

Capacity

The State submits the enclosed information with respect to Capacity, in response to the Court’s December 6, 2022 Order regarding substantial compliance.

The Statewide Workforce Initiative (SWI) was established to build capacity within the Adult DD Provider Organizations and to assist individuals Self-Directing their services with workforce related concerns. This work took the form of establishing workgroups (Recruitment/Retention; Credentialing/Standards; Training/Professional Development; and Institutions of Higher Education) to assist with addressing specific areas of work-related needs and to address ways to effectively increase number of DSP. This also meant that the staff would need to be trained so they have the skill set to do the work, feel competent in their roles, and remain in their positions. Throughout this past year a lot of work has been done. Two Statewide Workforce Summits were held, one in December and one in January. Both were well attended with a variety of stakeholders. There was work done at these Summits to direct the course of action the SWI will take.

There was a subject matter expert, Amy Hewitt, consulted for these Summits. Amy Hewitt was able to be a part of both Summits and help inform the agendas. As a direct result of her organization’s participation, she has now taken on the scope of the SWI work. Direct Workforce Solutions is now providing the support for the SWI. There has been some reframing of the work currently underway. The workgroups tasked with implementing many of the tasks and activities have shifted. The new groups are Marketing and Recruitment, Data and Reporting, Policy Guidance and Worker Voice, Training and Professional Development, and Selection and Retention. There is also the Coordinating Council, which plays a supporting role to the above-named workgroups. Work will continue to be done with Provider Organizations and with those in the Self-Direct Service Model. Direct Workforce Solutions Subject Matter Expert (SME) Amy Hewitt will be engaging with these two groups to develop a sustainable statewide workforce development infrastructure over the course of 2.5 years. (See Sage Squirrel May Status Report)

Court Order Required Actions	Required Documentation	Responsive Documentation
Fully implement the expectations of the Statewide Workforce Initiative - Redefining the Position to Reflect Community-Based Responsibilities. - Effective Recruitment – Broadening Recruitment Populations and Demographics, Realistic Job Previews, Broad Public Campaigns, Creating Apprenticeships and Pathways for Secondary and Post-Secondary Students and other strategies referenced (in the report) - Training Requirements based on the various core competency sets listed (in the report) and unique needs of the	Detailed plan (with dates) for accomplishing these functions	Capacity-000001 to Capacity-000033 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sage Squirrel May Status Report • Transformation Fund Phase I Activities List – Provider • Rhode Island Health and Human Services Workforce Initiative Annual Progress Report • Direct Workforce Solutions Contract
Documentation of involvement from		Capacity-000034 to Capacity-000037

Capacity

<p>Rhode Island workforce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credentialing Aligned with Training Requirements. - Effective Retention Strategies – Strategies that support personal and career growth including facilitating completion of degree programs, exploration of public service loan forgiveness, supporting staff to develop plans to achieve personal career goals. 	<p>higher education in recruitment and retention strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snapshot of Rhode Island’s State Workforce Initiative (SWI) • Memo Regarding Age Requirements for DSP and DSPI
	<p>Documentation of specific outreach and guidance to those who self direct their services</p>	<p>Capacity-000026 to Capacity-000033</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Workforce Solutions Contract <p>Capacity-000038 to Capacity-000075</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RI Self-Directed Services Employer Toolkit-Draft June 2023
<p>Statewide Workforce Initiative will meet the benchmarks defined in the 5/3/2022 court order and will include ALL partners public and private in development and implementation of workforce initiatives.</p>	<p>Number of actual (not simply hits on a website) applicants – both agency-directed and self-directed</p>	<p>Capacity-000076: Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report</p>
	<p>Number of new employees – both agency-directed and self-directed</p>	<p>Capacity-000076: Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report</p>
	<p>Number of paid internships and partnerships with higher education – higher education entities involved, provider organizations involved, number of internships by discipline or role</p>	<p>Capacity-000077 to Capacity-000080: Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report</p>

Sage Squirrel May Status Report

May 2023 RISWI Status Update
Sage Squirrel Consulting

- **Ongoing project management and transition activities/discussions**

- **RISWI Coordinating Council and Workgroup Meetings** – The Sage Squirrel team supported development of agendas during the first 3 weeks of May; throughout the entire month of May the Sage Squirrel team was responsible for meeting notes (draft and revised final versions based on review by group co-leads and Sherlock Center team)
 - **Coordinating Council**
 - a. Met on May 10
 - b. Meeting cadence 2nd Wednesday of every month, 3-4 eastern

 - **Workgroups**
 1. Selection & Retention
 - a. Meeting held 5/2 at 9am
 - b. 5/9 meeting cancelled
 - c. Planned meeting cadence is weekly, Tuesday mornings at 9 am

 2. Data and Reporting
 - a. Meeting held 5/2 at 10 am
 - b. No regular cadence established yet
 - c. Next meeting - TBD

 3. Training & Professional Development
 - a. First meeting planned for 5/12
 - b. No regular cadence established yet
 - c. Next meeting - TBD

 4. Marketing & Recruitment
 - a. First meeting is scheduled for 5/18
 - b. No regular cadence established yet

 5. Policy & Worker Voice
 - a. No meeting scheduled at this time; workgroup still forming

- **Training Survey**
 - The training s Survey was developed collaboratively by the prior Training and Professional Development Workgroup and the Standards and Credentials workgroup.
 - Fifty-eight people responded to the survey, although only about two-thirds completed the survey.
 - None of the respondents used the Spanish version.
 - The survey responses were presented by the Sage Squirrel team and discussed during the Training and Professional Development meeting on Friday May 12.

May 2023 RISWI Status Update
Sage Squirrel Consulting

- **L&D /Awareness Events**

- May 17: The 90-Day Challenge: How to Retain Direct Support Professionals from Day One (RISWI Learning and Diffusion Webinar)
 - A reminder about the event was sent on Wednesday, 5/10

WHAT: The 90-Day Challenge: How to Retain Direct Support Professionals from Day One

WHEN: 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM ET on May 17, 2023

HOW: [Click here \[us06web.zoom.us\]](https://us06web.zoom.us) to register and receive the Zoom link.

Overview:

The first 90 days are a crucial period when new DSPs are still adjusting to their roles and may be at risk of burnout or turnover. This webinar will explore practical steps that agencies and people who self-direct their services can take to address this challenge and ensure DSPs stay engaged and committed to their work.

First, **Barbara Kleist**, Program Director at the Institute on Community Integration (ICI), will share her expertise on this topic, drawing from ICI’s interactive online training resources for people who self-direct their services. Next, **Andrew Whalen**, a person who self-directs his services, and three DSPs (**Alicia Cole**, **Britney Eley**, and **William Harold**) will share their perspectives on best practices to engage and retain DSPs.

By the end of this session, attendees will gain new strategies to boost DSP engagement and support early in their employment—and improve retention in turn.

Visit the *Rhode Island Statewide Workforce Initiative Community Hub* to stay informed, access resources, and connect with one another: <https://riswi.org/> [riswi.org]

Actual event: Ninety-four people registered, and 49 attended (an attendance rate of 52%). These figures show a marked improvement over last month’s webinar when 72 people registered and 27 attended. Below is a breakdown of the attendees:

	Registered	Attended	Attendance Rate
Non-profit organization staff	35	21	60%
Agency provider front office staff	21	11	52%
Direct support professional	7	3	43%
State agency staff	8	3	38%
Family member of a person with I/DD	8	4	50%
Person with I/DD who directs their own services	1	1	100%
Other	14	6	43%
Total	94	49	52%

The event content came together nicely.

- The panelists (a person who self-directs his services, a frontline supervisor, and two DSPs) offered rich insights into early retention strategies.
- Barb’s content was accessible and informative.

May 2023 RISWI Status Update
Sage Squirrel Consulting

- **Hub updates/ new materials**
 - 1-page snapshot that provides overview of each workgroup and goals/activities
 - Updated FAQs
 - General Hub updates (e.g., removing references to RI.Workforce@sagesquirrel.com)
 - Two new anchor documents we completed:
 - DSP Apprenticeships: [DSP Apprenticeships - Rhode Island Anchor - Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative \(riswi.org\)](#)
 - DSP Training Requirements: [DSP Training Requirements - Rhode Island Anchor - Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative \(riswi.org\)](#)
 - 508 compliance on new documents
 - Continued work on three new anchor documents and self-direction materials
 - Spanish version of anchor documents were posted

- **Preparation for June Advisory Group meeting**

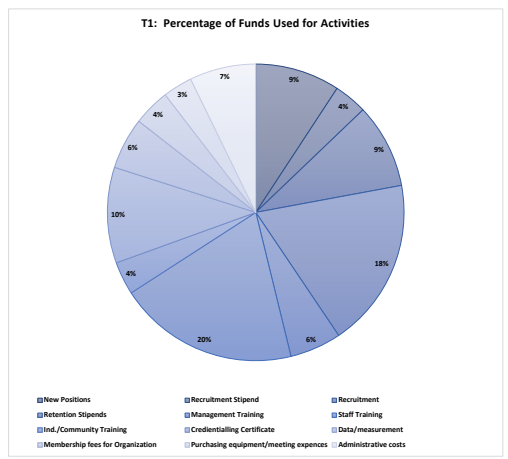
**Transformation Fund
Phase I Activities List
– Provider**

Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
1	Action Based Enterprises	Hire a HR coordinator.	1	0						1			
		Sign on bonus program for 10 new hires.		1									
		Enroll 30 DSP in online ACRE Training at the Sherlock center.					1		1				
		Professional development and/or education related to community integration and/or employment for DSP and participants					1	1					
Total #REF!													
1	Avatar	Retention Bonus			1								
		DSP Week			1								
		Tuition Assistance			1								
Total #REF!		Management Training			1	1							
1	Community Living	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)											
		1. Effective recruitment by staff recruiter and trainer		1									
		2. Expanding on our 100% innovative Community-based Workforce to help reduce turnover rate absenteeism			1								
		3. Comprehensive Training on Employees retention for 150 employees			1								
		4. Administrative time for billing and quarterly reports											1
Total #REF!		5. Final Project Report								1			1
1	Community Residence	Recruitment of 10 new staff (5 Direct Support Personnel, 5 Direct Support subs) using a \$500 hiring bonus incentive per staff	1										
		Recruitment of 10 new staff (5 Direct Support Personnel, 5 Direct Support subs) using a \$500 hiring bonus incentive per staff	1										
		Recruitment of 1 new staff (1 Registered Nurse) using a \$1,000 hiring bonus incentive per staff	1										
		Training of 11 new staff (5 Direct Support Personnel, 5 Direct Support subs, and 1 Registered Nurse) using standard company training methods and classes					1						
		Retention of 10 new staff (5 Direct Support Personnel, 5 Direct Support subs) using a \$500 6 month retention bonus per staff			1								
		Retention of 1 new staff (1 Registered Nurse) using a \$1,000 6 month retention bonus per staff			1								
Total #REF!		Retention of 8 current staff (8 Direct Support Personnel) using a \$500 retention bonus per staff			1								
1	Cove Center	Employment Support (Relias) training will be provided to all Cove staff (up to 120) with the goal of increasing skills in job coaching and community based support delivery					1		1				
		Creating Community Careers (Relias) training will be provided to 40 staff across 5 modules, with goal of enhancing skills across employment and community based support delivery. \$ 500 for completion					1	1	1				
		SME/ACRE Certification (Sherlock) provided to 6 staff with goal of staff deepening and demonstrating in-depth understanding and practice of supporting community employment \$1,250 for completion					1	1	1				
		Community Mapping training to be provided to 30 staff with goal of enhanced understanding and utilization of Google Maps and other tools to increase participants individualized community experiences. \$250 \$500 for completion					1	1	1				
		Management/Leadership training (Relias) to be provided to 15 staff and Managers to enhance skills in supporting participants and overseeing DSP's in community-oriented settings.					1		1				
Total #REF!		Staff recruitment goal to hire and retain 20 15 new DSP's through targeted advertising and sign-on bonus program.	1	1									
1	Easterseals RI	Advertise for staff		1									
		hire staff: job development/community trainer & apprentice supervisor	1										
		contact places where apprentices may be found		1									
		initiate job development and community activity building/rebuilding	1										
		choose and assess apprentices		1									
		begin apprenticeships and ongoing (\$63,400 plus \$4,370 in mileage reimbursement)	1										
		begin trainings and ongoing					1						
Total #REF!		project direction and evaluate program success								1			1
1	Frank Olean Center	Staff time for training					1						
		Center to community & technology trainer	1										
		Train the Trainer Training provided by Sherlock Center				1	1						
		Vocational Specialist Training hours to complete Sherlock Center training					1						
		Employment training for all Adult Services DSPs through BHDH-approved Perspective Corporation training.					1						
Total #REF!		JobForms Subscription										1	
1	Goodwill SNE	Hire 1 Job Coach for 1 1/2 Year	1										
		40 hour training by current Workforce Development Professional					1						
		Administrative time for billing and quarterly reports											1
Total #REF!		Final project report to include documentation of increase employment outcomes by 15%											1
1	James L. Maher Center	Hiring Recruiter/Onboarding specialist	1										

