an ongoing provider review process.

The Connecticut Agency Data Exchange

BRS is currently working on a data interoperability project, The Connecticut Agency Data Exchange (Conn-ADE). The Connecticut Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), in conjunction with BRS, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), and nine other state agency partners, with funding provided by the MIG and the Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant (MHT-SIG), seeks to implement a solution that will improve the ability of state human service agencies to share data on a case management and policy level. Conn-ADE will provide both case management options and overall research capacity, and these two capabilities differentiate Conn-ADE from the array of data interoperability platforms at hand in Connecticut. The project is in the planning stages.

BRS Employment Process Map

BRS Vocational Rehabilitation



Outcome Measurements

BRS Reviews Outcomes

- Occupation
- Wages
- Hours Worked
- Level of Public Assistance

Success Measured

- Number of cases successfully closed/total number of cases

*National Standards and Indicators

Standard 1

- Change in Employment Outcomes
- Percent of Employment Outcomes
- Competitive Employment Outcomes
- Significance of Disability
- Earnings Ratio
- Self Support

Standard 2

- Minority Background Service Rate

*New or Revised Since 2006

Revised, 2011

B. Board of Education and Services for the Blind

Employment Process Map Changes

The Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) has two employment process map changes since 2006. The first change noted on the 2011 map is the added benefit of Connect-Ability. The adult vocational rehabilitation program is enhanced by shared job leads through Connect-Ability. In a second related change, BRS and BESB now collaborate on outreach to employers. For example BESB and BRS work together to customize outreach materials for employers and have a shared goal to increase employer outreach activities. BESB is utilizing a computer-based case management system to track employer outreach.

There is also an important clarification on the map relating to Children Services and high school graduates who fall into the legally blind category. Upon high school graduation, all legally blind individuals transition from Children Services to BESB's Adult Independent Living Services. In addition, those requiring vocational assistance will receive BESB Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Thus the text "transition to adult services" in the 2006 map has been expanded and clarified with "Transition to Independent Living Services (and Vocational Rehabilitation Services if needed)". In contrast, visually impaired high school graduates transfer out of BESB and may face a gap in services. These individuals can move onto BRS only if they meet the BRS order of priority.

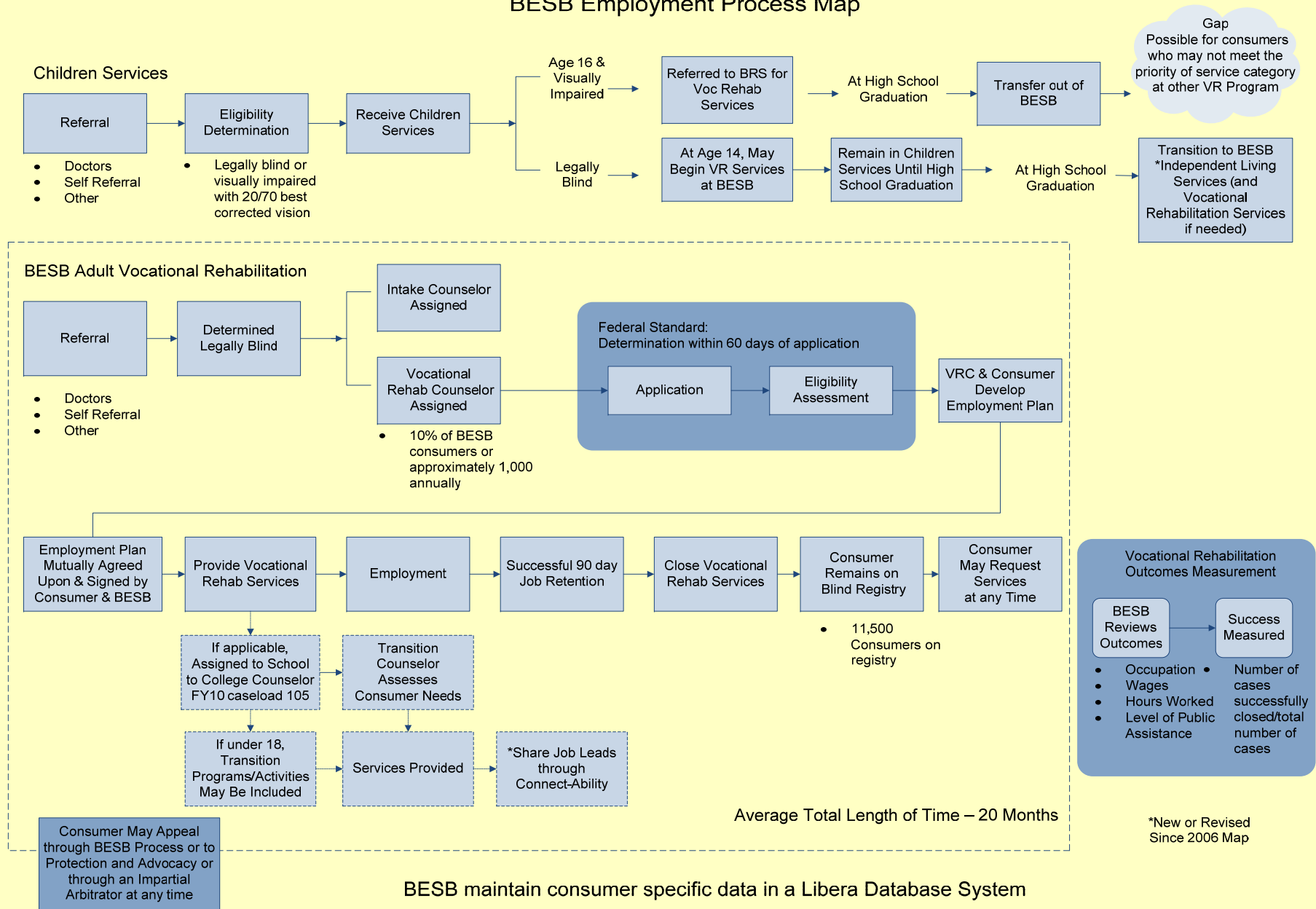
Employment Process Changes not noted on the map

