

Fact Sheet: Becoming Employed Starts Today (BEST)

Updated: October 17, 2016

<p>Overview</p>	<p>The Becoming Employed Starts Today (BEST) project is designed to transform service delivery through promoting sustainable access to evidence-based Supported Employment. BEST provides consumers with meaningful choice and control of employment and support services. BEST utilizes Peer Counselors, reduces unemployment and supports the recovery and resiliency of individuals with serious mental illness including co-occurring disorders.</p> <p>The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) secured the \$3.9 million federal grant from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services. The grant will provide services to 450 people over five years. North Central BHO and its provider Grant Mental Health and Columbia River Mental Health in Clark County are implementing the (BEST) project. Individuals with behavioral health issues, who desire to be employed, can access an approach to vocational rehabilitation known as Supported Employment (SE). This evidence-based practice adopted by SAMHSA assists individuals to obtain competitive work in the community and provides the supports necessary to ensure their success in the workplace. In addition to the direct services the goals of the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and oversee a Supported Employment Coordinating Committee • Develop and implement a strategic plan • Two implementation sites that ensure adherence to SE • Develop training curricula, technical assistance and ongoing guidance to sites • Develop a SE workforce and provide in person training, virtual and web based training, on-going coaching and support for credentialing or accreditation • Create sustainable funding approaches <p>Participate in a SAMHSA cross-site evaluation</p>
<p>Eligibility Requirements</p>	<p>The BEST project will serve individuals with serious mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. Individuals will be enrolled in the public behavioral health system (BHO/MCO for the early adopter region).</p>
<p>Authority</p>	<p>The SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services awarded the five year grant entitled Transforming Lives through Supported Employment. The purpose of these grants is to enhance state and community capacity to provide and expand evidence-based supported employment programs to adults with serious mental illnesses. This includes persons with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. The expected outcome of the program is for states to have services throughout the state and increase the number of individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders who obtain and retain competitive employment.</p>

Budget	The five year grant award totals \$3.9 million. FFY17 award is \$789,512
Rates	Not applicable at this time
Past FY Cost and Numbers Served	Since the inception of the grant the two sites have enrolled 157 individuals into the project. They have assisted 71 individuals obtain employment by making over 1400 contacts with employers.
Primary Partners	<p>In 2013, SAMHSA sponsored a virtual policy academy to advance the goals on the Olmstead U.S. Supreme Court decision of further integrating people into the community. Washington State Division of Behavioral Health Recovery submitted an application to participate with partners such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Governor’s Committee on Disability Employment Policy, Employment Security, Home and Community Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, Regional Support Networks, Provider organizations. The Washington State Olmstead Policy Academy on Employment will be converted to the Supported Employment Coordinating Committee and will finalize the strategic plan to improve the employment rate of individuals with significant behavioral health issues.</p> <p>Grant Mental Health in the North Central Washington Behavioral Health Organization and Columbia River Mental Health in the ‘early adopter region’ will implement the project, known as Becoming Employed Starts Today (BEST). The project will provide individual placement and support to people with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders.</p>
Oversight	The Supported Employment Coordinating Committee will provide recommendations to the Governor’s Task Force on Employment for people with disabilities and the Governor’s Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and Employment.
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