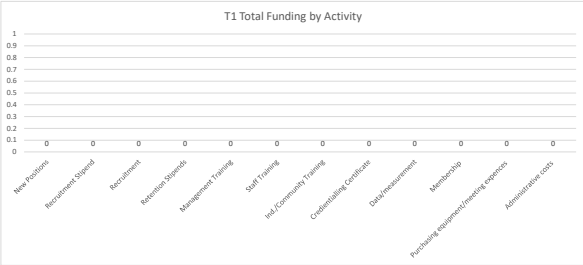
Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
1 UCPR	Staff Recruiter/Trainer (One Year)	1		1									
Total #REF!	Training of 100 Staff for 15 hours						1		1				
1 #REF!	Relias Training												
1 Whitmarsh	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
	Chromebooks for 40 Community-based Staff - to be used for case notes, training, and billing purposes						1					1	
	Chrome Enterprise License for each staff's chromebook											1	
	Computer cases for each staff											1	
	Hotspots for each Community-based staff member											1	
	SME Job Development training through the Sherlock Center will be provided to 40 staff in 7 sessions, totaling 19.5 training hours per staff (at 15.75 per hour) to prepare for APSE APSE Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Exam						1		1				
	SME Job Coaching and Retention training through the Sherlock Center will be provided to 10 total staff in 7 sessions, totaling 19.5 training hours per staff (at 15.75 per hour) to prepare for APSE Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Exam						1		1				
	Training will be provided to 40 staff through (at 15.75 per hour) Therap Academy on how to use Therap, Employment functions, and report case notes						1						
	Each staff that completes the SME Job Development training and SME Job Coaching and Retention will then apply for the APSE Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Exam								1				
	Money towards monthly memberships for Staff and Participants to increase community activities and employment opportunities										1		
	Monthly Membership for 6 Staff and 6 Participants for the YMCA to improve community involvement and health and wellbeing.										1		
	New hire sign-on bonuses to attract diverse and highly qualified candidates for Employment and Community-based positions		1										
	Money towards mileage reimbursements for Employment and Community-based staff				1								
	Money towards hiring and paying the salary for a Full-time Employment and Community-Based Program Supervisor - this individual would supervise all Employment and Community-Based support staff, oversee all programmatic aspects of the day-to-day services, hold meetings in regards to ISPs, staff meetings, and programmatic updates under the supervision of the Director of Adult Services	1								1			
Total #REF!	Provider development expenses - used for recruitment and job fair materials, advertising, and business materials			1									
1 Work Opportunities Unlimited	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
Total #REF!	1. Innovative Strategies to increase employment and community outcomes. (laptops for all DSPs, hotspots, paid working interviews for clients, job carving training, DSP wages)	1		1	1		1	1				1	
Total #REF!	2. Effective recruiting, training and retention strategies	1		1	1						1		
1 Becket Family of Services DBA LifeConnections	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
	Referral Bonus			1									
	Sign-On Bonus		1										
	Marketing Materials			1									
	Retention Bonus				1								
	Team Spirit/Appreciation Awards				1								
	DSP Rate Increase-Levels of Expertise and Experience				1								
Total #REF!	Training (NADSP), technology						1		1		1	1	
Total #REF!	Job Shadow						1						
1 Perspectives Corporation	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
	NADSP Annual Membership										1		
	DirectCourse (100 staff per year)						1						
	E-Badge Academy (20 DSP's Mentors and 30 Frontline Supervisors per year)						1		1				
	DSP Certification (20 DSP Mentors for a total of 50 hours each and \$1,500 certification bonus each)				1		1		1				
	DSP II Certification (20 DSP Mentors for a total of 50 hours each and \$2,000 certification bonus each)				1		1		1				
Total #REF!	Data Migration (8 hours/week)									1			
1 Spurwink RI	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
	Professional Development: a. Recruitment Bonuses		1										
	Professional Development: b. Development of a Career Ladder. (NADSP)				1		1						
	Professional Development: b. Relias Training staff time, ACRE Training staff time				1		1						
	Professional Development: c. Partnership with local colleges including Salve Regina University Master's Rehab. Counseling Program.				1		1		1				
Total #REF!	Final project report												1
Total #REF!	Administrative time for billing and quarterly reports												1
1 The ARC of Blackstone Valley	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
Total #REF!	Community Liaison Director (2 years 18 months, full time)	1					1						
Total #REF!	Employee career path and retention training (18 months)						1						
1 Trudeau	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
	Utilize a transformation/QI coordinator to take the lead on Trudeau's transformation and Quality Improvement initiative	1		1						1			
	Project plan												1
	Obtain a NADSP membership to access resources for DSP and Front Line Supervisor certification						1				1		
	Purchase access to the E Badge Academy for DSP and Frontline Supervisors to work toward certification					1					1		
	Purchase Frontline supervisor "Train the Trainer" training and annual renewal. This will be used to provide training opportunities for front line supervisors					1							
	Complete "Train the Trainer" certification for 5 trainers					1							

	Facilitate 2 sessions of Front Line supervisor training for 10 supervisors in order to increase competency of the management team					1								
	Incentive for successful completion of Front Line Supervisor training for 10 managers				1				1					
	College of Direct Support Annual Licensing fee for access to accredited training (needed for attaining badges in E Badge Academy)							1			1			
	Data collection									1				
	Incentives for completion of DSP-I certification in E Badge Academy (25 x 250) changed to 20 people			1					1					
	Training costs for completion of DSP-I certification						1		1					
	Incentives for completion of Front Line Supervisor certification in E Badge Academy (10 x 300)			1		1			1					
	Training costs for completion of Front line supervisor certification in E Badge Academy			1		1			1					
	Incentives for community memberships and employment successes (50 x 150) changed incentive to \$100 each			1			1							
Total #REF!	Final report									1				1
Organization	Administrative-billing													1
1 West Bay RI	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs	
	Two DSP-Community Connections Specialists	1		1			1							
	Two day long sessions by National experts						1							
Total #REF!	Administrative time for billing and quarterly reports													1
Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs	
1 Access point RI	Finalize project plan									1				1
	Sign on bonuses for new staff			1										
	Employee Referral			1										
	Current employee bonus			1										
	Data Coordinator	1								1				
Total #REF!	Navigators	1												
Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs	
1 Fogarty	Further professional development: identify trainings for TOT, explore computer classes, identify tech. training for DSPs, Data collection						1							
	Strengthen recruitment: website developer, digital questions for potential applicants, employee testimonials, link website to social media. Community connections, etc. Data collection			1										
Total #REF!	Billing and Quarterly reports													1
Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialling Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership fees for Organization	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs	
1 Gateways to Change	20 hour per week recruiter	1		1										
	20 hour per week mentor	1												
	Incentive - onboarding new hires, Referral incentive for current employees; incentives for obtaining agency goals; Enhanced tuition reimbursement			1										
	Staff Training to job descriptions, employment and community outcomes and the PCP process						1							
Total #REF!	Administering/analyzing employee satisfaction, retention rates, reason for separation									1				
	Total Requested Funded Activities	23	9	23	46	14	49	9	26	14	10	8	18	

Organization	Activity (Purpose building workforce capacity)	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!
29	Total # Programs receiving funding 29	23	9	23	46	14	49	9	26	14	10	8	18	
		#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!



New Positions	Recruitment Stipend	Recruitment	Retention Stipends	Management Training	Staff Training	Ind./Community Training	Credentialing Certificate	Data/measurement	Membership	Purchasing equipment/meeting expenses	Administrative costs
#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!



**Rhode Island Health
and Human Services
Workforce Initiative
Annual Progress
Report**



Annual Progress Report

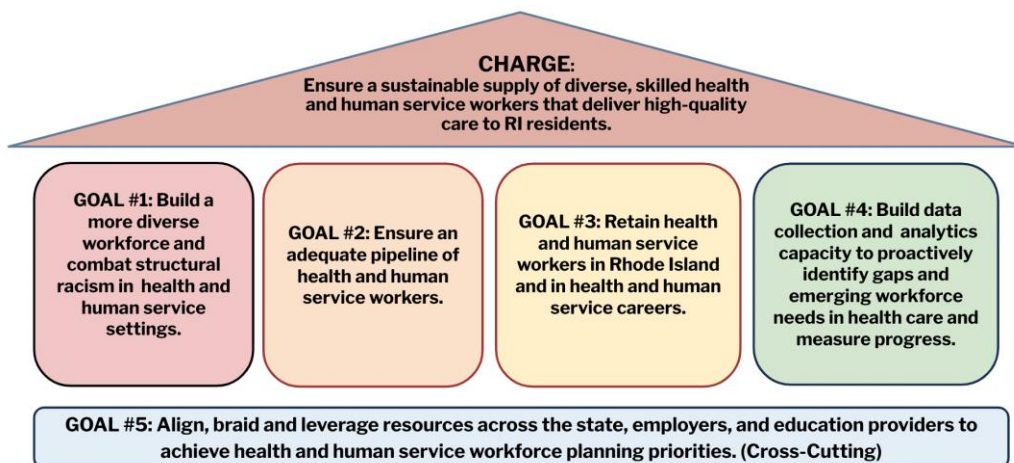
June 2023

Overview

Like many states, significant workforce shortages across health and human services and a lack of diversity among professionals is limiting access to quality care and services for all Rhode Islanders. In response, the Executive Office of Health & Human Services (EOHHS), the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC), and the Department of Labor and Training (DLT) – in partnership with the Rhode Island Foundation – co-hosted a Healthcare Workforce Summit, on April 1, 2022 that brought together healthcare and education providers, policymakers, and labor and community partners for a data-driven, collaborative, facilitated process to identify solutions to these workforce challenges. Just six weeks later, a public/private, dynamic, action-oriented health workforce planning and implementation process was launched to identify and pursue short-term and longer-term solutions to ensure that there is a highly skilled, diverse health professional workforce to deliver high-quality care to all Rhode Islanders.