BESB has added another transition coordinator. This new coordinator is assigned to the Children's Program and works with legally blind and visually impaired students to develop pre-vocational skills using the matrix of development contained within the Expanded Core Curriculum of the public education model. Both transition coordinators work with the counselors and education consultants at BESB and the school districts.

Planned Employment Process Map Changes

A recently passed Connecticut law mandates a new Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, effective July 1, 2011 that includes the programs presently administered by BESB. The new bureau will have a director who is appointed by the Governor. The director will determine the organizational structure of the new bureau.

BESB Employment Process Map



C. Department of Developmental Services

Employment Process Map Changes

Referral

Help Line

Since 2009, there has been a gap in case management services for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) (formerly known as the Department of Mental Retardation) consumers not eligible for Title XIX. Although these consumers do receive some services from DDS, they do not receive case management services. Consumers must be on Title XIX to receive the employment waiver. To address this gap, each of the three DDS Regions (North, South, and West) established a Help Line to assist approximately 1000 families per region who do not have access to case manager services. Six help Line staff (2 per region) assists consumers to apply for DDS Family Support Services or refer them to appropriate community resources and services. The Help Line staff assist parents with the Medicaid application process as the individuals can become eligible at age 18 regardless of family income. At that point DDS assigns a case manager.

Referrals from RESCs and SERC

Other new referral sources since 2006 for students transitioning from school to adult services agencies are the newly-created positions at the Regional Education Services Centers (RESCs) and State Education Resource Center (SERC). The Bureau of Rehabilitative Services funded six new positions for one year to work with the Department of Education at the five RESCs and at SERC. (The State Department of Education will fund these positions after the first year). These six individuals work with all adult services agencies across disabilities, including the DDS transition coordinators, to enhance relationships between consumers and adult service providers and agencies, and to help schools do a better job of making appropriate referrals.

A gap in services exists under the referral process for interstate referrals and Spanish-speaking referrals.

Eligibility

A gap in services exists in the system for new DDS consumers who are not transitioning from a school into adult services. To address this gap, these individuals are placed on a waiting list to be considered for one time funds available for those interested in competitive employment. Still, service gaps exist for consumers who do not want employment.

Assessment/Determination of Needs

At the time of consumer assessment/determination of needs, DDS consumers receiving Title XIX benefits are assigned a case manager and the Level of Need (LON) and the Priority Checklist are completed. The Individual Plan (IP) and a Career Assessment are also developed at this time, and were added to the employment process map. The most significant change in the IP is the new DDS employment policy, which requires that graduates and consumers at LON 1-3 must have competitive employment goals. There is also a standard career plan to be used by all employment providers, and

documentation that the case manager and consumer have addressed the consumer's employment goals and discussed competitive employment options.

DDS consumers are increasingly expressing an interest in self employment, yet DDS does not have a systematic and thorough way to help to consumers who want to try self employment.

Planning and Resource Allocation Team (PRAT)

The Planning and Resource Allocation Team (PRAT) reviews all documentation submitted and summarizes their recommendations on the Regional Utilization Resource Review Request Form. The PRAT's recommendation is then forwarded to the Regional Director. Changes to PRAT include required justification for Day Service Option (DSO) program for LON 1- 3. Also, Group Supported Employment (GSE) enhancement funds and one time employment interview funds are now available. Job developer training is provided by the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI).

