Creating Opportunity for Homeless Jobseekers: Connecting Income, Employment, and Housing Supports

Housing Staff Seattle | December 15th 2016 |
Today's Agenda

I. Evidence and Value of Earned Income

II. “Employment First” Rationale

III. Evidence-Based Program Models and Best Practices to Support Earned Income

IV. Activity – Let’s Talk About Work
Welcome! Meet the Presenters:

Chris Warland,
Assoc Dir, Field Building
National Initiatives of Poverty & Economic Opportunity

Carl Wiley, LSW
Coordinator,
National Center on Employment and Homelessness
National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity

We are dedicated to ending chronic unemployment and poverty.

Our National Center on Employment & Homelessness works to ensure that employment in quality jobs is a key element in preventing and ending homelessness.
The National Center on Employment & Homelessness (NCEH) is dedicated to ensuring that employment is a key element in the fight to prevent and end homelessness.
I. Evidence and Value of Earned Income
Most people experiencing homelessness want to work.

People experiencing homelessness consistently rank paid employment alongside healthcare and housing as a primary need.*

People experiencing homelessness often attribute their homelessness to unemployment and insufficient income.**


Employment is an important factor in preventing and ending homelessness.

Numerous studies find that increased income is a strong predictor of a person exiting homelessness.*

Earned income and current or recent employment are associated with shorter duration of homelessness.**


Employment impacts well-being, health and quality of life.

Employment and income are associated with improved quality of life among people experiencing homelessness.*

Income from work improves access to food, clothing, housing, and healthcare-increasing personal, family, and community well-being.*

Employment shows promise in supporting recovery from mental illness and addiction†, reducing recidivism, and reducing reliance on public benefits.††

Employment services for people experiencing homelessness are **cost-effective**.

- Employment services offered within supportive housing are cost-effective and benefit tenants, funders, and society* through increased employment, earned income, and lower dependence on benefits.**


Benefits of Earned Income

Financial and social benefits

Skills extend beyond the job

Build protective factors / strengths
Benefits of Earned Income

Employment improves health, family functioning, builds self worth and instills purpose*

II. Employment First Rationale
Activity:
What Does it Mean to be “Work Ready?”

• Write a brief definition of “work ready.” What characteristics does a “work ready” individual possess? What resources does a “work ready” individual have access to? What barriers have to be mitigated?
• With your table, compare definitions and try to reach consensus. Where do you agree or disagree?
Activity: What Does it Mean to be “Work Ready?”
“Employment First:”

What does it mean?

- We might need a better term...
- Think “Housing First” NOT “Work First”
- Taking a ‘Housing First” approach toward employment
“Employment First”

Principles

• Almost everyone can work with the appropriate supports
• Rapid attachment strategies connect people to earned income as soon as possible
• “Meet people where they are” with regard to employment
• Benefits counseling by a knowledgeable professional is essential
Assuming Employability

- Don’t assume someone can’t work
- Focus on strengths
- Honoring Consumer Choice
What About **Benefits**?

- Benefits counseling by a knowledgeable professional is essential
- Many incentives and allowances for earned income are underutilized
III. Evidence-Based Program Models and Best Practices to Support Earned Income
## Employment Based Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Employment Services</th>
<th>Enhanced Employment Services</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and <strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong> for interests, strengths, experience, skills, barriers, learning needs, and program eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>Interview clothing, childcare, and transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume preparation / “<strong>soft skill</strong>” training</td>
<td>“<strong>Hard skill</strong>” or occupational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job search</strong> assistance and training</td>
<td>Job development and <strong>placement services</strong> - on-the-job training, internship, or apprenticeship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral Support <strong>Referrals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Job retention follow-up</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

HEARTLAND ALLIANCE
NATIONAL INITIATIVES

@cwarland  @CarlINCEH
Evidence-Based Program Models and Strategies

“Attachment to Work” Approaches
- Transitional Jobs
- Supported Employment
- Alternative Staffing
- Social Enterprise

Advancement Strategies
- Contextualized Basic Adult Education
- Bridge Programs
- Sector-based Training
Transitional Jobs

- Combines time-limited, wage-paying, subsidized jobs,
- skill development, and supportive services to transition individuals to employment

- Proven to get people with significant barriers successfully working, reduce recidivism after release from prison, and reduce reliance on public assistance.
Individualized Placement and Support (IPS Supported Employment)

- The standard evidence-based model for helping individuals with mental health issues transition to employment
- Supports rapid entry to the competitive labor market integrated with support services as soon as the participant feels ready
Individualized Placement and Support (IPS Supported Employment)

