



Community-Based Services Expansion of DD Services

The Division has focused extensive efforts on expanding developmental disabilities throughout Nebraska. As the Governor and Legislature have consistently provided new funding annually for developmental disability services, it has been necessary for the Division to ensure that adequate service capacity exists to meet the emerging needs. Not only is the demand for capacity growing, but individuals are increasingly seeking to receive their services in more integrated setting. Thus, the Division must continue to focus its efforts to ensure more integrated vocational, recreational and residential services are available.

Additional Funding for the Registry of Needs

The Division of Developmental Disabilities is required to maintain a Registry of Needs. When an individual is found eligible for DD services, they are either prioritized for funding (i.e. in emergent need of protection from abuse/neglect, shelter, food or medical attention) or their request for services is added to the Registry. Although the Developmental Disabilities Services Act (DDSA) requires individuals to utilize available educational services and most youth are cared for in their family homes, the Division encourages early determination of eligibility for DD services. This provides individuals and their families with information for long-term planning during their educational years, and it also provides for expedited access to services if emergent needs arise. Individuals are added to the Registry of Needs with a designated “date of need”, generally the date they are anticipated to leave educational services at the conclusion of the school year in which they turn age 21. For this reason, there are many people on the Registry of Needs whose date of need is a future date. Individuals who are past their requested date of need are waiting for dollars to be appropriated so that they may access services and are considered as having unmet needs.

Since 2009, the Legislature has appropriated an additional \$22.238 million to provide services to people on the Registry of Needs:

Fiscal Year	Amount
2009-10	\$ 5,000,000
2010-11	\$ 5,000,000
2011-12	\$ 3,600,000
2012-13 & 13-14	\$ 3,893,000
2013-14	\$ 4,745,000
Total	\$ 22,238,000

The Division is still in the process of allocating the new funding from 2012-13 and 2013-14. The following is a status of those funds as of December 31, 2013:

Total Offers of Services to Individuals on the Registry of Needs, Based on Date of Need	179
Offers Accepted	82
Offers Pending Response	85
Offers Rejected (and Individuals Moved Their Date of Need Forward)	12
Individuals Receiving Offers Who Were Already Receiving a DHHS Service	96
Individuals Receiving Offers Who Have Previously Received and Rejected a Similar Offer	7

The current estimated annual cost of funding services for individuals on the registry of unmet needs at December 31, 2013, is as follows:

	# of Persons	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Estimated Cost
Individuals whose date of need is on or before December 31, 2013	1,798	\$ 47,414,863	\$ 57,714,793	\$ 105,129,656
Individuals whose date of need is after December 31, 2013	333	\$ 8,779,932	\$ 10,618,946	\$ 19,398,878
Total	2,131	\$ 56,194,795	\$ 68,333,739	\$ 124,528,534

The Division continues its efforts in allocating the remaining funding available, and anticipates having the new funds fully allocated by January 2015.

Continuous Commitment to Funding Community Services

Since 2007, the Nebraska Governor and Legislature have expressed a firm commitment to developmental disability services through increased funding for the oversight and quality of services and also through the increased funding of the services themselves. Not only has new funding been made available for individuals on the Registry of Needs, but funding has also been allocated for the following purposes:

- Annual funding to ensure that all Nebraska high school graduates with developmental disabilities receive day services (a practice initiated in 1995);

- Funding to ensure individuals living at the Beatrice State Developmental Center may move into the community, if that is what they choose;
- Routine rate increases for years 2007 through 2013; and
- Funding to fully implement Rate Methodology and the Objective Assessment Process implementation for 2014-15.

A summary of DD Historical Expenditures by Fiscal Year is as follows:

Fiscal Year	DD Aid (Program 424)	Annual % Increase	% Increase Since 2007-08
2007-08	\$ 72,918,405		
2008-09	\$ 77,897,612	6.83%	6.83%
2009-10	\$ 83,033,176	6.59%	13.87%
2010-11	\$ 92,575,100	11.49%	26.96%
2011-12	\$ 101,576,760	9.72%	39.30%
2012-13	\$ 108,279,135	6.60%	48.49%
2013-14	\$ 112,185,688	3.61%	53.85%
2014-15*	\$ 143,352,195	27.78%	96.59%

The positive impact the additional appropriations have made in the lives of individuals needing supports is significant. The Division appreciates the continued commitment to funding services and providing quality supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Expanded Provider Capacity

To meet the increased demand for services throughout Nebraska, the Division has focused significant effort on expanding provider capacity.

