

**SMHP Council Employment Subcommittee**  
**November 20, 2024**

IN ATTENDANCE: Don Hughes; Steve LaMaster; Justin Brown; Val Comerford; Kathy Petkauskos; Michael Stepansky; Amelia Dillon; Tom Coppinger; Kim Anderson

**Review of November 5 meeting with MassAbility and DMH regarding ACCS-CIES Focus Group findings:**

- Don Hughes, Steve LaMaster, Michael Stepansky, Justin Brown, Val Comerford and Kim Anderson met with Jessica Cimini, MassAbility Director of Career Services Operations; Adam Garber, MassAbility North District Director; Beth Lucas, DMH Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health Services; and Julie Hwayoung Shepherd, Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health Services
- The ACCS-CIES Focus Group Report was shared and reviewed.
  - The report was broken down into 5 categories/themes based on the feedback from the three focus group sessions:
    - Assertive Orientation
    - Continuous Integrated Teamwork
    - Referral Process
    - Continuity of Employment Supports
    - Cultural Competence
- The meeting was well received, and it was clear how much went into the report.
- The focus was on “what was working” and not problematic.
- There were no “recommendations”, just best practices.
- They appreciated that the report was solution focused.
- The timing of the report aligned with wrapping up their feedback from the Reach Hire Conference in July. There was overlap from the conference and report.
- Next Steps:
  - Michael, Jessica, and Adam will be meeting to review report and Reach Hire feedback and put the information all together.
  - Jessica and Adam were invited to attend the SMHPC Employment Subcommittee and share combined information.

**Work Without Limits Benefits Counseling Programs**

- Kathy offered to provide an overview of their two Social Security Benefits Counseling Programs: Work Incentives Planning and Assistance and Employment Network
- Kathy will present at the next meeting.
- It was discussed to invite those who participated in the Focus Groups to attend the next meeting.

**Reviewing of Membership**

- Discussed revisiting membership and sending out an email to those who have not been as active to inquire if they are still interested in participating.
- Discussed sending an invite to those who participated in the ACCS-CIES Focus groups to attend the December meeting. Don will send out the list of the participants for consideration of who to ask to join.

**Revisiting of goals**

- At the January meeting, we will plan to review goals and what to focus on.

- We definitely want to bring back the Clubhouse employment and education data back to the meeting. Review of this data helps to see where DMH is going with the data and setting of benchmarks.
- We would also like to have MassAbility to present data again at a meeting.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2024 1-2pm**