

State Agency Promising Practice

TOPIC:
Funding and
Service Contracting

Missouri: Using Funding to Improve Integrated Employment Services

By Jean Winsor and Racheal I Inegbedion

Project Background

The Impact of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agency Employment Contracting Methods and Service Payment Rates on Employment for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The goal of this project is to explore how state IDD agencies' contracting and payment methods supported the use of innovative employment services, access to assistive technology, or improvements in the employment services workforce to ensure access to high-quality employment services. To explore this topic, we have selected eight states whose IDD agency and/or Medicaid Authority developed and implemented financing strategies that reflect the factors of interest.

Introduction

The state of Missouri has taken steps to use their funding strategy to improve employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This initiative is marked by a strategic shift toward a data-driven, outcome-focused model, leveraging technology to optimize service delivery. Missouri's approach, underscored by the integration of the REDCap system for data management and analysis, represents an emerging effort to improve employment services for the IDD population. This analysis delves into Missouri's methodologies, strategies, and implications of its Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) model integrated employment services, providing insights into the potential replicability and scalability of such models.

For the latest in this series, visit:

[State Agency Promising Practices](#)

[Service Provider Promising Practices](#)

State Initiatives and Strategic Implementations

Financing and Payment Structures

Missouri is systematically transitioning from traditional time-based billing to an outcome and milestone-based value payment model. Transitioning from traditional time-based billing to a value-based payment model marks a significant pivot in Missouri's strategy. This model will reward service providers for achieving specific outcomes and milestones. Such a model aims to motivate providers toward delivering services that culminate in meaningful employment outcomes for individuals with IDD. This innovative payment structure aims to incentivize service providers toward achieving significant employment outcomes for individuals, moving beyond the mere provision of services. The intent is to ensure that compensation is aligned with the quality and impact of services rendered, encouraging a focus on tangible results over service duration.

Missouri has developed two complementary efforts to modify funding structures to improve employment services and supports for individuals with IDD. One is to provide incentive payments to community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) to report specific data on the services and supports they provide. The second is to develop a value-based payment system to incentivize the provision of high-quality, integrated employment services.



ThinkWork!
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON

In 2020, the Missouri Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) with assistance from the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology, began to develop a series of service payment points based upon individual acuity and other social characteristics. The intent was to develop and implement a funding structure for employment and other day services that moves away from traditional fee-for-service models and toward a system based upon quality. DDD staff noted that, “time-based payments reward inefficient CRPs” and that the state wanted to see CRPs increase their focus on providing “good discovery, good job matches, and fading of the job coach as much as possible.”

To develop the value-based payment structures, DDD first needed to have a source of data from which to establish the payment points and amounts. Paying CRPs to submit their data encouraged the CRPs to regularly submit accurate data to the state. CRPs are aware that the data they submit will be used to establish the states value-based payment structures. However, the requirement to submit data was new to the CRPs. DDD felt that it was important to offer payment for data reporting to quickly establish this practice across the state of Missouri and encourage as many CRPs as possible to participate.

CRPs are asked to provide data on each of the five integrated employment services they are providing on a quarterly basis. Missouri collects data on the service type, activities that occur under the service type, if the service has been completed, and what the outcome of the service was. The CRPs report data on an individual client basis, and the payment is \$55 for each service. For example, if a CRP reports on three services for one person, they are paid \$165. CRPs report that it takes their staff approximately 30–40 minutes to report on each service a person receives.

DDD initially used Enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (E-FMAP) and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to develop and build the data reporting system. The state has also used these funds to hire an outside contractor to conduct the analysis of the pay-for-reporting initiative. Missouri’s general revenue dollars fund ongoing maintenance.

Data Integration for Strategic Outcomes

The adoption of the REDCap system in Missouri stands out as a critical component of the state’s strategy. This system does more than gather data; it serves as a cornerstone for quality assurance and provider training. By analyzing detailed information on service provision and outcomes, Missouri can tailor its services to better meet the needs of individuals with IDD, ensuring that employment support services are both effective and aligned with best practices. This system facilitates comprehensive data collection and analysis, enabling the state to gather actionable insights into service provision, outcomes, and areas requiring enhancement. The continued focus on transitioning from time-based to outcome-based payments signifies a commitment to efficiency and efficacy in service delivery. This approach ensures that services not only meet the immediate needs of individuals with IDD but are also aligned with best practices in employment support.

Impact

Missouri’s initiative involves a nuanced engagement strategy with service providers, combining financial incentives for detailed reporting and successful outcomes with the imperative for provider buy-in. The state faces the challenge of elevating participation rates and expanding the pool of engaged providers. A key component of addressing this challenge is the emphasis on continuous training and technical assistance, ensuring that providers are well-equipped to meet the standards of quality and effectiveness set by the state. By offering financial incentives for detailed reporting and successful outcomes, the state encourages providers to adopt accountable service models. However, the success of this initiative is contingent on widespread provider buy-in, which remains a challenge.

The use of data to support quality assurance monitoring to evaluate provider-level business processes within service provision highlights Missouri’s commitment to quality and alignment of the service delivery system with Employment First principles. As a result of the REDCap data collection tool, the state now has information about the aggregate wages and annual earnings, job retention rates, average length of time for

employment services, average number of units of service, and the number of people using SSA work incentives and Able Accounts for waiver recipients. For example, because of the data collection, the state also has learned that the 1-year job retention rate for individuals with IDD is 83%. This tool is instrumental in establishing benchmarks for service provider performance, emphasizing the importance of adhering to best practices and achieving expected outcomes. A key aspect of Missouri's approach is the emphasis on continuous training and technical assistance for providers. This initiative is designed to not only inform rate methodologies but also identify and address training needs, thereby elevating quality-of-service delivery across the state.

Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Directions

While Missouri's approach is ambitious and forward-thinking, it confronts challenges related to provider engagement, data use, and the practical application of its fidelity tool. The initiative's success hinges on its capacity to demonstrate the benefits of detailed reporting and outcome-based payments to providers, using collected data to drive systemic improvements. Additionally, the transition toward an integrated data system entails significant investment in technology and training, underscoring the need for continuous adaptation and refinement of strategies.

The state's efforts have already resulted in improved service delivery monitoring, better support for providers, and enhanced employment opportunities for individuals with IDD. Missouri's model offers invaluable lessons on leveraging technology to advance integrated employment services and develop more effective financing structures. Looking forward, the state aims to further expand the use of value-based payments and enhance the quality of employment services, setting a precedent for innovative, data-informed approaches to supporting individuals with IDD in the workforce. In December 2023, DDD completed one full year of data collection and hopes to have two full years of data upon which to build their value-based payment structure. At the end of the first year, about 35% of CRPs in the state have participated and received payment for reporting data. After the state has two years of data,

Missouri will move toward the development of value-based payments.

Conclusion

Missouri's integrated employment services initiative exemplifies a dynamic, data-driven approach to improving outcomes for individuals with IDD. By focusing on technology integration, innovative payment models, data-driven strategies, value-based payments, and using data for quality assurance, Missouri is pioneering a system that prioritizes meaningful employment opportunities. This analysis underscores the importance of continuous evaluation and adaptation, offering a blueprint for other states seeking to innovate their financing structures and policies for integrated employment outcomes. Missouri's experience provides critical insights into overcoming challenges associated with provider participation, data use, and system integration, offering a roadmap for enhancing service delivery for the IDD population at a policy level.



The contents of this report were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant #90IFRE0058). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this report do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

www.ThinkWork.org

Year of publication: 2025