Initiative Charge and Goals

After reviewing feedback provided during the April 2022 Summit, the initiative’s public/private Project Management Team set out the initiative’s charge and goals.



Extensive Public-Private Collaboration

Since implementation last June, 429 individuals from 160 organizations have participated in initiative workgroups, subcommittees, and events to develop and implement solutions. The planning process has included stakeholders from the following areas:

K-12 Schools	Advocates	Behavioral health providers	Community-based health providers
Higher education	Home care	Hospitals	Labor
Long-term care	Payors	Philanthropy	Professional associations
Social service agencies	State agency leaders	Trade associations	Training providers

Please refer to the Rhode Ahead section below concerning how to get involved in future initiative activities and see the Appendices for a full list of participating organizations.

Structure and Partner Engagement

The initiative is guided by a public/private Project Management Team that includes representatives from across government, the healthcare sector, and philanthropy. Partnering organizations participate on multiple ad hoc project teams that have been established to advance priority activities with leadership coming from initiative staff and the Project Management Team, which works to align and leverage the work of the initiative with other health and human services initiatives. Project Management Team members also work closely with an interagency group of Executive Sponsors to lead the work and to align and broker resources. Executive Sponsors for the initiative include the EOHHS Assistant Secretary, the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education, and the Director of the Department of Labor and Training. Please refer to the Appendices for a list of organizations participating on the Project Management Team. Ad-hoc project teams are advised by two Workgroups - one focused on career pathways, pipelines, and higher education and the other on workforce data collection and analytics (see below).

Projects and Progress

During the first year, the following initiatives were collaboratively identified and prioritized to address specific health & human services workforce challenges brought forward by each Workgroup and advanced through project teams:

Career Pathways, Pipelines, and Higher Education Partnerships Workgroup	Workforce Data Collection and Analytics Workgroup
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Troubleshoot Barriers to Nursing Assistant Testing & Licensure Pilot and Implement a Health and Human Services Career Day Promote and Increase Impact of Health Loan Repayment Programs Support Recredentialing of Foreign-Trained Health Professionals Expand Clinical Placements for Health Professional Students Develop and Enhance Behavioral Health and Direct Care/Nursing Career Ladders Realign CTE Healthcare Standards to Better Support Industry Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory Existing Healthcare Training and Education Programs Analyze Health Occupational Licensure Data and Conduct Workforce Analysis Create and Publish Occupational Data Dashboards


Career Pathways, Pipelines and Higher Education Projects and Progress

Brief descriptions of projects and progress over the past 12 months are provided below:

Lead Partner	Project
RIDOH	Troubleshoot Barriers to Nursing Assistant Testing and Licensure
Goal:	Eliminate testing delays encountered by aspiring Nursing Assistants during the licensure process.
Rationale:	Almost 70% of RI nursing homes are understaffed due to a shortage of Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and this shortage is being exacerbated by testing delays encountered as part of the licensing process and attributable to the testing vendor. The CNA staffing shortage results in a deterioration of care and contributes to a shortage of beds in long-term care facilities and hospitals.
Progress:	By regulation, RI has one CNA testing vendor. RI Department of Health (RIDOH) staff have worked with the current vendor to increase accountability, improve vendor staffing, increase testing capacity and exam locations, and make scheduling protocols more efficient and responsive. RIDOH staff have amended regulations to allow additional vendors to provide CNA testing services and are working to increase training programs' support for students during test registration. RIDOH staff have: facilitated the vendor's use of Registered Nurses from other states to work as CNA examiners; provided weekly updates of all available test slots to the RI Health Care Association, Hospital Association of RI, and LeadingAgeRI to share with their members; and applied for a waiver from CMS to allow CNA applicants additional time to complete their testing due to lack of available test slots.
Next Steps:	RIDOH staff will continue to provide enhanced oversight of the testing vendor by meeting bi-weekly with the vendor to identify open testing slots and to escalate test-taker complaints. Staff will also determine the need for and viability of opening the RI market to other test vendors, and if necessary, will work with the Department of Administration to procure new vendors. If new vendors enter the market, RIDOH will utilize the enhanced oversight and communication methods employed earlier this year with the current vendor.

Lead Partner	Project
Skills for RI's Future	Pilot and Implement a Health and Human Services Career Development Day to Raise Awareness of Health and Human Services Careers
Goal:	Increase awareness among students and job seekers of employment and career opportunities within the health and human services sector.
Rationale:	There is a lack of awareness among youth and prospective workers about employment and advancement opportunities in the health and human services sector. Promoting careers in health and human services will attract more people to the field.
Progress:	Led by Skills for Rhode Island's Future, the Health and Human Services Career Day was held on Saturday, April 1, from 9am-4pm at the RI Nursing Education Center. The day featured exhibits and presentations by more than 35 employers, institutions of higher education, training programs, State agencies, and community partners. Almost 140 attendees learned about health and human services careers by speaking directly to industry experts, connecting with employers, and participating in hands-on health scenarios created in simulation and skills labs.

Lead Partner	Project
Skills for RI's Future	Pilot and Implement a Health and Human Services Career Development Day to Raise Awareness of Health and Human Services Careers
Next Steps:	Skills for Rhode Island's Future will follow-up with all participants to encourage enrollment in training and education and/or employment and evaluate the event to determine how to structure future efforts to promote employment in the sector.



Lead Partner	Project	
Rhode Island Foundation, RIDOH	Promote and Increase the Impact of Health Professional Loan Repayment Programs as a Tool for Workforce Attraction and Retention	
Goal:	Support health and human services worker retention through loan repayment.	
Rationale:	Loan repayment is an effective tool for recruiting and retaining highly qualified health care professionals. There are a number of federal and state programs available in Rhode Island, each with its own set of programmatic criteria. Leveraging these programs most effectively requires expanded communication and dissemination of information about loan repayment opportunities, increased investment to help meet demand for state programs, strengthening collaboration and communication between partners, and continued exploration of how to expand access to loan repayment tools—particularly for underserved communities.	
Progress:	With leadership from the Rhode Island Foundation, the project team is expanding partnerships and increasing the dissemination of information about loan repayment opportunities to health and human services workers. Project team members are working to build upon and better align different loan repayment programs, including the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program and the Wavemaker Fellowship and have advised Commerce on the development of the new Wavemaker-Healthcare guidelines to help expand eligibility for loan repayment to additional occupations and settings. Team members are advocating for direct state investment in the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program and have worked with RIDOH and EOHHS to develop and make available a new online loan repayment navigation tool to help professionals and employers navigate the complicated world of loan repayment programs. Please use the QR code below to access the new tool.	
Next Steps:	Project team members will promote existing loan repayment opportunities, advocate for additional resources for the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program, and conduct outreach to share the new loan repayment navigation tool developed by EOHHS and RIDOH.	 <p><i>Loan Repayment Navigation Tool.</i></p>

Lead Partner	Project
RIDOH and the RI Welcome Back Center	Recredentialing of Foreign Educated Health Professionals
Goal:	Support foreign educated healthcare workers, living in Rhode Island, to secure licensure and/or certification in RI, so they can work in health and human service roles at the top of their licensure.
Rationale:	Internationally trained healthcare professionals face significant barriers to securing licensure in Rhode Island while healthcare sector employers struggle to address worker shortages and diversify their workforces.
Progress:	RIDOH Academic Institute staff worked closely with the RI Welcome Back Center to secure Real Jobs Rhode Island funding from DLT. The RI Welcome Back Center works to meet participants' needs by providing solutions to the barriers that prevent internationally-educated health professionals from reentering the healthcare workforce in RI. The grant will fund a one-year pilot initiative in collaboration with Thundermist, Lifespan, the RI Department of Education, Genesis Center, and others to provide a range of services including intensive case management, English Language Instruction, resources and guidance concerning licensing and alternative pathways, and assistance with exams and licensing fees. Over 50 foreign-trained healthcare workers recently attended a recruitment event for the new program, making it likely that the first program cohort will be oversubscribed.
Next Steps:	Project partners are collaborating to implement and evaluate the year-long pilot and grow the initiative over time to support more workers. The first cohort of ~25 participants will begin in July.

Lead Partner	Project
Salve Regina University, RIC	Expand Clinical Placements for Health Professional Students
Goal:	Expand the number of high-quality clinical placement opportunities for aspiring health professional students.
Rationale:	Degree programs that require clinical placements have difficulty recruiting placement sites and preceptors (supervisors) for students working to become health professionals, while simultaneously clinical settings face challenges providing clinical placements for students.
Progress:	A project team is seeking to understand issues and identify challenges and potential solutions associated with increasing the number of clinical site placements and preceptors for health and human services roles. The team developed and delivered a survey this past Spring to 174 academic clinical program coordinators at eight institutions of higher education in Rhode Island, and successfully received survey submissions for 42 different academic programs. Survey results are being analyzed and aggregated by the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, and have been preliminarily shared with the project team.
Next Steps:	Project team will work to develop a companion survey to the initial instrument, which will collect data from clinical placements <i>sites</i> to identify the unique issues and barriers experienced by employers. This group is also exploring options for engaging students around data collection efforts as it relates to their clinical placement experiences. All data results will be used to develop actionable solutions to the clinical placement barriers, and to increase clinical placement opportunities for students. Potential strategies being explored by the project team, which will guide the group's efforts for the next




Lead Partner	Project
Salve Regina University, RIC	Expand Clinical Placements for Health Professional Students
	year, include: advocating for state funding to make it more financially attractive for employers to host clinical placements, affiliating with employers who have established internship programs, exploring alternatives to hospital/long term care placement sites, taking steps to promote organizational cultures in which clinical education is increasingly valued, increasing contact hours for clinical instructors, developing a centralized repository of preceptors, and exploring non-financial incentives to employers and clinicians to supervise and train preceptors.