Community-based Specialized Providers provide for the majority of services to individuals in Nebraska with developmental disabilities. Specialized Providers are required to be certified by the Division and must be in compliance with Title 404 of the Nebraska Administrative Code. If a Specialized Provider serves four or more individuals in a residential setting, then it must also comply with the Division of Public Health regulations regarding centers for developmental disabilities. Upon being certified by the Division, a Specialized Provider is eligible to enter into a general services contract that allows them to be compensated for providing services to individuals in the community.

Prior to 2009, there were 25 Specialized Providers certified in Nebraska. Anticipating an influx of new people into services due to the waiting list funding and to better support the needs of people moving out of institutions, the Division began actively recruiting new providers. Since 2009, the Division has increased the number of newly certified Specialized Provider agencies by

60% to 35 certified provider agencies. This has also included an expansion to a total of 87 separately certified provider programs across the state. For example, a certified provider agency may have several separately certified program service areas such as one in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, and Beatrice. The addition of newly certified agencies is one measure of increased services, and the addition of certified programs by agencies that are well established have proven to address needs of the individuals and families. For your reference, a Specialized Provider Listing with certification status is included in the Appendix herein.

The Division's goal is to continue to provide an array of service options for people with disabilities living throughout Nebraska. Thus, the Division will continue to assess the needs across the state and increase specialized services as needed in the upcoming years.

Employment/Integration Initiatives

It is important for people to be integrated into their local community and have access to integrated vocational, recreational and residential supports.

New Employment Services

With the approval of the two adult waivers in January 2011, employment services were revised to provide greater opportunities for individuals to explore integrated employment. The previous Supported Employment service was split into two service types. Vocational Planning focuses on career planning and job exploration in order for individuals to develop job skills and to have a more normal job searching experience. Once employment is obtained, Integrated Community Employment services take over and provide job coaching and supports. With the revision of these two services, providers are able to bill for more time spent on assisting individuals with seeking employment. Employment services are compensated at enhanced rates to encourage providers to provide these services.

In addition to Vocational Planning and Integrated Community Employment, non-specialized services were added into the two adult waivers. Non-specialized services are self-directed and provided by community members of the individual's choosing (a friend, neighbor, college student, etc.) Many individuals are opting to utilize this service, Community Living and Day Supports, to hire someone familiar with the individual to provide job seeking and job coaching supports.

2013 Employment/Integrated Activities Statistics

In March 2013, a survey was distributed to all service coordinators and community coordinator specialists within the Division. For every individual on their caseload, they were asked to compare the services the individual received in 2007 to the services and supports of today.

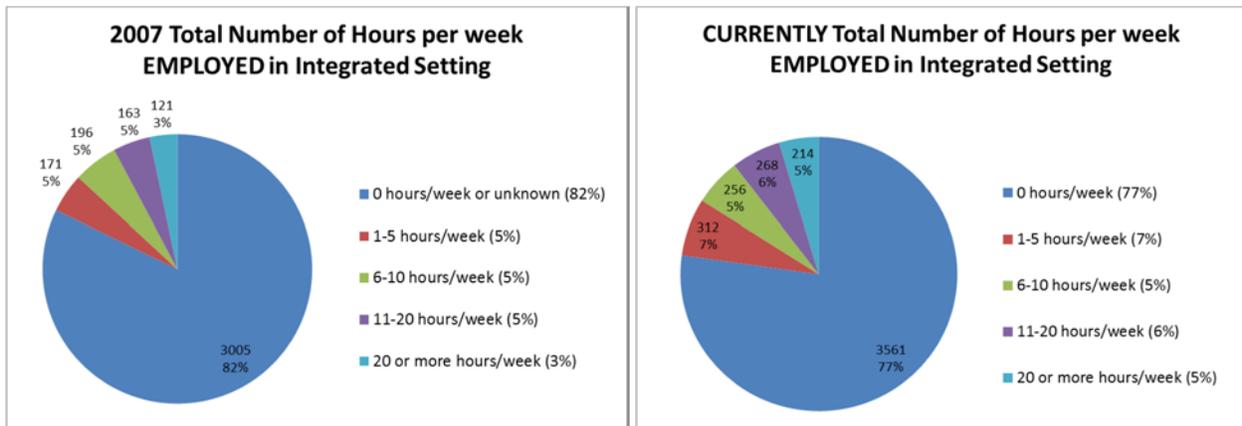
Information was gathered relating to employment, volunteer and recreational activities in integrated community settings. Growth was observed in each area of integrated activity.