In addition, since DDS has replaced the wait list with a priority list, the wait list box no longer appears on the employment process map. New options include the consumer receiving funding, or staying on the priority list depending on need and the availability of funding. Not on the map, but also a change is the availability of one time funding for DDS consumers to explore the experience of real-time competitive work. The funding for this service is portable, that is they can bring their funding with them if they change community providers.

Portability/On-line Provider Profiles

The portability process is used by DDS consumers when they are not satisfied with the services they receive from their current public or private provider, or when they need to change who provides their services for some other reason. Provider Profiles are now available on-line for consumers to access what services providers give to consumers to help them decide where to look for additional or new services. The provider profiles are listed in alphabetical order and by town and can be accessed at <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3620&q=424134>.

Employment Process Changes not noted on the map

New Employment Waiver- Autism Pilot Project

The Autism Pilot Program (APP) was an endeavor of DDS to provide specific services to adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who do not have a diagnosis of mental retardation. The provision of various support services can have a profound effect on participants' ability to live more independently. These services are tied to specific skills deficit areas and they include: case management services; life, social, educational and employment skills services; community mentor; job developer/career counselor; consultative services; and interpreter services. Participants began enrolling the APP in September, 2006 in New Haven County. This year, legislation was passed that removed the pilot status and made this a permanent division in DDS. The department has written 3 new waiver applications to serve people with autism. They have been approved by the Legislature and will be submitted to CMS this fall. DDS anticipates they will begin in January, 2012 and will expand this service across the entire state. The waivers will serve children and adults.

Supported Employment Commitment

A key infrastructure change initiated in September 2011 is ongoing supported employment services for DDS consumers referred to BRS. The Regional Planning and Resource Allocation Teams will now have the authority to sign off and commit to any and all appropriate requests for long term DDS support as required by BRS. This also applies to upcoming school graduates. The regional allocation teams can make a decision as to whether the ongoing commitment letter to authorize funding is signed. Formerly, the legislature had to authorize funding for graduates before DDS was willing to sign authorize an ongoing commitment. This often resulted in a prolonged delay before an individual could receive services from BRS.

Services

New agencies have been recruited in the state to work on competitive employment services for DDS consumers. Residential agencies are now providing employment services as well.

Southbury Training School

The DDS Southbury Training School was built in the late 1930s as a home for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Pursuant to a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice, admission to Southbury closed in 1986, the population is declining, and the average age of residents is now over 63. Nevertheless, residents participate in a variety of day programs on and off campus, and have opportunities to work in individual and group supported employment at local business, job skills training, and sheltered employment. The school is currently conducting trainings for staff in options for competitive employment as well as performing outreach activities to step up competitive employment options for residents.

Planned Changes to the DDS Employment Process

At present, DDS does not have a way to measure how much its consumers are earning, how many hours they are working, and how many consumers are referred to BRS. DDS is working with ICI to facilitate and streamline the transfer of the above employment outcomes from the BRS database to DDS. The department is developing an Advanced Planning Document for approval of CMS that creates a technology infrastructure that will connect the multiple IT platforms at DDS to allow for integrated information management.

At the end of 2011, DDS will publish three new waiver guides that will highlight employment for DDS consumers.