Lead Partner	Project
EOHHS	Develop and Enhance Behavioral Health and Nursing/Direct Care Career Ladders to Support Employment and Career Advancement
Goal:	Identify strategies to 1) diversify the workforce, 2) establish an adequate pipeline of workers, and 3) increase employee retention.
Rationale:	RI is experiencing severe workforce shortages in behavioral health and direct care/nursing occupations which decreases access to high quality care and services for all Rhode Islanders.
Progress:	<p>This winter, EOHHS convened two Career Ladder Advisory Committees to focus on enhancing Behavioral Health and Direct Care/Nursing career ladders. The workgroups are composed of industry, education, and other stakeholders and are charged with identifying and addressing system barriers that limit access to education, employment, and career advancement. Both workgroups have met monthly and examined best practices to support working adults, mapped relevant career ladders including key occupations and related educational and training programs, and through group consensus building, identified and validated key barriers and strategies. The groups have prioritized activities to support skill development and career advancement that help working adults, and especially workers of color, progress through career pathways towards licensed behavioral health and nursing professions.</p> <p>In addition, the workgroups have started working closely with the Career and Technical Education system to orient and prepare high school students for behavioral health and nursing careers (See below). Both workgroups are also working with RIDOH and the agency’s health professional licensure boards to explore how to collaborate to reduce licensure-related barriers to practice while maintaining healthcare quality and public safety.</p>
Next Steps:	<p>The workgroups are developing and finalizing priority strategies and activities to enhance Career and Technical Education opportunities for young people and to address licensure related barriers and opportunities. Partners will be broken into project teams to advance priority activities.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><i>Behavioral Health Career Ladder</i></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><i>Direct Care-Nursing Career Ladder</i></p> </div> </div>

Lead	Project
RI Department of Education	Realign Career and Technical Education (CTE) Healthcare Standards to Better Support Industry Needs
Goal:	Align the State’s CTE system to better meet industry needs and orient and prepare young workers for health and human services careers.
Rationale:	Current workforce shortages have created an urgent need to prepare high school students and young adults for college and careers in high-demand health and human services occupations. Under the current CTE structure, the Bioscience Program Standards, which guide the preparation of students to enter careers in nursing and other health related careers, are grouped in with Animal Science and Plant Science Program Standards. The result is that critically needed nursing and other health related career programs are organized, led, and supported by different industry and education partners than other health science careers, which are organized under the existing Healthcare Program Standards. The needs of industry, K-12 education, and higher education would be better served by a realignment of key healthcare program standards.
Progress:	<p>In April 2023, EOHHS convened employer, higher education, and CTE partners to learn about how they could partner with the CTE system to help address worker shortages in Rhode Island. The meeting affirmed CTE partners’ desire to separate the current grouping of careers in the nursing field with careers in the animal sciences and plant sciences.</p> <p>As a result, members of the relevant CTE Industry Advisory Committees realigned standards and added CTE Program Standard categories to better address industry identified needs. Specifically, <u>the following areas are being added to the Health Science Cluster</u>: Direct Nursing Care, Behavioral Sciences, Healthcare Laboratory, and Data Science & Healthcare Analytics. These program standards will join existing health science standards in the Health Science Cluster including Bioscience, Certified Patient Care Technician, Community Health Worker, Dental Hygienist, and Emergency Medical Responder.</p>
Next Steps:	The new alignment of standards takes effect with the 2023-2024 school year. This fall, EOHHS will work with RIDE and CTE leaders to host regional gatherings of health and human services employers, higher education partners, and school districts to explore and advocate for the creation and/or expansion of CTE Healthcare Science Cluster programming in Rhode Island.

Workforce Data Collection and Analytics Projects and Progress

Lead Partner	Project	
EOHHS	Conduct a Comprehensive Inventory of Health and Human Services Training and Education Programs in Rhode Island	
Goal:	Create and make publicly available a comprehensive inventory of health and human services training and education programs available to Rhode Islanders.	
Rationale:	There is no single comprehensive source of up-to-date health and human services education and training program information available for healthcare workforce system planners and industry stakeholders to assess gaps in training and education and to support sharing and promotion of available programs. Information on various programs is also difficult for prospective students and workers to find and use to assess different educational opportunities.	
Progress:	EOHHS has gathered and documented information on all available training programs and has worked with programs to secure missing data and to validate program information.	
Next Steps:	EOHHS will share the resource widely with relevant stakeholders and will need to determine a process for keeping the inventory current over time.	 <p><i>Healthcare Training & Education Inventory</i></p>

Lead Partner	Project	
EOHHS, RI Data Ecosystem	Analyze Health Occupational Licensure and Other State Data to Conduct Preliminary Health and Human Services Workforce Analysis	
Goal:	Successfully execute a data sharing agreement between RIDOH and EOHHS to share data collected during the licensure process for licensed health and human services occupations and incorporate the data set into The RI Data Ecosystem's data warehouse to enable cross matching with other state data sets and the completion of a preliminary healthcare workforce analysis.	
Rationale:	State, industry and educational leaders have been unable to determine the employment status, career trajectory, retention, demographics, and other important characteristics of RI's licensed health professionals. More generally, public and private sector leaders lack the sector wide data required to equitably assess and grow the state's current and future health and human services workforce. Sharing of data between RIDOH and EOHHS, with support from the RI Data Ecosystem, will enable future analysis and inform policy development, planning, and evaluation.	
Progress:	This past winter, RIDOH and EOHHS completed a data sharing agreement and RIDOH has shared an initial licensure dataset with the RI Data Ecosystem that includes information on multiple occupations including nurses, nursing assistants, social workers, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists,	

Lead Partner	Project
EOHHS, RI Data Ecosystem	Analyze Health Occupational Licensure and Other State Data to Conduct Preliminary Health and Human Services Workforce Analysis
	dentists, and dental hygienists. The RI Data Ecosystem has the capacity to link individual data across twenty or more public data sets and has broken out the data by race, ethnicity, gender, and location/setting. The RI Data Ecosystem is in the process of utilizing the data to complete an initial analysis on the healthcare workforce including counts, wages, education, licensure and training, demographic breakouts, career progression, and temporary workers. The Ecosystem has developed an interactive Microsoft PowerBI dashboard tool to support analysis of the data.
Next Steps:	The initial analysis will be shared with health and human service sector stakeholders at the initiative Summit on June 6. EOHHS staff will explore how to make the data and dashboards available publicly following the Summit. In addition, EOHHS will work with RIDOH to explore adding additional data fields that can be collected during the licensure process and to collect updated data sets annually to determine trends and monitor change over time.

Lead Partner	Project
DLT	Develop Easy to Understand Data Dashboards Setting out Labor Market Information for Key Healthcare Occupations
Goal:	Assemble health and human services labor market information in a concise and easy to understand format.
Rationale:	Public labor market information has not been organized in such a way that key healthcare occupation data points are easily located and understood. Collecting and reformatting the data will help state and industry stakeholders better understand the labor market supply and demand information available through DLT and other public sources.
Progress:	Staff at DLT built an interactive dashboard that is filterable by healthcare occupation, with data points related to graduates produced in RI, active and inactive licensees, demographics, current wages, and 2030 projected employment by occupation.
Next Steps:	DLT is making the dashboard available to the public and will work with industry partners to both share and validate the data.

The Rhode Ahead



Over the next 12 months the initiative will accelerate its efforts to expand access to high-quality, culturally appropriate, and responsive health and human services through strategies that will **attract, train, and retain a diverse workforce**. Building off of the collaborative infrastructure and public-private partnerships built over the past year, initiative partners will collaborate to pursue a shared policy agenda that will promote innovation and the testing of inclusive and supportive health and human services strategies leading to career ladders in high-demand occupations and incentivize new and incumbent workers to join the healthcare workforce and advance their healthcare careers in Rhode Island. During and immediately after the initiative’s June 2023 Summit meeting, partners will break into public-private project teams to further develop and advance the framework below:

The Rhode Ahead

Strategies to create a diverse, skilled sustainable health and human service workforce



The Rhode Ahead Initiatives

	Career Awareness and Outreach Efforts	
Goal: Attract students and job seekers to health and human service careers.		
Description: Conduct public-private marketing campaigns and outreach efforts to promote health and human service careers.	Rationale: According to the Indeed Hiring Lab, between mid-2016 to the end of 2019, job seeker interest in health and human service jobs relative to all jobs fell nearly 20% and the COVID pandemic further reduced interest and employment in health careers. Higher education programs in RI report declining numbers of applicants.	
Aligned Programs and Resources: Builds on the Caring Careers Campaign , the recent Career Development Day and widespread interest among private sector partners to promote jobs and careers. Use this QR code to link to the Caring Careers website:	 <i>Caring Careers</i>	



Tuition Assistance and Supports for Paraprofessionals to Become Licensed Health Professionals

Goal: Increase the diversity of RI's health and human service workforce by supporting paraprofessionals to become licensed health professionals.

Description: Paraprofessionals receive upfront tuition assistance towards educational costs and wrap around supports.

Rationale: Tuition assistance reduces financial barriers to obtaining education, promotes career advancement, and increases the racial and ethnic diversity of health and human services professionals. Wrap around supports help workers to complete educational and clinical requirements for certification and licensure.

Aligned Programs and Resources: Builds on the **Health Professional Equity Initiative and RI Reconnect**. Use the QR Codes to learn more about the Health Professional Equity Initiative and RI Reconnect.



RI Reconnect



Health Professional Equity Initiative



Health Professional Loan Repayment

Goal: Retain nursing and behavioral health professionals in the state by providing loan repayment support after a period of service in Rhode Island.

Description: Expand the existing **Health Professional Loan Repayment Program** and the **Wavemaker Fellowship** by increasing the total number of loans and expanding eligibility to more occupations and work settings.

Rationale: Loan repayment is an effective tool for recruiting and retaining highly qualified health care professionals. Loan repayment decreases the financial stress of student loan debt on incumbent workers and supports worker retention in the health and human services field, particularly in underserved areas.



Aligned Programs and Resources: Expands the **Health Professional Loan Repayment Program** and the **Wavemaker Fellowship**. Use the QR codes to connect to the program websites.





Wavemaker Fellowship



Health Professional Loan Repayment Program

 	<h2>Tuition Assistance for Students to Obtain Health and Human Services Professional Degrees</h2>
<p>Goal: Attract more students to obtain degrees leading to licensed health and human service occupations.</p>	
<p>Description: Students receive upfront tuition assistance towards the educational costs of degree programs leading to licensed occupations in the health and human services sector.</p>	<p>Rationale: Tuition assistance reduces financial barriers to obtaining higher education and makes it possible for students from all backgrounds to pursue and obtain a health-related postsecondary degree and licensure in occupations and settings experiencing worker shortages.</p>
<p>Aligned Programs and Resources: Builds on the RI Promise scholarship, which allows all Rhode Islanders coming right out of high school to pursue associate degrees at Community College of RI tuition-free.</p>	

	<h2>Pre-Employment Training and Supports for Entry-Level Health and Human Services Jobs</h2>
<p>Goal: Grow the health and human service paraprofessional workforce with expanded pre-employment training.</p>	
<p>Description: Additional resources for pre-employment training and wraparound support to prepare people for paraprofessional roles in health and human services.</p>	<p>Rationale: Creates pipelines of talent into high demand paraprofessional occupations.</p>
<p>Aligned Programs and Resources: Expands Real Jobs RI investments in the healthcare sector. Use the QR Code to learn about Real Jobs RI.</p>	
<p><i>Real Jobs Rhode Island</i></p>	



Increased Faculty and Clinical Placements

Goal: Increase the number of faculty and expand the number of quality clinical placements.

Description: Develop strategies utilizing national best practices to address educational requirements, tuition costs, and salary differentials that discourage practicing health professionals from pursuing advanced degrees and faculty positions. Simultaneously identify and address organizational and financial barriers for community-based provider organizations to serve as clinical placement sites.

Rationale: Health professional faculty shortages resulting from an aging workforce and uncompetitive salaries are limiting the capacity of our higher education institutions to train our future health professional workforce. It is necessary to expand the capacity of higher education programs to graduate health and human service professionals and to increase opportunities for students to gain clinical experience, particularly in community-based settings that have fewer resources to support students.

Aligned Programs and Resources: Leverages the proposed partners, framework, strategies under recent Nursing Expansion Grant proposals.



Career Ladder Pilots

Goal: Inspire and Fund Career Ladder Pilot Programs that Reimagine and Create Pathways to High-Demand Jobs and Careers.

Description: Pilot projects will be led by collaborations of employers, higher education, labor, CTE programs, and community partners and will prioritize: attracting new workers, increasing access for underrepresented populations, incorporating anti-racist and culturally responsive practices, creating strong linkages with CTE and higher education, removing barriers to education for working adults, using apprenticeship models, and engaging multi-employer and/or multi-higher education partners.