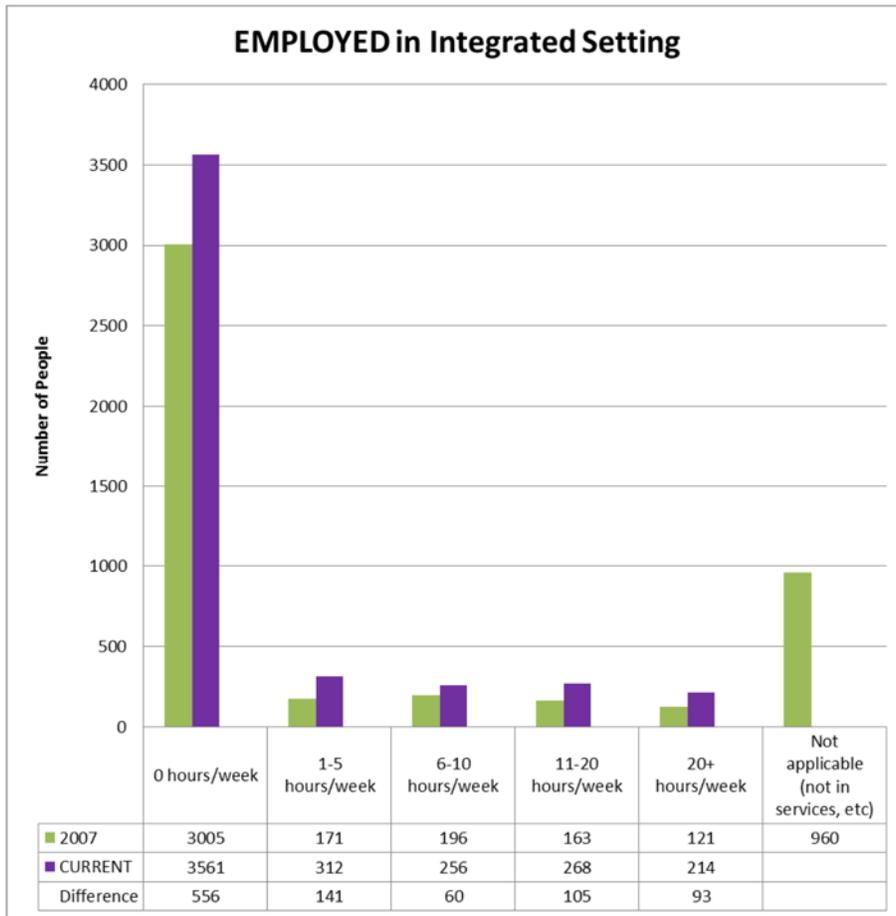
Nebraska's commitment to integrated employment for people with disabilities is evidenced through the efforts of the Division and its many key stakeholders:

- Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) –The Nebraska State AFP Team has been collaborating since 2010 to increase employment for people with disabilities in Nebraska. The team has several different workgroups and active projects, including a webinar series on employment.
- Wal-Mart Grant – This was initiated by the ARC of Nebraska, with collaboration from the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DD Planning Council). The grant resulted in a transition tool-kit that included a series of three videos recorded by the Division. The toolkit can be viewed at: <http://arc-nebraska.org/transition-tool-kit/>.
- Ready-Set-Go – This project was funded by the DD Planning Council and resulted in a booklet and brochure that provides an overview of services available by the Division and other agencies to help prepare young adults transitioning to adult services, with an emphasis on employment services.
- Together We Can – This project was funded by the DD Planning Council and resulted in online training curriculum geared towards non-specialized providers, with an emphasis on modeling and job coaching.
- Project Search – This program, operated by Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, is a unique one year school-to-work program that is business led and takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. Nebraska currently has twelve programs across the state and the Division's local service coordinators participate on the steering committee at each location. The national Project Search 8th Annual Conference is to be held in Omaha in the summer of 2014.
- Benefits Planning Calendars – The Division collaborates with Easter Seals of Nebraska, which is one of two Tier III Benefits Planning agencies in Nebraska, to provide benefits planning calendars to people with disabilities throughout Nebraska. These calendars are useful tools to assist employed individuals to collect the appropriate documentation and participate in processes necessary for them to maintain their benefits while being gainfully employed.
- The CSI Network Collaborative – The DD Planning Council funded this project to actively engage stakeholders throughout Nebraska to analyze the current status of employment services, with the goal to increase coordination of employment services and supports provided to persons with developmental disabilities to maximize their effectiveness.
- PAKS Developmental Services Grants – The DD Planning Council is funding two projects in Western Nebraska designed to increase employment options for individuals in rural Nebraska.

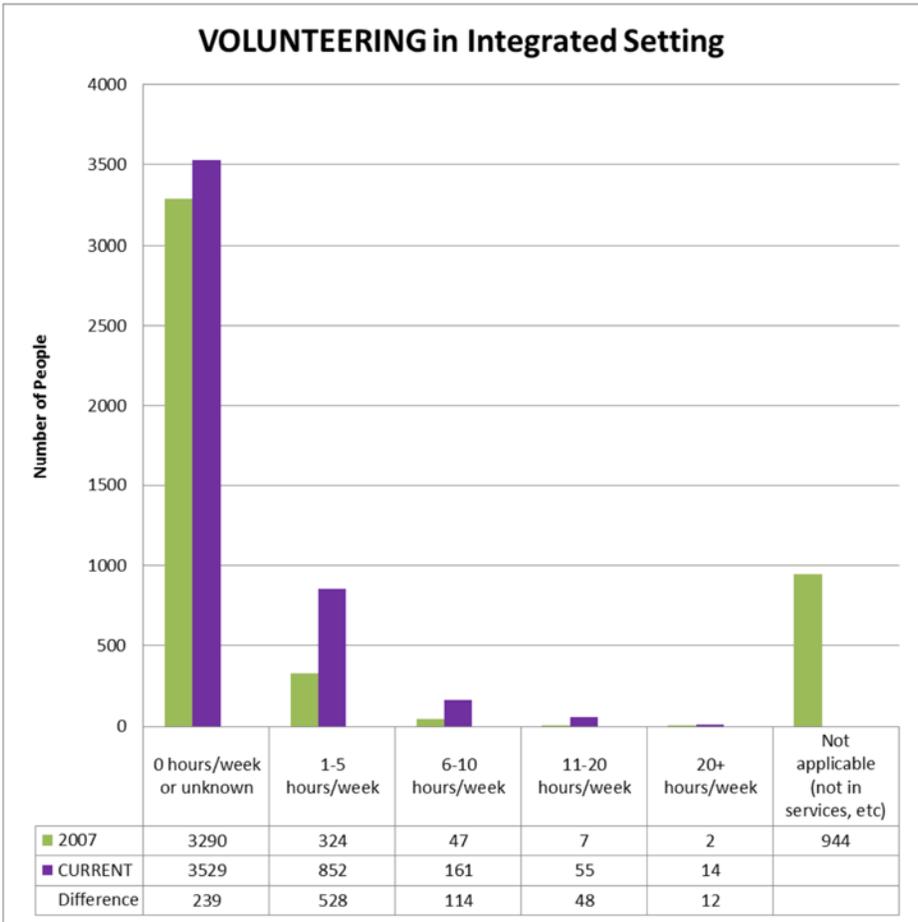
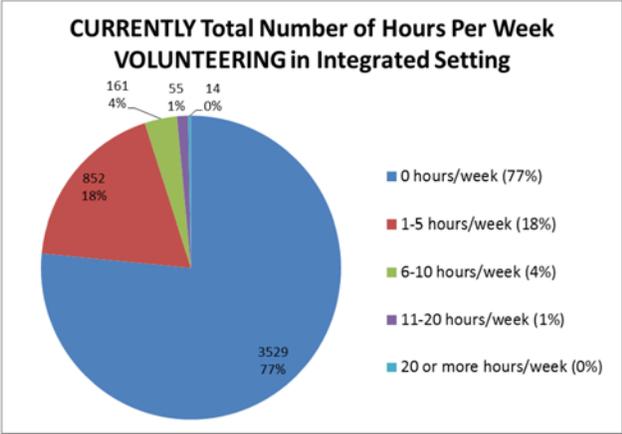
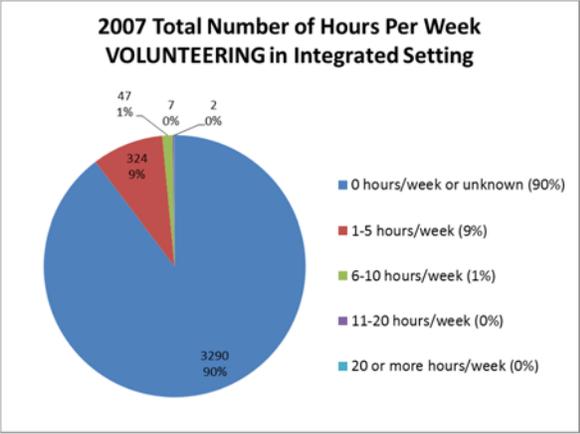
- Summer Work Experience – The DD Planning Council funded a six-week program operated by Goodwill in Omaha for recent high school graduates to teach job placement skills.
- The Division’s Community Liaison and Technical Assistance Coordinator both routinely visit with local groups of families and educators to ensure that they understand the array of services available to youth upon graduation, and consistently encourage them to strive towards obtaining integrated community employment.
- The Division continues to hold quarterly New Service Coordination Orientation and annual statewide Service Coordination Conference/Training that emphasizes person-centered practices and the value of integrated employment to equip service coordinators to support individuals in fully integrating into their local communities.