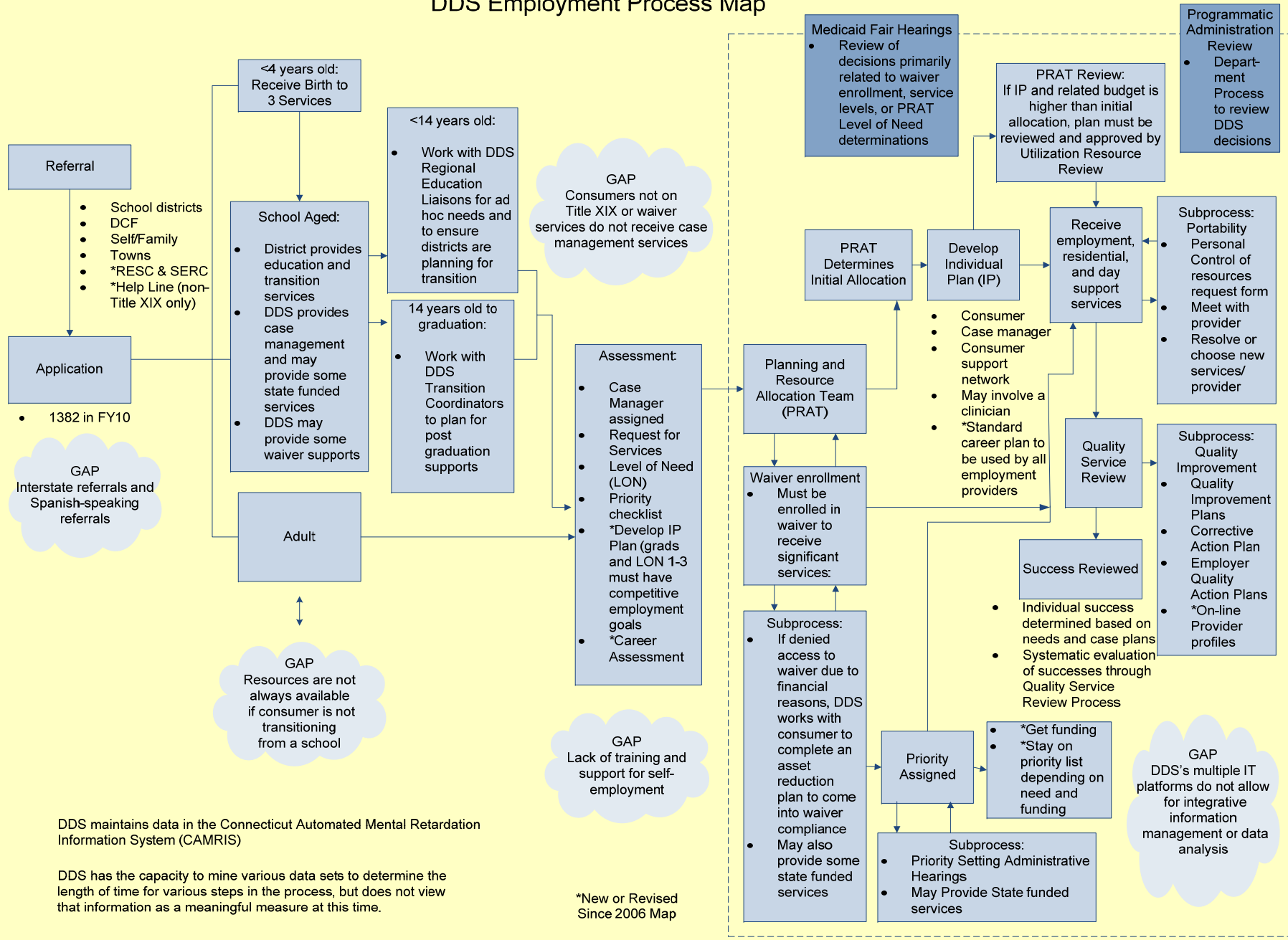
On July 13, 2011, the Consumer Corner Website was launched. The Consumer Corner Website provides information and resources to Connecticut citizens with intellectual disabilities, their families and professionals. This website focuses on self advocacy, independent living, employment and health and safety for consumers.

Direct Impact of Connect-Ability

The Connect-Ability initiative has been a key factor in the DDS changes related to employment. In addition to its encouragement of key policy changes that foster competitive employment, changes supported by Connect-Ability include:

- education conferences for families, providers and school districts,
- training on Social Security work incentives, financial management and asset development,
- training for IP teams on changing from a group employment to a customized employment model
- videos highlighting the successful competitive employment of several DDS consumers,
- a mass mailing sent to 100,000 employers promoting employment for individuals with disabilities, and
- the facilitation of the statewide job list which is now available to DDS and other state agencies.

DDS Employment Process Map



D. The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Employment Process Map Changes

Supportive Housing

The supportive housing program is a comprehensive program which provides for transitional housing, employment/vocational, psychosocial rehabilitation and clinical services designed to serve persons who are homeless and have a psychiatric disability. Housing-based case management is provided to help tenants to secure and maintain stable, affordable housing. For clients not currently in appropriate housing, the primary goal is to develop strategies to assist them in securing housing. For those already housed, the goal is to assure that adequate services are in place so that the person will maintain housing. The housing-based case manager works to assure that the tenant has the support needed to fulfill the conditions of tenancy and to remain housed.

The HomeWORK project connected people in supportive housing to employment and/or education. The project is highlighted in a short film of client case studies and is available on the Connect-Ability and the DMHAS web pages (<http://www.ct.gov/dmhas/site/default.asp>). The HomeWORK project ended in May, 2011, however the connection between people in supportive housing to employment and/or education continues via the Supportive Housing program.

Mental Health Waiver

The Mental Health Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver, referred to as the WISE (Working for Integration, Support and Empowerment) Program, is an addition to the 2011 map. WISE is designed for adults with serious mental illness who are being discharged or diverted from nursing home care. This Medicaid Waiver provides participants with the medical and psychiatric services and supports necessary to live independently in the community. Waiver services are provided face to face, in the participant's home or in other community settings (non office based). Individualized assessment, Recovery Plan development, and service delivery emphasize participant strengths and assets, utilization of natural supports and community integration. In other words, service delivery emphasizes psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery from the disabling effects of psychiatric disorders. The Waiver is operated by DMHAS with oversight by the Department of Social Services, Connecticut's Single State Agency for Medicaid.