Rationale: Pilot projects will help Rhode Island solve its most pressing health and human services workforce challenges by financially supporting collaborative, sustainable and innovative career ladder programs through cross-sector, multi-agency partnerships. The initiative will create opportunities to replicate and scale up the work of innovative partnerships that have been created by multiple health and human services who are crafting innovative workforce solutions.

Ongoing Projects

In addition to our Rhode Ahead initiatives, there are other critically important projects that are currently underway and will continue in the year ahead. These include:

- **Career and Technical Education:** Work will build on recent changes in Career & Technical Education regulations and will help facilitate new partnerships between health & human service providers, institutions of higher education, and CTE high schools.
- **Professional Licensure:** Efforts will include reviewing health professional licensure requirements and processes to consider changes that could help increase the number and diversity of licensed health professionals.
- **Health Workforce Data:** The initiative's Workforce and Data Analytics Workgroup will continue to develop RI's health workforce data collection and analytics capacity to serve as a resource to employers, educators, job seekers, and policy-makers.
- **Foreign Educated Health Professionals:** Continuing work with the Rhode Island Welcome back center to support foreign trained health and human services workers living in Rhode Island to secure credentials, licensure and employment in the state's health and human services sector.

Opportunities to Get Involved

Multiple forums will be created to support the necessary and highly valued engagement of initiative partners in the further development and realization of the Rhode Ahead agenda. Forums for partner engagement and participation will include:

- **Rhode Ahead Initiative Teams:** Project Teams composed of a mix of public/private partners with relevant expertise will be established this summer to develop detailed proposals and associated cost estimates to advance the Rhode Ahead agenda. Teams will include Tuition Assistance, Support for Faculty and Clinical Placements, Career Awareness and Outreach, and Career Ladders Pilot Initiative Planning.
- **Regularly Scheduled Partner Update Meetings:** Throughout the year, Initiative staff will host concise, online update meetings every other month where staff and partners working to advance key projects share progress, vet ideas, and take feedback from interested stakeholders from across the initiative.
- **Workforce Data and Analytics Workgroup:** The data workgroup will continue meeting regularly to build upon its progress over the past year to help guide and support ongoing health and human services data capacity building and analysis.
- **Ongoing Projects:** A number of teams will continue meeting to advance ongoing projects, including work on career and technical education and professional licensure.

If you wish to get involved in any of the activities above, please contact Rick Brooks at Rick.Brooks@ohhs.ri.gov or Aryana Huskey at Aryana.Huskey.CTR@ohhs.ri.gov. Thank you for your continued interest and your sustained support of our efforts.

Appendix I: Executive Sponsors and Project Management Team Members

The initiative receives leadership, support, and guidance from the following interagency team of Executive Sponsors:

Ana Novias, Assistant Secretary, RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Shannon Gilkey, Commissioner, RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

Matt Weldon, Director, RI Department of Labor and Training

The initiative is guided by its public/private Project Management Team that includes representatives from across government, the healthcare sector, and philanthropy. Team members include:

Alyssa Alvarado, Executive Director, Governor's Workforce Board

Aryana Huskey, LCSW, Health Workforce Transformation Project Manager, RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Bonnie Rayta, CHSOS, Manager of Simulation & Technology - RI Nursing Education Center, RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

Charon Rose, Director of Workforce Strategy and Operations, RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

Howard Dulude, Director of Finance, Hospital Association of Rhode Island

Karyn Lowe, J.D., Deputy Director of Policy, Office of Governor Daniel J. McKee

Keith Murray, Real Jobs Rhode Island Coordinator, RI Department of Labor and Training

Dr. Larry Warner, Chief Impact and Equity Officer, United Way of Rhode Island

Laurie Leonard, Director of Academic Affairs and Accreditation, RI Department of Health

Lisa Odom-Villella, Deputy Commissioner, RI Department of Education

Mackenzie Daly, Chief Health Program Evaluator, RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals

Marti Rosenberg, Health Policy and Planning Director, RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Rick Brooks, Director, Health Workforce Transformation, RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Sandra Victorino, LMHC, Director of Workforce Development, Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, Care New England and Chairperson, Commission for Health Advocacy and Equity

Zachary Nieder, Senior Strategic Initiative Officer, Rhode Island Foundation

Zoya Tseytlin, Program Officer for Workforce Development, Adult Education, Economic Mobility & VITA, United Way of Rhode Island

EOHHS and the Project Management Team are provided project management and consulting services by Kristin Lehoullier and Bert Cooper of Elevated Results, Inc.

Appendix II: Public/Private Partners Engaged in Initiative Activities

Accesspoint RI	Goodwill of Southern New England
Addiction Recovery Institute	Governor's Behavioral Health Council
Adoption RI	Hasbro Children's Hospital
Aldersbridge	Healthcentric Advisors
Alee Behavioral Health	Home Care Advantage
Alliance for Better Long-Term Care	Home Care Services of RI
Alpert Medical School Brown University	Homecare Networks RI
Amos House	Hope Nursing Home Care
Anchor Bay East Providence	HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	Horizon Healthcare Partners
Avatar Residential	Hospital Association of RI
BAYADA Home Health Care	Integra
Becket Academy	Johnson & Wales University
Blackstone Valley CHC	LeadingAge RI
Blue Cross Blue Shield RI	Lifespan
Boston Behavior Learning Centers	Lifespan ClinTECH Center
Bradley Hospital	Lincoln Technical Institute
Bridgemark	McAuley Village
Brown Physicians	Meaningful Outcomes
Burrillville School District	Mental Health Association of RI
Butler Hospital	National Association of Social Workers-RI
CareLink RI	New England Institute of Technology
Care Transformation Collaborative -RI	Neighborhood Health Plan of RI
CB Homecare	NeuroRestorative
Community College of RI	Newport Hospital
Center for Health & Justice Transformation	Newport Mental Health
Center for Southeast Asians	Onward We Learn
Central Falls School District	Opportunities Unlimited
Care New England	PACE
Charlesgate	Parent Support Network of RI
CharterCARE	Perspectives Corporation
Child & Family Services of RI	Phenix Home Care
Commerce RI	Ponaganset High School
Community Care RI	Progreso Latino
Community Care Alliance	Providence College
Community Health Worker Association - RI	Providence Community Health Center
Community Provider Network of RI	Providence Public Schools
Coventry Public Schools	Raising Hope Home Care
CODAC	Refugee Dream Center
Comprehensive Community Action Program	Rhode Island Hospital
Cranston Public School District	Rhode Island College
DataSpark	RI Assisted Living Association
Davies Tech	RI BHDDH
East Providence High School	RI Coalition for Children & Families
EBCAP	RI Council 94 AFSCME
Economic Progress Institute	RI Dental Association
Eleanor Slater Hospital	RI Dept. of Administration
Elevated Results	RI Dept. of Children Youth & Families
Exeter Job Corps	RI Dept. of Corrections
Family Behavior Solutions	RI Dept. of Education
Family Services of RI	RI Dept. of Health
Faulkner Consulting Group	RI Dept. of Human Services
Fogarty Center	RI Dept. of Labor & Training
Franklin Court Assisted Living	
Gateway	
Genesis Center	

RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services
 RI Foundation
 Right at Home
 RI Governor's Workforce Board
 RI Health Care Association
 RI Health Center Association
 RI Medical Society
 RI Nursing Education Center
 RI Nursing Institute Middle College
 RI Office of the Governor
 RI Office of Healthy Aging
 RI Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner
 RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
 RI Office of Veterans Services
 RI Oral Surgery
 RI Partnership in Home Care
 RI Parent Information Network
 RI Prevention Resource Center
 RI State Nurses Association
 RI Senate
 RI Student Loan Authority
 RIDDC
 Roger Williams University
 Sage Squirrel Consulting
 Salve Regina University
 Senior Agenda Coalition
 SEIU 1199 NE
 Sherlock Center
 Sista Fire
 Skills for RI's Future
 South County Health
 St. Elizabeth's
 South Kingstown School District
 SUMHLC - RI
 Systems Change Strategies
 The Opening, LLC
 The Providence Center
 Thundermist
 Tides Family Services
 Tockwotton
 Tri-County Community Action Agency
 Trudeau Center
 United HealthCare
 United Nurses & Allied Professionals
 United Way of Rhode Island
 University of Rhode Island
 Urban Perinatal Educational Center
 VICTA
 Visiting Angels of Rhode Island
 Welcome Back Center - RI
 Western Governors University
 Your Choice of Home Care

Direct Workforce Solutions Contract

Rhode Island Statewide Workforce Initiative Proposal

3.1.23

Introduction and Context

The Sherlock Center is working with Rhode Island BHDDH and other strategic partners to develop and implement key components of a sustainable statewide workforce development infrastructure. The shared goal focuses on improving direct support workforce stability for employers in Rhode Island. Direct Support Workforce Solutions is a national consulting group at the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration assists community disability and other human services agencies in implementing workforce strategies that reduce turnover, attract, recruit, and retain qualified talent, and engage and prepare their workforce to deliver high-quality services. Key components of a sustainable workforce infrastructure include:

1. Marketing/Recruitment
2. Data Collection/Reporting
3. Training/Professional Development
4. Policy Development/Worker Voice
5. Selection & Retention
6. Leadership/Coordination/Accountability

This proposed scope of work builds upon past and current projects Direct Support Workforce Solutions has been providing with Sherlock Center. The proposed deliverables and activities align with the key components of a sustainable workforce infrastructure that have emerged from recent engagement with key stakeholders in workforce development across Rhode Island about developing, implementing, and evaluating RI specific workforce statewide strategies that support and align with Rhode Island's Statewide Workforce Initiative. This work will be completed through a contract with the Sherlock Center and input for all activities will be obtained through RI SWI summit attendees, relevant work groups and the Coordinating Council.

The University of Minnesota workforce consultants will work Sherlock Center staff and other key stakeholders (e.g., BDDH Director, Sage Squirrel, RI SWI participants) to implement the proposed deliverable activities. The proposed timeline for this work is March 1, 2023-December 31, 2025.

Proposed Scope of Work and Deliverables

Deliverable #1: *Marketing Campaign and Corresponding Materials*

The Institute on Community Integration will develop and implement a statewide marketing campaign and corresponding materials, with feedback from stakeholders and the Coordinating Council.

Activities:

- Produce a 15-minute electronically distributed Realistic Job Preview (RJP) for DSPs who work in Rhode Island from the perspective of the employee. This will include varied content options a prospective employee can view based on employer type (organization or self-directed) and the

type of service delivered (e.g. in-home, group home, supported living, day program, competitive integrated employment).

- Produce 4-6 30-second public service announcements promoting the profession of direct support in Rhode Island.
- Create 4-6 DSP customizable DSP recruitment tools (e.g. looped video for job fairs, flyers, ads, website announcements).
- Provide 2-3 training sessions for employers on the appropriate use of these tools.

Deliverable #2: *Comprehensive Workforce Solutions Consultation for up to 33 employers.*

Provide training and consulting to implement the comprehensive workforce solutions consultation process in each provider in the state of Rhode Island who applies to participate. The purpose is to gather information to understand the employer's practices, policies, and culture concerning the Direct Support workforce.

This comprehensive workforce solutions model will continue with the current cohort of 5 employers moving to the action planning and implementation/evaluation phase. Three new cohorts of employers will be added over 3 years to allow up to 33 employers in RI to have access to comprehensive technical assistance and consultation that is specific to their organization's needs by participating in one of the cohorts.