The Division is committed to integrated community employment and is excited to continue with current efforts and explore even more new opportunities in the upcoming years to encourage employment. The following charts from the 2013 survey show that significant progress has been made in increasing the number of hours per week people are employed in integrated settings. This is **true** employment where people with developmental disabilities are earning minimum wage or above and being paid directly by the business in an integrated setting (not in sheltered work or workstation environments.) While Nebraska has not yet met the 50% goal set by the Nebraska State AFP Team, it is well on its way towards that goal!





The Division has far exceeded its goals with regard to volunteer activities in an integrated setting. While volunteering is an unpaid activity, it provides people with an opportunity to explore and experience their community, learn skills that may be transferrable to future employment, and to contribute meaningfully to their community. Contribution to others provides individuals with a sense of self-esteem, which is especially important for people who have traditionally been devalued by the public at large. We have long understood that people with disabilities have real value to our communities – volunteering provides them with a tangible opportunity to experience their value and to share it with others.



Similar to volunteer activities, the Division has seen great progress with individuals participating in integrated recreational activities. Through collaboration with OMNI Behavioral Health Services, the Division has offered training on the benefits of integrated leisure activities. Additionally, the DD Planning Council has focused efforts on integrated recreation activities such as the Kearney Inclusive Recreation Project. Life cannot be all work and no play – people with disabilities need to experience joy and inclusive recreation similar to the rest of their community. By enjoying integrated recreational activities in their community, individuals

become more accepted and feel comfortable exploring other opportunities. While this may certainly lead to more fun – it can also lead to employment. Many people find employment through their connections with friends, family, and other casual relationships; people with disabilities are no different. So the Division is excited to see people with developmental disabilities participating in their communities where they can develop such relationships.