Robert McDonald
Alternative Staffing

- Brokers temporary entry-level job placements for at-risk populations
- Shows promise in helping individuals learn workplace skills, build confidence, and leverage temporary placements to permanent jobs
Social Enterprise

- Subsidized employment in which participants work in a revenue-generating business operated by the provider
- NOT a “sheltered workshop”
- Focused on building skills and experience to transition into labor market
Advancement Strategies

- Contextualized Basic Adult Education
  - Employs real-life materials, situations and issues that are relevant to the learner’s life to illustrate lessons

- Sector-based training
  - Delivers occupation-specific “hard skills” training in high-demand, high-growth industries

- Adult Education Bridge Programs
  - Combine basic skills instruction with sector strategies to give low-income workers access to jobs with advancement and benefits
Rapid Rehousing: Implications for employment services

• Rapid attachment employment strategies are all the more important
• Some, but not all, RRH participants can successfully access work using “mainstream” services
• Integrate financial literacy and asset building
• Retention and reemployment services are critical
Key Principles and Promising Practices Across Models

- Rapid attachment to work—“employment first”
- Applied change theory—“meet people where they are”
- Employment-focused motivational interviewing
- Supportive peer and staff relationships
- Multiple employment options and chances to try again
IV. Activity – Let’s Talk About Work
Activity – Let’s Talk About Work:
Part 1: Questions that explore Work

ELICITING/EVOKING CHANGE TALK

Rationale: Change talk consists of responses evoked from clients – often reasons that are personally important for them.

Questions to Elicit/Evoke Change Talk
• “What kind of job do you see your self in?”

1 - Get into pairs
2 – Brainstorm a list of questions you think would elicit a client’s employment goals

Sobell and Sobell, 2008 - Motivational Interviewing Strategies and Techniques: Rationales and Examples
## Activity – Let’s Talk About Work: Part 1: Questions that explore Work

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Let’s Talk About Work: Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is directive, with a goal of eliciting self-motivational statements and behavioral change from the client in addition to creating client discrepancy to enhance motivation for positive change.

Precontemplation
Contemplation
Preparation
Action
Maintenance

Recycling

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Enhancing Motivation for Change in Substance Abuse Treatment. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US); 1999. (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 35.)
Let’s Talk About Work: Motivational Interviewing

1. Express empathy through reflective listening.

2. Develop discrepancy between clients' goals or values and their current behavior.

3. Avoid argument and direct confrontation.

4. Adjust to client resistance rather than opposing it directly.

5. Support self-efficacy and optimism.

### Activity – Let’s Talk About Work:
Part 2: Anchoring Client Goals to Employment

1 – Select any one priority and one any barrier

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<th>Priorities</th>
<th>CLIENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stabilize housing / provide for Children /</td>
<td>Unstable Housing / No Child Care / No transportation / Criminal Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide for myself / get my own apartment /</td>
<td>/ Don’t want to lose benefits / Limited Work History /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get out of debt / purchase a car</td>
<td>No High School diploma /</td>
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2 – Break back into pairs and select one person to be “client” and the other is “staff”
Activity – Let’s Talk About Work: Part 2: Anchoring Client Goals to Employment

### CLIENT Priorities
- Stabilize housing / provide for Children / provide for myself / get my own apartment /
- get out of debt / purchase a car

### Barriers
- Unstable Housing / No Child Care / No transportation / Criminal Record / Don’t want to lose benefits / Limited Work History /
- No High School diploma /

### Role Play
- **Client** – use priority and barrier to help guide your narrative
- **Staff** – Engage in a dialogue to uncover and explore your client’s employment goals

*(bonus points for using the 5 MI principals)*
## Activity – Let’s Talk About Work:
**Part 2: Anchoring Client Goals to Employment**

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<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Anchor to Employment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Goals</td>
<td>Stabilize housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide for Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide for Myself</td>
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<tr>
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National Initiatives Toolkits

WIOA Planning & Implementation Toolkit

Opportunity Youth Employment Toolkit

Employer Engagement Toolkit

Working To End Homelessness Toolkit

Transitional Jobs Programs Toolkit

TANF and Transitional Jobs Toolkit

www.heartlandalliance.org/nationalinitiatives
Questions...?
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Activity – Let’s **Talk About Work:**
Part 2: **Anchoring Client Goals to Employment**

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<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstable Housing / Child Care / No transportation / Criminal Record / Don’t want to lose benefits / Substance Abuse Issue / No High School diploma /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interests</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with my hands / being around kids / cooking / being around people / working alone / being outside / open to any job</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>