Activities in the Discovery phase for each cohort include:

- Initial virtual planning session and follow-up meetings based on individual organization need.
- Support and technical assistance to collect workforce data and other key information including:
 - Conduct Baseline survey – measurement of turnover, vacancy, wages/benefits, demographics.
 - Facilitation Self-assessment – reflection on what has been done, how it has worked and what should change.
 - Conduct Stakeholder interviews – listening to staff at all levels to find solutions.
 - Conduct Focus groups - listening to staff at all levels to learn of their experiences and find solutions.
 - Conduct comprehensive document review related to workforce – learning about and gaining understanding about the organizational culture.
- Conduct a website and communications audit – review of workforce messages as an employer.
- Provide report analyzing workforce data and findings of Discovery evaluation with recommendations for addressing employer's workforce challenges.
- Complete a virtual presentation to organization's leadership team summarizing findings and recommendations, identifying priorities and initiating action planning (up to 4 hours scheduled over one or more sessions).

Activities in the Action Planning and Implementation phase for each cohort include:

- Conduct initial individual planning meeting with each participating organization.
- Provide participating organizations with framework for a systematic approach to implementing workforce solutions within their respective employers.

- Provide individual consultation and technical assistance to identify and develop or build upon existing action plans to implement recommended workforce solutions within respective employers.
- Provide individual consultation to participating employers to strategize, problem-solve and troubleshoot during implementation of workforce strategies.
- Provide a report for each of the 3 years summarizing key workforce findings and recommendations for future consideration.

Deliverable #3: *Create a Modified Comprehensive Workforce Consultation Model for Self-Direction Employers in Rhode Island*

Design, plan, and revise the current comprehensive workforce consultation model for use with self-direction employers in Rhode Island. Provide training and consulting to pilot and implement the modified comprehensive workforce solutions consultation process for up to three cohorts of up to 8 self-direction employers per cohort. Approximately 20% of employers in Rhode Island are self-direction employers. The purpose is to gather information to understand the employer’s practices, policies, and culture concerning the Direct Support workforce.

During year 1, the University of Minnesota’s workforce consultants will work with Sherlock Center, BDHHD and key stakeholders from self-directed employers to create a modified comprehensive workforce solutions model to meet self-direct employer needs. This will include gathering stakeholder and employer input that will be used to inform the model design. In years 1- 2, a pilot of the workforce consultation model with a small cohort of up to 3-4 self-directed employers will be initiated and implemented. Based on what is learned from cohort, in years 2-3, a second cohort of up to 3-4 self-directed employers will have the opportunity to participate in the comprehensive workforce solutions model.

An evaluation of the new model for self-direct employers will be conducted and will include recommendations for scaling implementation to other self-directed employers in Rhode Island beyond the pilot.

Activities in the planning phase for each cohort include:

- Engagement of self-direction employers, their supports, and other stakeholders in gathering feedback and input for modification of the Discovery phase.
- Planning and revision of Discovery phase tools and processes
- Planning and development of data collection tools for self-direction employers.
- Engagement of self-direction employers, their supports, and other stakeholders in gathering feedback and input for modification of the Action Planning and Implementation phase.
- Planning and revision of Action Planning and Implementation phase tools and processes

Pending the results of the planning phase, activities in the Discovery phase for each cohort may include:

- Initial virtual planning session and follow-up meetings based on individual employer need.
- Support and technical assistance to collect workforce data and other key information including:
 - Conduct Baseline survey – measurement of turnover, vacancy, wages/benefits, demographics.
 - Facilitation Self-assessment – reflection on what has been done, how it has worked and what should change.
 - Conduct Stakeholder interviews – listening to staff at all levels to find solutions.

- Conduct Interviews or Focus groups - listening to staff to learn of their experiences and find solutions.
- Conduct comprehensive document review related to workforce – learning about and gaining understanding about the employer culture.
- Conduct a website and communications audit – review of employer messages to their employees.
- Provide report analyzing workforce data and findings of Discovery evaluation with recommendations for addressing employer’s workforce challenges.
- Complete a virtual presentation to employer summarizing findings and recommendations, identifying priorities and initiating action planning (up to 4 hours scheduled over one or more sessions).

Pending the results of the planning phase, activities in the Action Planning and Implementation phase for each self-direction employer cohort may include:

- Conduct initial individual planning meeting with each participating self-direction employer.
- Provide participating employers with framework for a systematic approach to implementing workforce solutions.
- Provide individual consultation and technical assistance to identify and develop or build upon existing action plans to implement recommended workforce solutions for the employer.

Deliverable #4: *Technical assistance and training to Sherlock Center workforce coaches to promote sustainability for workforce development using Train the Trainer model (Up to 5 Sherlock staff trained to support employers with ongoing implementation and evaluation of workforce interventions)*

Implement a Train the Trainer model to train up to four Sherlock Center staff to be workforce coaches in Rhode Island to support employers. Training will consist of bi-monthly trainings and shadowing of ICI workforce consultants to learn best practices and processes for two cohorts. Following their observation of the first cohort, in cohort 2 they will co-lead with University of Minnesota workforce consultants the consultation for employers. Following their co-leading of cohort 2, Rhode Island workforce coaches will have the opportunity to lead the comprehensive workforce process for employers participating in cohort 3. The University of Minnesota workforce consultants will observe and provide mentoring and support to coaches as needed during cohort 3 implementation.

Activities include:

- Train the trainer sessions that aligns with best practices regarding data management and how to utilize statewide and employer-specific workforce data to guide decisions.
- Continue training plan for two current workforce coaches from Sherlock Center observing the current cohort of employers participating in the action planning, implementation and evaluation phase.
- Provide training and support to current workforce coaches 1 and 2 to co-lead comprehensive workforce model with new cohort of employers.
- Initiate training of 2-3 new workforce coaches from Sherlock Center to observe and participate in comprehensive workforce model with new cohort of employers.
- Provide training and support to current workforce coaches 1 and 2 to lead comprehensive workforce model with a third cohort of employers.

- Provide training and support to new workforce coaches 3-4 to co-lead comprehensive workforce model with the third cohort of employers.
- Provide support and technical assistance to workforce coaches from Sherlock Center in leading implementation of comprehensive workforce model for the fourth cohort of employers.
- Coordinate and facilitate weekly/bi-weekly coaches huddle sessions to review and discuss progress, identify issues and determine plans for proceeding.
- Coordinate and facilitate monthly Coaches Connect session to share updates and engage in planning activities.
- Provide training guide and resources on workforce interventions and workforce discovery tools.

Deliverable #5: *Implementation and Administration of Rhode Island Direct Support Professional (DSP) I, II, and III certification through National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) e-badging program.*

Expand the existing organizational involvement in NADSP's certification program to train and support DSPs and provide consultation to develop a program statewide to train and support new DSPs to develop competencies needed to do their job. Provide technical assistance to identify opportunities for DSPs to pursue career pathways and professional certifications.

Activities:

- Provide consultation to develop, implement and administer a competency- based training plan to prepare new staff with the basic competencies to begin their employment and to create a framework for career pathways and professional certifications for DSPs based on the NADSP certification program.
- Provide technical assistance and support to Sherlock Center to develop a DSP training hub that will house the training records of Rhode Island DSPs.

Deliverable #6: *Expansion of a state-specific workforce portal to include intervention data collection and monitoring. (Up to 300 hours of training and consultation on data collection and monitoring over 3 years).*

In partnership with CPNRI, ICI is currently piloting a state-specific portal to streamline data collection requirements and offer employer and statewide reporting in real time. This work will build off of CPNRI's efforts to expand the portal for self-direct employers and build intervention data into the portal.

Activities:

- Provide consultation to develop and implement a system in RI to monitor progress on the workforce initiative deliverables and workforce data in RI.
- Work with key stakeholders in RI to figure out how individuals and families who self-direct can input their workforce data into the portal to provide a comprehensive picture of the workforce stability in RI.
- Collaborate with Sherlock Center to conduct a comprehensive scan of all data that is collected and provide a report with recommendations for improving efficiency and usefulness of current data collection systems.
- Use the workforce solutions portal to provide longitudinal reports to employers and the state BHDDH agency on data gathered within the portal.

Deliverable #7: *Provide technical assistance, engagement and facilitation support with RI SWI Coordinating Council and Workgroups.*

The University of Minnesota workforce consultants will continue to work collaboratively in the planning and implementation of the RI SWI Coordinating Council and Workgroups building upon the work from the two recent workforce summits initiated and lead by Sage Squirrel. Subject-matter experts in workforce solutions at the University of Minnesota will continue to support RI SWI Coordinating Councils and Workgroups in the various activities and tasks assigned to the groups.

Activities:

- Attend, participate and assist with facilitation with the RI SWI Coordinating Council meetings.
- Attend, participate and assist with facilitation for each RI SWI work group meetings.
- Provide technical assistance and support to Sherlock Center and BHDDH in the planning and implementation of the RI SWI Comprehensive Workforce Plan.

Project Management: ICI staff will provide ongoing project oversight and management for specific deliverables. It is anticipated that a Sherlock Center Project Team will be established and meet at least monthly to monitor and report on the progress toward meeting the deliverables.

Proposed Timeline

The proposed timeframe for this proposed work is March 1, 2023-December 31, 2025 (34 months)

	Mar Y23	Apr-Jun Y23	Jul-Sep Y23	Oct-Dec Y23	Jan-Mar Y24	Apr-Jun Y24	Jul-Sep Y24	Oct-Dec Y24	Jan-Mar Y25	Apr-Jun Y25	Jul-Sep Y25	Oct-Dec Y25
Project Administration (60 hours over 36 months)												
Complete Project Proposal and Initiate Contract	X											
Monthly meetings with Project Leadership Team		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Other Meetings as needed		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summary Report					X				X			X
Deliverable 1: Marketing Campaign and Corresponding Materials that Aligns with RI SWI Workplan Goals for Marketing and Selection .												
Produce 15-minute realistic Job Preview video.	X	X	X									
Produce 4-6 30-second public service announcements.	X	X	X									
Create 4-6 DSP customizable DSP recruitment flyers.	X	X	X									
Produce marketing campaign guide.			X	X								
Deliverable 2: Comprehensive Workforce Solutions Consultation for up to 33 employers												
Cohort 1 Action planning and implementation phase	X	X	X	X	X							
Cohort 2 Discovery phase			X	X								
Cohort 2 Action planning and implementation phase					X	X	X	X				
Cohort 3 Discovery phase					X	X						
Cohort 3 Action planning and implementation phase							X	X	X	X		
Cohort 4 Discovery phase							X	X				
Cohort 4 Action planning and implementation phase									X	X	X	X
Deliverable 3: Create a Modified Comprehensive Workforce Consultation Model for Self-Direction Employers in Rhode Island												
Planning & Design Phase	X	X	X	X	X							
Initiate and engage self-directed cohort 1						X	X	X	X			
Initiate and engage self-directed cohort 2								X	X	X	X	X
Written evaluation report summarizing									X			X
Deliverable 4: Technical Assistance and training to Sherlock Center workforce coaches to promote sustainability for workforce development using Train the Trainer model (Up to 5 Sherlock staff trained to support organizations with onaoina implementation and evaluation of workforce interventions)												
Workforce coaches 1-2 observe cohort 1 action planning/implementation .	X	X	X	X	X							
Train workforce coaches 1-2 to co-lead comprehensive workforce model with cohort 2.			X	X	X	X	X	X				
New workforce coaches observe comprehensive workforce model with cohort 2.			X	X	X	X	X	X				
Train workforce coaches 1-2 to lead comprehensive workforce model with cohort 3.					X	X	X	X	X	X		

