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To: Employment First stakeholders

From: Acacia McGuire Anderson, Interim Employment First Coordinator

Re: Employment First: The components of transformation

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

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In late 2014, DHS issued grants to help facility-based providers transform their business models.

In anticipation of a new Request for Grant Applications expected to come out soon, we want to share the components of transformation.

According to the training and technical assistance (T/TA) contractors Living Opportunities and WISE who have been working with the 25 providers as part of the transformation project, there are five primary elements to transformation. Future providers that may consider applying for 2016 grants should consider these elements before applying.

1. Meet with the board. Living Opportunities and WISE met with several provider organization boards in the first phase of transformation. In some cases, the boards of directors did not have a full understanding or picture of the concepts involved with transformation to supported employment services. It took, in some cases, many months to get boards to fully buy in to the many changes happening nationally and statewide around employment services and the reasons for shifting from facility-based to integrated and community-based services.
2. Assessment. The T/TA contractors conduct organizational assessments with each provider. The overall goal of the assessment is to identify areas that the provider will likely need to focus on in order to meet the overall objectives of this project. These assessments consider a broad range of topics which may include board education, family and client messaging, staff hiring/training practices, organizational branding, community relations, organizational restructuring, information and technology needs, and financial considerations.
3. Strategic Plan/Training Plan: T/TA contractors develop, in collaboration with the executive director, board, and staff (when relevant), an individualized strategic plan for each provider organization to guide them through the steps needed to transform their business. The plan includes

timelines, benchmarks, and activities that will help the provider reach their overall objectives in this project.

4. Implementation: The activities that happen during implementation are based on the provider's strategic plan and resulting training and technical assistance plan. These efforts focus on both the business and direct service aspects of the provider organization's transformation. Some examples of implementation may include shadowing experts from a TA provider or an organization that has completed transformation, staff training and mentoring programs, meetings with community business members, information and education to community stakeholders
5. Interim Reports: Interim reports will be created collaboratively with the input of T/TA contractor and the providers, with the intent of assessing the progress made towards meeting the goals agreed to in the T/TA plans, and making any revisions necessary. This process will assure that communication is clear, and that adequate training resources are being applied towards the appropriate goals of the transformation project. Throughout the review process, participants will note which activities have been most effective, and which goals need to be revised or revisited.

In future messages on transformation, we will bring you perspectives directly from providers that have been part of this process.

If you have comments or other questions, please email them to employment.first@state.or.us

~ Acacia