Employment is revisited at every recovery plan review and annual update. The recovery plans and recovery plan updates include an area to record employment. Mental Health Waivers are now tracked for quality improvement with an outcome measure that 90% of all clients served in the waiver program are offered supported employment. Since program started in 2009 five consumers have received employment services.

Addiction Services

Addiction Services is an addition to the 2011 DMHAS employment process map; however these services are not new and were available during 2006 though not included on that map.

DDaP Database

In July, 2010 DMHAS began implementing a new data system called DDaP, used for consumer specific data associated with their private non-profit sector providers and state operated local mental health authorities (LMHAs). This infrastructure change allows DMHAS to track employment outcome measures such as number of clients, competitive employment, wages, and hours worked, start/end employment dates and other outcomes. When the new system is complete, DDaP will allow users to print reports on a regular basis. Data is shared on individuals with each provider agency, but not across agencies comparing outcomes among agencies. Presently, the DMHAS Mental Health providers and three addiction providers are being evaluated with these new data system outcomes.

DMHAS Working with BRS

Consumers served by LMHAs and community providers also have more contact with BRS. In the “other adult employment focused adult services” line, under the provide services category, is a new connection with BRS. The box represents the on-going connection DMHAS now has with BRS to work collaboratively to provide employment services to DMHAS consumers. DMHAS is focused on what is the best practice for teaming with BRS around employment issues. One example is the BRS/DMHAS Collaborative Employment Project, where one BRS counselor is stationed at an LMHA in Bridgeport. Both agencies are collecting information on teaming for employment and the goal is to feature an effective local team that can provide technical assistance to regions with less experience in interagency teaming.

Cedarcrest Hospital

Cedarcrest Hospital is closed. Thus the information on the 2006 process map is deleted on the updated map. Consumers are now assessed by DMHAS and then receive the appropriate services by either a local LMHA or Connecticut Valley Hospital.

Employment Process Changes not noted on the map

Agency Employment Policy Change

DMHAS has authorized a statewide agency policy for all DMHAS contractors to ensure their consumers begin recovery in a holistic way. The policy frames employment and housing as a fundamental pursuit essential to a consumer’s recovery plan from the start of their recovery. As a result, mental health staff are talking about employment earlier with clients than they did in the past. Agencies are encouraged to hand out employment materials to consumers and their family members at intake so that everyone has the same information. Consumers also have the opportunity to meet an employment specialist at intake. The new policy was disseminated statewide to all DMHAS contractors with the Commissioner’s signature.

Employment Services for Addiction Services

In addition to the two existing providers who address the employment needs of the addictions population, DMHAS has developed a program to focus on employment services for consumers in the Hartford and southeastern Connecticut region. The Recovery Oriented Employment Services (ROES) program follows a curriculum that is very similar to the EPIC I web based employment curriculum

described below. Over 500 consumers have been trained since 2009 and close to 50% have part or full time jobs. This service is not a result of Connect-Ability.

Addiction Services - The Employment Tool Kit

A small group of representatives from various State and provider agencies developed an employment toolkit to promote employment practices to help people in recovery from addiction disorders work toward becoming employed. The toolkit is based on the belief that employment is a critical ingredient of the recovery process and the sense of community belonging (as cited in the Department's Recovery Oriented Employment Services Vision Statement in 2003). The toolkit is available on the C-A website at http://www.connect-ability.com/media/pdf/Sect1_Toolkit.pdf.

Johnson & Johnson Project – Fidelity Review

The mission of the Johnson & Johnson - Dartmouth Community Mental Health Program is to increase access to evidence-based supported employment (SE), also known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS), for adults with serious mental illness who are interested in improving their work lives. This national program systematically works with states to implement supported employment following the evidence-based guidelines, initially in a small number of sites (typically 3-4 community mental health centers) and expanding statewide over time. The program is administered in each participating state through collaboration between the state mental health authority and the state vocational rehabilitation administration. In Connecticut, 18 provider agencies share employment statistics quarterly on 6 employment outcomes and the data are aggregated and sent to Dartmouth.

EPIC I

The EPIC I initiatives comprise a wide range of training and program dissemination activities, some of which are complete or well underway:

Pardons Project. This train the trainer model was conducted in all five regions of Connecticut. The trained DMHAS staff trains consumers to know the pardon process and how to complete the application. One hundred people in Bridgeport are waiting to be trained.