Train workforce coaches 3-4 to co-lead comprehensive workforce model with cohort 3.					X	X	X	X	X	X		
Mentor workforce coaches 1-4 to lead implementation of comprehensive workforce model with cohort 4.							X	X	X	X	X	X
Weekly/bi-weekly coaches huddle sessions.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Monthly Coaches Connect sessions.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deliverable 5: Implementation and Administration of Rhode Island Direct Support Professional (DSP) I, II, and III certification through National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) e-learning program												
Develop, implement and administer a competency-based training plan for career pathways and professional certifications using NADSP certification program.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide technical assistance and support to develop a DSP training hub for DSP training records.			X	X	X	X						
Deliverable 6: Expansion of a state-specific workforce portal to include intervention data collection and monitoring. (Up to 300 hours of training and consultation on data collection and monitoring over 3 years)												
Develop and implement a system in RI to monitor progress on the workforce initiative deliverables.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Engage key stakeholders to help individuals & families input their workforce data into the portal.							X	X	X			
Collaborate with Sherlock Center to conduct a comprehensive scan of data collection			X	X								
Provide report with recommendations			X	X								
Deliverable 7: Provide technical assistance, engagement and facilitation support with RI SWI Coordinating Council and Work groups (120 hours per year up to 360 hours over 3 years)												
Assist with RI SWI Coordinating Council meetings.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Facilitation for each RI SWI work group meetings.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Technical assistance and support in planning and implementation of RI SWI Comprehensive Workforce Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Snapshot of Rhode
Island's State
Workforce Initiative
(SWI)**

Snapshot of Rhode Island's State Workforce Initiative (SWI)

The SWI Coordinating Council Serves a Multi-Faceted Role supporting Workforce Efforts by:

- ❖ Reviewing and approving the statewide workforce development plan for the RI SWI
- ❖ Producing monthly reports of ongoing priorities and progress of the SWI
- ❖ Ensuring cross-system and cross-SWI coordination
- ❖ Offering solutions to address challenges raised through SWI workgroups
- ❖ Supporting informed decision-making on direct support workforce policy and operational recommendations
- ❖ Providing feedback on outcomes monitoring
- ❖ Overseeing communications and engagement with stakeholders
- ❖ Supporting overall learning and diffusion strategies approved by the council

SWI Advisory Council Supports the Coordinating Council and Workgroups by:

- ❖ Providing feedback, knowledge and support across workforce efforts
 - ❖ Assisting in evaluating workforce outcomes
- ❖ Facilitating cooperation and communication between the State Workforce Initiative and the DSP community

SWI Workgroups include:

Data & Reporting Workgroup

Co-Leaders:
Amy Grattan, Sherlock
Tina Spears, CPNRI

Goal 1

Develop statewide infrastructure to support data collection, management and reporting that monitors workforce quality outcomes and supports planning.

Goal 2

Use data to make decisions that address workforce challenges resulting in data-driven solutions.

Policy Guidance & Worker Voice

Co-Leaders:
Esther Picon, Lazo
Jenna Husted, CPNRI

Goal 1

Increase DSP voice in workforce development and related SWI activities and policy.

Goal 2

Create a well-planned policy advocacy plan that engages and provides talking points for all stakeholders about DSP workforce challenges and solutions.

Training & Professional Development

Co-Leaders:
Rob Kalaskowski, DLT
Mary Onyejose, Community Living of RI

Goal 1

Develop clearly defined training and support for DSPs that result in high-quality services for people supported.

Goal 2

Develop clearly defined training and support for front line supervisors that result in stable and competent DSPs.

Goal 3

Build career pathways for DSPs and front-line supervisors.

Goal 4

Develop opportunities for workforce staff to practice their skills and network with coworkers.

Selection & Retention

Co-Leaders:
Sheila Coyne, RI Self-Direct Coalition
Casey Gartland, West Bay RI

Goal 1

Develop a system that minimizes wage compression and allows flexible wages commensurate to skills and longevity.

Goal 2

Ensure access to robust DSP and FLS benefit options that are actually utilized.

Goal 3

Sustain options to address DSP and FLS well-being including mental health trauma, etc.

Goal 4

Teach employers effective strategies to identify, understand and tailor interventions that will improve their employee retention.

Marketing & Recruitment

Goal 1

Find and engage with partnerships to support recruiting DSPs.

Goal 2

Identify and effectively use relevant recruiting platforms.

Goal 3

Develop and implement effective marketing strategies supporting retention.

Co-Leaders:
Michael Andrade, ProAbility
Aryana Huskey, EOHS

SWI WORKGROUP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Data & Reporting

Goal 1. Develop statewide infrastructure to support data collection, management and reporting that monitors workforce quality outcomes and supports planning.

Policy Guidance & Worker Voice

Training & Professional Development

Selection and Retention

Goal 1. Develop a system that minimizes wage compression and allows flexible wages commensurate to skills and longevity.

Marketing & Recruitment

**Memo Regarding Age
Requirements for DSP
and DSPI**

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals



Quality Management Services

14 Harrington Road
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920

TEL: (401) 462-2317
FAX: (401) 462-0393

MEMORANDUM

TO: Statewide Workforce Initiative
FROM: Division of Quality Management Services
DATE: May 9, 2022
SUBJECT: Age requirement for Direct Support Professionals and
Direct Support Professional Interns

The Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Services and Hospitals (BHDDH) held an internal meeting regarding age requirements for Direct Support Professionals. Upon conclusion of the meeting that was held on Friday, May 06, 2022, it was concluded that the minimum age requirement for Direct Support Professionals is 18 years of age, the legal age of majority in Rhode Island. [212-10-00-1.21C1\(a\)](#)

It was determined that the BHDDH-licensed Developmental Disability Organizations (DDO) may have a training program for Direct Support Professional Support Interns (DSPI). DSPI's have a minimum age requirement of 16 years of age and must be enrolled in high school. DSPI's are not allowed to work alone providing direct supports. A DSPI must be working with a Direct Support Professional Mentor (DSPM). The DSPM is responsible for any and all actions taken by the DSPI.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas Duford".

Signed

May 09, 2022

Dated

Douglas Duford, Associate Director
Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
14 Harrington Road
Cranston, RI 02920-3080

**RI Self-Directed
Services Employer
Toolkit-Draft June
2023**

Rhode Island Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit

Tools to Help Find, Hire and Keep Direct Support Professionals



Preamble

Through self-directed supports you decide who works with you. You are the employer. You can find your own direct support professionals (DSPs). Once you find potential DSPs, you need to interview, hire, and manage them. To learn more about Rhode Island's Self-Directed Supports, explore the following links.

- [Rhode Island Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals Self-Directed Services](#)
- [Self-Directed Supports: What You Need to Know!](#)

This toolkit provides tools that you can use prior to hire, and when hiring, training, and keeping DSPs.

SECTION ONE: Prior to Hire

Managing Your Files

Understanding What You Need from Your Direct Support Professional

[Tool: Daily Living Skills](#)

SECTION TWO: Hiring Your DSP

Finding Your Direct Support Professional

[Tool: Recruitment Checklist](#)

[Tool: Create a Job Description](#)

[Tool: Examples Ads for Job Posting](#)

Making the Right Choice

[Tool: Conducting an Interview & Questions to Ask](#)

[Tool: DSP Selection Sheet](#)

[Tool: Reference Checklist](#)

[Tool: Offer Letter](#)

SECTION THREE: Training Your New DSP

Preparing Your Direct Support Professional

[Tool: Onboarding Checklist](#)

[Tool: Getting to Know You](#)

Communication with Your Direct Support Professional

[Tool: Communication Cues](#)

Direct Support Professional Performance

[Tool: Performance Tracking Sheet](#)

SECTION FOUR: Keeping Your DSP

Stress Less

Celebrate!

Author: Kristi McCann, MSM, SHRM-SCP, Independent Consultant with Human Resources Expertise

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section One: Prior to Hire – Manage Your Files



Manage Files

RECORDKEEPING

Keeping paperwork is important. It shows that services are provided, DSP record(s) are correct for the state, payments were made, and the budget is in good shape.

DSP Records to Maintain:

- ☐ Application and/or Resume
- ☐ Interview notes
- ☐ Tax Documents (Federal & State)
- ☐ Training documents

Keep ALL DSP Documents while the DSP works for you. Once the DSP leaves, keep records for an additional five years.

TIPS FOR BEING MORE ORGANIZED

Staying organized will help you make the most of your time and be more productive.



HAVE NEEDED SUPPLIES READY

Have a file cabinet, hanging files, file folders, & labels for information you must keep.



REGULARLY SET A TIME TO KEEP UP WITH FILES

Plan out your weekly or monthly time to help you make the most of your time.



CLEAN OUT YOUR MIND OF TO-DO LIST

Write down tasks needing to be done and focus on important needs and prevent any burnout.



ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Distractions can be a major productivity killer.



ASK FOR HELP IF NEEDED TO STAY ORGANIZED

Staying organized will help you make the most of your time and be more productive.

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Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section One: Prior to Hire – Understand What You Need from Your Direct Support Professional (DSP)

Understand What You Need from Your DSP

USE YOUR VOICE!

The best advocate for yourself is ... YOU! Finding a DSP to fill all your needs, connects with your personality, and can help you be the best version of yourself, takes time. Before you start trying to find this person, you need to start with writing down or telling a trusted family member what you need most. Then state what common interests you would like your DSPs to have. Having common connections builds a stronger bond in working together.



You can create “A Day in My Life” (example below) as a tool to think about what help you need and the shared interests you hope to have with your DSP.

A DAY IN MY LIFE

6AM - 7AM

Wake up & get out of bed with help. Need help picking out clothes

8AM - 9AM

I do my PT exercises, and I love when others do them with me. I then feed & brush Fluffy, my cat.

10AM - 3PM

I work at Aldi's, 12 minutes from my home.

6PM

Dinner time, and I need help preparing it and a reminder to take my medicines.

7AM - 8AM

Need help making breakfast, and I love cooking. Remind me about medications.

9:30AM

Need a ride to my job.

3PM - 6PM

I love going to movies, cooking, drawing, & being outside.

7PM - 9PM

I like watching basketball games, being with my family, and boardgames before then going to bed.



Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section One: Prior to Hire – Understand What You Need from Your Direct Support Professional (DSP)

TOOL

Understand What You Need from Your DSP

Daily Living Skills



Personal Care

- Showering/Bathing
- Grooming Care
- Nail care
- Brush/Floss Teeth
- Toileting

Chores

- Cleaning Dishes
- Clean Sweeping/Vacuuuming
- Cleaning main rooms
- Dusting
- Tub/shower scrubbing

Dressing

- Dressing Self
- Laundry care
- Selection of clothes for weather
- Selection of clothes for the occasion

Nutrition & Wellbeing

- Plan & shop for meals
- Use of kitchen appliances
- Managing medications
- Arranging medical appointments
- Attending medical appointments

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Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – Find Your Direct Support Professional



Find Your DSP(s)

Featured Points:

- *A job description needs developed based on your needs.*
- *List places to post your DSP opening.*
- *Reach out to contacts who may know of possible DSPs.*
- *Know what to do if there is a low number of DSPs that apply.*

RECRUIT & HIRE

One of the most important tasks is finding the right Direct Support Professional (DSP) to help support your daily needs. Following the advice in this education and the tool worksheet will assist in this important decision.

--Create a job description before posting the role.

