



**Office of
Mental Health**

Employment is Recovery

Nicole Haggerty, LMHC
Deputy Director, Adult Community Care
NYS Office of Mental Health

What will we discuss today?

- What employment has to do with mental health
- The Office of Mental Health's plan to improve employment outcomes
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS) as the Evidenced-based model of choice
- The New York Employment Services System (NYESS)



Employment: Why?

- Lack of employment is a **key social determinant of health**, as is poverty. Both lead to poor health outcomes. **Low employment rates are pervasive** for people with disabilities and the compounding effects are more significant than that of their non-disabled, unemployed peers.
- What will improve outcomes is the **weaving of employment principles** and practices into day-to-day service delivery in order to **de-mystify and normalize the employment conversation**
- Employment is at the heart of rehabilitation and **recovery**.
- We are in a unique moment not only in the healthcare, but socially and culturally:
 - *The conversation of disability and employment is not as uncommon as it once was*
 - *Workforce crisis forces employers to view untapped labor pools*
 - *We have a robust infrastructure in NY to deliver employment supports*
 - *We have a partner Chief Disability Officer and a Governor who agrees this is a priority!*



Key Points to Consider

- Research shows that...
 - Employment is a key social determinant of health*
 - There is a direct correlation between employment and improved mental/physical health and reduced need for more service interventions
 - The vast majority people with a disability *want to work*
 - Employment stats for people with disabilities range from 15-20% employed (depending on how its measured)

*SDOH include the conditions of our environments, such as where we live, work, learn, and play, and how they affect our health outcomes and risks.



Office of
Mental Health

What does everyone need to know?

Employment **is** a good idea!

- Social Determinant of Health
 - Financial Health + Physical Health + Mental Health + Socialization + Meaningful Activity + Self Worth + Work Ethic + Improved Quality of Life...
- Reductions in the need for medical and psychiatric intervention
- Be careful of your own bias!
 - *What have you learned about employment for individuals experiencing psychiatric barriers, and is it a sound foundation?*



Work & Benefits

Working while receiving public benefits is possible!

- Those providing supports **do not** need to be benefits experts but do need to understand a couple of basics
 - Individuals will have more \$\$\$ in their pocket and will not be penalized for working while receiving SSA benefits but **must** report income
 - Individuals will be eligible for free Medicaid in **almost** all scenarios
 - The common trauma and difficulties associated with public benefits **are real** and need to be part of the conversation
 - Many common myths about what happens when someone on public benefits earns wages **are not real** and we're all part of the problem



Why NYS is Primed to Improve Employment Outcomes

- Robust service/funding infrastructure:
 - How we use Medicaid under the rehab option + State Aid to fund full provision of IPS
 - Fully state aid funded programs also exist, however serve a lower # of people
- Nationally recognized experts providing training and technical assistance to providers, funded by NYS OMH.
 - Center for Practice Innovations (CPI) & the all new Psych Rehab Training Academy
- Social Determinants of Health as driving factors for **Medicaid services systems reform**
- Career opportunities for persons with lived experience, **who are interested in a career pathway of Peer Support**, are going to exponentially increase with the addition of Peer Workers in MHOTRS (clinic with rehab option), crisis service continuum (including CPEP, Stabilization Centers, crisis outreach, etc.), and CORE.
- A need for workforce and a pool of interested applicants!



OMH Employment Plan

The OMH Employment Plan seeks to **improve employment and quality of life outcomes for OMH service recipients through a multi-faceted approach that includes:**

- Normalizing the employment conversation for all OMH service providers
- Equipping everyone from leadership to program staff with the language, tools, and practices needed to make employment a standard focus in the recovery journey
- Implementing psychiatric rehabilitation principles, which align with Employment 1st Philosophy
- Supporting providers through training and technical assistance



OMH Employment Plan: How?

- **Data-Driven:** Monitor services and initiative outcomes to drive policy and programming
- **Evidenced-Based:** Individual Placement and Support (IPS)
- **Expand and Modernize Rehab Services:** PROS Investment, New Employment Liaisons, Expansion of Peer Support
- **Equip:** Targeted Workforce Training
- **Partnership is Essential:** Ticket-to-Work, ACCES-VR, Commission for the Blind, DOL, OPWDD, DOH, OASAS, MISCC, Employment 1st, ASPIRE



Individual Placement and Support

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is a **model of supported employment** for people with serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia spectrum disorder, bipolar, depression). IPS supported employment helps people living with behavioral health conditions **work at regular jobs of their choosing** (The IPS Employment Center, 2022).



Basic Principles of IPS Investments in Employment Infrastructure

1. Competitive Employment
2. Systematic Job Development
3. **Rapid Job Search**
4. **Integrated Services**
5. Benefits Planning
6. **Zero Exclusion**
7. Time Unlimited Supports
8. Worker Preferences

A rapid job search approach to help job seekers obtain jobs rather than assessments, training, & counseling. This is a place-train model, where the person gets the job first and then support is wrapped around.

IPS programs are integrated with mental health treatment teams. The Employment Counselor works closely with mental health providers to support share clients.

People are not excluded on the basis of readiness, diagnoses, symptoms, substance use history, psychiatric hospitalizations, homelessness, level of disability, or legal system involvement.



IPS Investments in Employment Infrastructure

2022 Budget

- \$2.8 million dollar investment in PROS programs to support a more robust IPS infrastructure
- Benefits and Financial management expertise
- Dedicated OMH staff to help bridge NYS employment resources to OMH rehab programs and support full IPS implementation



Investments in Employment Infrastructure

2023 Proposed Budget includes:

- State Aid to support full IPS implementation for CORE, ACT and CCBHC providers (supplementing the Medicaid rehab component already utilized in these programs).
- Enhancing data systems to monitor and track employment outcomes by program type
- Improving partnerships with Disability Resource Coordinators and OMH rehab programs to engage underserved populations
- Increased training and technical assistance for all providers of IPS





New York Employment Services System



Department of Labor



Office of Mental Health



Office for the Aging



Department of Health



Office for People with Developmental Disabilities



Commission for the Blind



Office of Addiction Services and Supports



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



Office of Mental Health



**New York Employment
Services System**

What is it?

- Statewide partnership and resource for all things related to employment
- Collaborative employment services case management system
- Ticket-to-Work Administrative Employment Network
- Primary employment services data source



**Office of
Mental Health**

Resources Available

- The NYESS Team can answer all questions related to employment services and connect you to resources for you, your agencies, and your customers!
- NY Systems Change and Innovative Opportunities Network (SCION)
 - *Disability and Workforce Partnership!*
- We're always available to set up a customized training or Q+A call/WebEx
- NYESS Customer Resource Page: <https://nyess.ny.gov/customer-information.html>
- NYESS Learning Center: <https://nyess.ny.gov/learning-center.html>



Plans for 2023

- Re-boot of Employment 1st
- OMH rehab programs funded and trained for IPS implementation
- Collaborative ODEP Grants:
 - *ASPIRE: Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment*
 - *NEON: National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network*
- Formalizing the NYESS Benefits and Work Incentives Network (WIN)
 - *Centralizing a directory and creating a locator map*
- NY SCION full implementation
- Expansion of 55B: Access, Mechanisms and Career Progression
- Enhancing data infrastructure to establish baseline measures, track progress, and inform policy





Thank You!