Americans with Disabilities Legal Rights Training. Various training activities have occurred statewide to pass on legal knowledge to consumers about employment rights and the Americans with Disabilities Act. DMHAS is committed to continue the trainings through their education and training division, after Connect-Ability funding ends.

Women's Services. DMHAS Women's Specialty Program organizations received ongoing training and technical assistance on employment and educational services available statewide. Selected Women's Programs also received training on the web-based KeyTrain program (see details below). Over a 12 month time span, DMHAS Woman's Specialty Program Organizations showed a 10% increase in their residential program participants obtaining one or more of the following: 1. General Education Degree, 2. Post-secondary training certificate, or 3. Competitive Employment.

Recovery-Oriented Employment Services (ROES). ROES created recovery relevant resources and increased DMHAS staff capacity and awareness of cross-agency employment resources with an emphasis on networking with employers statewide. Ten Connecticut employers are enlisted in the

employer network/coalition and have posted open positions are “recovery ready”. A “Train the Trainer” component was developed for the ROES seven-module employment curriculum and at least two trainers per DMHAS region were trained. A regional resource directory pocket-sized handbook was developed, printed, and distributed to consumers seeking jobs.

Planned Changes to the DMHAS Employment Process

EPIC I

KeyTrain. KeyTrain is a nationally recognized complete interactive training system for career readiness skills, based on ACT’s WorkKeys assessment system and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). The NCRC is the national standard in certifying workplace skills and allows individuals to demonstrate their level of skill in the most common skills required for success in the workplace. This program is used to assess a consumer’s capacity to be trained for a specific job and to determine whether a consumer is ready to return to work by passing a series of skill sets in the areas of math, reading searching for information, and locating information. Consumers are given alternative career choices within their field of interest if they do not have the capacity for training in their original career choice. EPIC purchased seven licenses and the program is strategically placed throughout Connecticut. The EPIC I employment curriculum is a distance learning model that will be posted on the Connect-Ability website in February, 2012, offering enhanced employment courses to consumers such as resume writing and job search skills, what to do with their first paycheck, and how to work with colleagues.

Supervisor Training. The EPIC I program also has a component to train supervisors on how to utilize evidence-based practice outcomes to help providers enhance their services.

Evaluation. Every planned change in EPIC I has an outcome measure attached and is being evaluated by Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF).

EPIC II – Distance Learning Component for Young Adults

EPIC II is a distance learning component similar to EPIC I. The curriculum includes soft skills and life skills training, including financial literacy, social networking, and how to work with colleagues. Although the curriculum is geared to the young adult population, several of the agencies collaborating on this project believe that this curriculum will serve their adult population as well. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Labor (DOL) are directly involved in this initiative, with the following state agencies invited to participate: Department of Corrections, Court Support Services Division, Adult Education, Department of Developmental Services (DDS), BRS, the Office for Workforce Competitiveness, and the state community colleges. Every planned change has an outcome measure attached and is being evaluated by CWEALF.

National Association of Mental Health Program Directors Grant

DMHAS received monies from National Association of Mental Health Program Directors to develop an infrastructure to train staff around small business development. Up to fifteen consumers will receive mini grants to seed small businesses. This is for all other adult employment services.

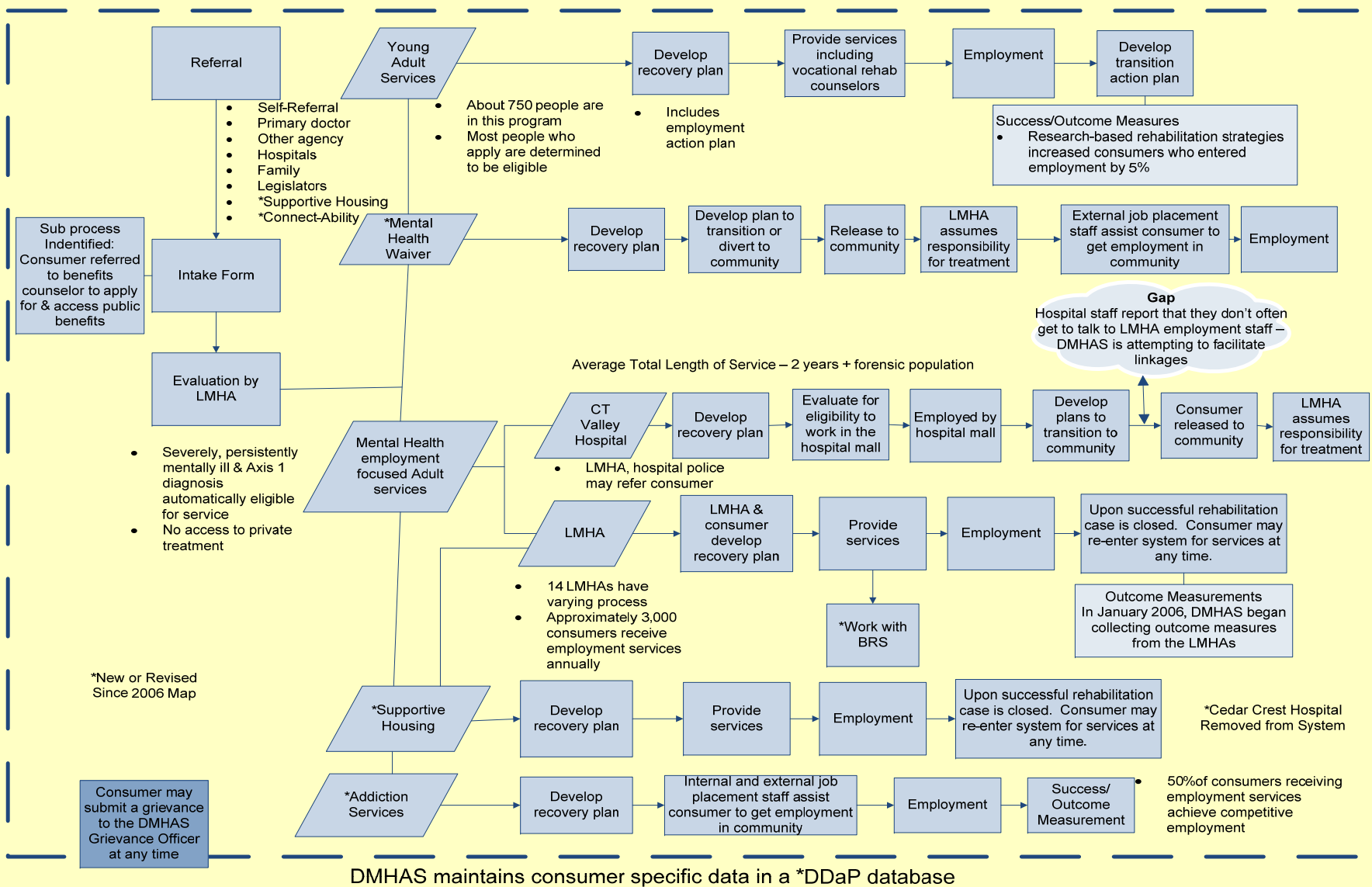
Direct Impact of Connect-Ability

The impact of the Connect-Ability on the employment process and outcomes for DMHAS consumers is significant and measurable as can be seen by the various employment supports and training programs described in this report. The principal change is the collaborative interagency culture developed during the creation and implementation of Connect-Ability. DMHAS confers on a regular basis with BRS and DDS on cases. In addition, the technical assistance center developed by Connect-Ability is a referral source for consumers to DMHAS. In addition, DMHAS has developed a strong connection with the Department of Labor (DOL). For example, DOL continues to employ disability navigators despite the end of grant funding, and has created quiet rooms as a result of the HomeWORK project.

The HomeWORK project, which connected people in supportive housing to employment or education, EPIC I, which addressed identified gaps in the employment process and developed and disseminated trainings, and EPIC II, a hybrid of agency specific employment soft-skills trainings, are all the result of Connect-Ability funding. Connect-Ability provided the funds to make these vital employment infrastructure changes occur.

Transportation issues have also been addressed through Connect-Ability. Workshops on transportation were conducted for all DMHAS employment staff which included consumer materials. Periodic updates on transportation are provided by the Connect-Ability staff.

DMHAS Employment Process Map



APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE of AGENCY Employment PROCESS MAPPING and PROGRAM CHANGES SINCE 2006

Refer to your 2006 Agency Process Map and the agency specific question list attached.

1. What are the changes in the process steps for any clients entering your agency compared to 2006?
 - fully implemented, currently existing changes
 - a. Related to referral
 - b. Related to eligibility confirmation
 - c. Related to planning services in general, and specifically for employment supports including referring clients to other agencies or providers
 - d. Related to your utilization of CRPs, and measuring the quality of their services
 - e. Related to determination of client success or case closure
 - f. Related to other steps, including follow-up after successful employment, specific to your agency
 - g. Related to changes in your agency data systems, databases and data storage:
 - describe the new data system, databases and data storage
 - the agencies you share data with what data is shared
 - explain the data sharing process between agencies

2. Are there any continuing or planned changes in your agency process steps for any clients entering your agency compared to 2006?
 - a. Related to referral
 - b. Related to eligibility confirmation
 - c. Related to planning services in general, and specifically for employment supports
 - d. Related to your utilization of CRPs, and measuring the quality of their services
 - e. Related to determination of client success or case closure
 - f. Related to other steps, including follow-up after successful employment, specific to your agency
 - g. Related to future upgrades to your agency data systems, databases and data storage:
 - describe the proposed data system, databases and data storage
 - the agencies you plan to share data with what data will be shared
 - explain the proposed multi-agency data sharing process

3. What program changes exist in your agency programs compared to 2006, specifically related to employment supports for your clients?
 - a. briefly describe the type of service or program (i.e. job coach, skills development, benefit counseling)
 - b. who provides the new or changed services or programs
 - within agency
 - community provider
 - other agency
 - c. how are success outcomes measured for the new or changed services or programs

4. Are there any continuing or planned changes in your agency programs compared to 2006 specifically related to employment supports for your clients?
 - a. Briefly describe the type of service or program proposed
 - b. Who is expected to provide the new service or program proposed

- c. Are there any plans for measuring success of the new service or program proposed
5. Referring to your agency specific questions list, what is the status of the previously identified gaps in services or programs?
- a. How were the identified gaps resolved?
 - b. Are there any new gaps in services or programs or communications? Briefly describe.
6. Provide details for as many of the following outcomes measures as possible for your agency using data for the past year (2010). Wherever possible these outcomes will be compared to the data available from 2006.
- a. Number of applications or referrals received in past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10)
 - b. Number of clients in process during past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10);
clients in process = from referral to close
 - c. Number of clients served during past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10), exclude ineligible;
completed process = referral to close or successful employment
 - d. Number of clients successfully employed (i.e. 90 day job retention) during past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10)
Has the employment rate for clients (# employed / # eligible clients in past year) increased?
Has the average salary for clients increased?
 - e. Average duration (days) to confirm eligibility determination;
Are processes shorter than federal standard?
 - f. Average duration (days) to develop or begin developing client service plan;
Are processes shorter than federal standard?
 - g. Average duration (months) for an eligible client to complete the process from referral to case closed or successful employment
 - h. Number of inter-agency referrals, in general or specific to employment services in past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10);
Has there been an increase in referrals to other agencies for employment support services?
 - i. Number of community provider referrals, in general or specific to employment services in past fiscal year (7/1/09 to 6/30/10)
Has there been an increase in referrals to other non-agency providers for employment support services?
 - j. -How are the outcomes collected by your agency integrated into client data systems?
7. Describe what impact has Connect-Ability had on your agency's process and services; consider the following:
- referral process to receive clients into agency
 - referral of agency clients to others
 - technical assistance in general and specific to employment services
 - employer contacts or job openings
 - relationships across agencies for employment services
 - relationships with non-agency providers

AGENCY SPECIFIC QUESTION LIST

The following information is from the 2006 Process Mapping and Report.

DMHAS Employment Process

1. How is DMHAS measuring the quality of LMHA services? What progress has occurred in quality measures which were planned to be implemented in Jan. 2006?
2. What changes, if any have occurred since 2006 to address the gap in communication between DMHAS and LMHA employment staff when they develop the individual's transition plan to the community?
3. In 2006, DMHAS reported that some LMHAs may wait until the consumer is well into treatment before discussing employment as a part of recovery while others may discuss employment goals sooner. What has DMHAS done to ensure that all clients begin working on employment plans at the point they express an interest in working?
4. How has DMHAS addressed the transportation barrier the agency reported in 2006?
5. How has DMHAS developed and maintained links between agencies such as BRS, DOL, and VA? Has staff been added to act as liaisons between agencies?

DDS Employment Process

1. How has DDS addressed the gap in resources for clients who are not transitioning from an educational setting into the workforce?
2. How has DDS addressed the limited availability of state funded services for clients who apply after high school?
3. How is employment success determined? Can DDS obtain quantitative evidence from their Quality Service Review Process?
4. Does the IT platform change from 2006 allow for integrated information management or data analysis?
5. How has DDS addressed the transportation barrier the agency reported in 2006?
6. Has DDS addressed the staffing issues to improve the employment process indicated in the 2006 report (need to increase number of Case Managers, Education Liaisons, and Transition Coordinators)?

BRS Employment Process

1. In 2006, BRS staff reported that BRS made 442 referrals to other agencies, however due to the limitations of the Bureau's MIS system, there was not specific information available regarding to whom these referrals were made. Is there a mechanism in place that reports what referrals BRS makes to other entities?

BESB Employment Process

1. What changes occurred since 2006 to address the lack of vocational training in the public school systems?

Has BESB addressed the gap in services for visually impaired adults who in the past did not receive vocational rehabilitation services due to prioritization criteria limitations at BRS?