--Create a professional email so applicants have a way to send a resume to you.

--Have your list of Daily Living Skills toolkit worksheet.

--Create a list of names of people who may know of possible DSP applicants.

--Put together a list of organizations who may help you find DSPs: social service agencies, DSP Directories, faith organizations.

FOUR STRATEGIES TO FIND DSP(S)

1

Know the characteristics you want in your DSP



It is important to get to know each candidate. Determine how well you connect with the candidate. Do you share similar interest.?



2



Have a detailed job description

Everyone applying needs to know what you would like in the services provided. What are your must haves?



3

Know where to share your job posting



Have a list of places both online and in your local community where you can share your job opening.



4



Make enticing job posting

One of the most crucial aspects of the hiring process is creating an attention-grabbing and detailed job posting.

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – Find Your Direct Support Professional

TOOL

Find Your DSP(s)

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

- Have your Daily Living Skills checklist completed.
- Must have abilities the DSP will have in order to be considered.
- Write a story about what a top-performing DSP would act like and have interest in. Use in job post.
- Create an attractive job post for different media types. (newspaper, online job boards, etc...)
- Have a professional email where resumes can be sent.
- Reach out to organizations who can spread the word and post your position within their networks.

TOOL



CREATE A JOB DESCRIPTION

Instructions: Write detailed responses to each question below. Then organize your answers in the structure on the following page.

1 What is the Job Title? (Direct Support Professional is common, but not required)

2 Write a story about the perfect DSP for you.

3 List the MOST important skills the DSP needs to know how to do? (7- 12 items)

4 How much & what type of experience should the DSP have?

5 What must they physically be able to do? (Lifting, driving, standing for long periods)

6 What range of pay will the DSP earn? (Required in Rhode Island)

7 How can someone apply for the position? (List your email for resume submissions)

8 List any additional information needed: references, car insurance, etc...

THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: _____ **1**

About this Job:

_____ **2**

Job Responsibilities:

- ⊙
- ⊙
- ⊙
- ⊙
- ⊙
- ⊙
- ⊙

3

Experience/Education: _____ **4**

Physical Requirements: _____ **5**

Pay Range: _____ **6**

How to Apply: _____ **7**

Additional Information: **8**

Applicants offered an interview will be asked to provide references and proof of auto insurance.

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – Find Your Direct Support Professional

Find Your DSP(s)

FACTORS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU CREATE A JOB POST

- Know the different places you can post a job ad:
 - Newspaper Ad
 - Online Job Board
 - Flyer
 - Newsletter Announcement
 - External Recruiting Company
- Know how to write for job post method because each need different types of information.
- Grab the attention of those who are searching for a job. How your first line reads will quickly decide if they want to read further!

See the next page for some examples of DSP job posts in different formats.

Newspaper Ad

Direct Support Professional

Need amazing person to help me to live my best life! Assist w/prep for day, cook w/me, drive 2/days/wk, & manage my home. \$18-19.50/hr M-F 9a-5p
Email: Apply@me.com

Keep short and use a lot of abbreviations. These ads charge per word or letter & space. Bold headline is best to help your ad stand out over others.

Online job boards allow for a lot more information. Be as detailed as possible & have keywords that describe your job, it helps in guiding people to your ad when they search. Examples: caregiver, DSP, home attendant, etc...

Online Job Board

Direct Support Professional

Warwick, RI

Job Details

Part-time

Salary Guidelines:

Hourly position: \$18.00 - \$19.50/hr

Job Description:

Looking for an amazing person who wants to help me live my best life!

Requires the following activities:

- Assist in daily preparations to start the day positively.
- Allow me to be your Sous Chef in prepping meals.
- Drive me to my job every Tuesday & Thursday and back home afterward.
- Assist in keeping my home organized and cleaned.
- Assist with reconciling banking and budget.

Email resume to: apply@me.com

Newsletter Article

Great Job Opportunity Supporting a Neighbor

As a strong neighborhood that supports one another, we wanted to share about a job opportunity. Our neighbor, Sheldon, is looking to hire someone to support him with his daily needs.

This person will help him in getting ready each weekday and twice per week will provide transportation to his job. He wants someone who enjoys cooking so he might learn some new techniques and recipes. The person needs to assist in managing some regular household needs and help in cleaning tasks that are hard for him to do. (Nothing like cleaning all the windows)

If that sounds like something you would enjoy; send Sheldon an email to let him know your interest. Or perhaps you know of someone that might have these skill sets and interests. Send all emails to: apply@me.com

A newsletter can be much more personal and written to a specific audience. Be sure to help write it so information shared is limited to your comfort.



Make the Right Choice

Featured Points:

- *Review application and learn about their work history.*
- *Prepare interview questions and decide who will participate in the interview.*
- *Stay away from questions of discrimination.*
- *Know what factors matter most in selecting the best DSP.*

INTERVIEWING AND SELECTING YOUR NEW HIRE

To begin, your application needs to have the proper information, so you know where the DSP has worked, how long they worked there, who supervised them, how to reach the employer, and a short description of what they did in the position. This allows you to learn if they have the basic experience you need.

Before interviewing anyone, you, or the person helping you hire a DSP, should prepare questions ahead of time. Ensure that you ask the same questions to all candidates for a fair evaluation. You can use the sample interview form found in this toolkit.

What factors matter most to you? Below is a list of experiences, skills, and knowledge you might want to consider. Select five most important “must haves” from the list below.

- Kindness* *Experience with meal assistance* *Good driving record*
- 5+ years experience* *Knows how to use lift equipment* *Speaks calmly*
- Listens well* *Worked in-self direct before* *Eager to involve in community*
- Is a good cook* *Comfortable in personal care* *Good connection* *Patient*
- Knows of adaptive technologies* *Creative* *Looking for long term career*

Be aware of your bias

- Be open to ALL applicants.
- Don't ask questions about:
 - Race, religion, culture, age, marriage/relationships.
 - If pregnant, gender identity, disability.



Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – *Make the Right Choice*



TOOL

Make the Right Choice: Interview Questions

Featured Points:

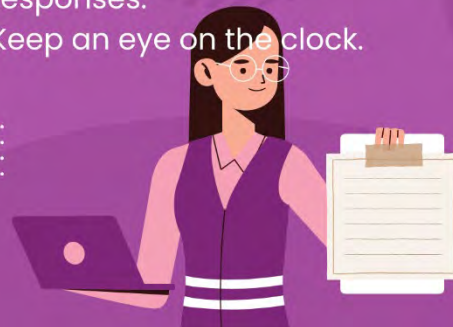
- ***Have your interview questions prepared.***
- ***Only ask the questions prepared.***
- ***Avoid conversations and questions about the other person's faith, relationships, disability, & ethnic background.***

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

Follow these tips to best prepare for each interview you have with an applicant. An example list of interview questions you can use to interview DSP's is on the next page.

INTERVIEW PREP

- Ensure a quiet & private space.
- Make sure you print the interview questions out.
- Have notepaper ready to write responses.
- Keep an eye on the clock.



Interview Questions

FULL NAME: _____ DATE OF Interview: _____
Day / Month / Year

PREFERRED NAME: _____ On Time for Interview? (check if yes)
Unit No. St. No. Street Town/City State Zip Code

ADDRESS: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

Ask each question below clearly. Allow the person time to think and respond. Write notes in a notebook about their answers to each of your questions.

1. What do you do to motivate yourself to work hard in times when you are lacking motivation?

2. Explain what qualities make *you* a good Direct Support Professional

3. Explain your work history to me.

4. What experience do you have working with individuals with _____? (A specific need such as: feeding, Alzheimer's, communication boards, etc...)

5. Describe a time when you faced a difficult challenge with an individual you support *and* what you did to resolve the challenge.

6. Why did you leave your last position? (If they have not left this position, ask how they plan on coordinating schedules.)

7. What makes you feel successful in a job?

8. What are your expectations/needs, if I hire you?

9. Describe what community involvement means for you and how would you help (persons name they would support) be involved in activities of his/her choice?

10. (*If they will need to drive anyone in their car*) Do you have a valid driver's license? Do you have a reliable car to use that is fully insured?

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – Make *the Right Choice*



TOOL

Give an Offer Letter & Start Strong

Featured Points:

- ***Use all tools available to make the best choice.***

- ***Use the Selection sheet to guide your decision.***

MAKE THE BEST CHOICE

Key factors to think about when you decide to make an offer to a candidate:

- Give yourself time to think about all the information you have gathered on each person.

- Think about your priority needs first.

- Talk with a trusted family member or friend.


- Try not to get stressed about your decision. Take a break for a day to think about who you would like to hire.

- Use all your resources to make the best decision.

DSP SELECTION SHEET

USE OPEN SPACES FOR ADDITIONAL CRITERIA YOU WANT TO USE:

CANIDATES NAMES:	CRITERIA:									
	ON-TIME FOR INTERVIEW?	DSP WORK HISTORY?	SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR NEEDS?	EXPECTATIONS THE SAME?	INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES?	RELIABLE CAR & DRIVERS LIENCE?				

TOTALS: 										

CHECK EACH CRITERIA BOX PER CANIDATE THAT MEETS THE NEED OR EXPECTATION

TOOL

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP - Make the Right Choice



Check References

REFERENCE CHECKLIST

Candidate Name: _____

Education Check Degree: _____ Earned? Yes or No	Name of Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____ Dates Attended: _____
Certification Check	Certification: _____ Date Earned: _____

Work References

Employer Name: _____ Contact Person: _____ Contact Phone or E-mail: _____		
Information to Confirm:	Notes:	Acceptable?
What was the title of the position held?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Dates of Employment?		<input type="checkbox"/>
What were some of the responsibilities in the position they held?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good attendance?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good communicator?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of work performance:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Would you rehire them?		<input type="checkbox"/>

Work References

Employer Name: _____ Contact Person: _____ Contact Phone or E-mail: _____		
Information to Confirm:	Notes:	Acceptable?
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Good communicator?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of work performance:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Would you rehire them?		<input type="checkbox"/>

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What was the title of the position held?		<input type="checkbox"/>
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What were some of the responsibilities in the position they held?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good attendance?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good communicator?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of work performance:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Would you rehire them?		<input type="checkbox"/>

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Two: Hiring Your DSP – Make the Right Choice



TOOL

Give an Offer Letter & Start Strong

KEY POINTS TO HAVE WITHIN AN OFFER LETTER

- Begin with a positive note like: *Congratulations* or *You were the top candidate*, or *You are hired!*
- In the first paragraph provide the following information: The title of the position, the address of where the employment will be based, the rate of pay per hour, who the supervisor will be and the date on which you would like them to start.
- State any benefit options offered regarding health, dental, or vision insurance, if applicable.
- The next paragraph needs to include any conditional items for them to have the position. These can include: [Rhode Island background check](#), driving record check, proof of auto insurance and/or evidence of education.
- State any documentation they will need to have of their start date. Commonly you will need to see their documents to verify their ability to work in the United States. Follow the guidelines for completing the Federal form called an [I-9](#). Additionally, they will need to complete a [RI W-4](#), this is the state withholding allowance document.
- End with a positive message on how you are looking forward to them accepting. You can suggest a timeframe in which you would like to have an acceptance. Ask them to sign the letter (so you can keep in your files).

Example letter on the next page....

Offer of Employment

June 1, 2025

Candidate's Name

Persons' Street Address
City, Rhode Island Zip Code

Dear _____,

Congratulations! I am pleased to offer a part-time position as Direct Support Professional. The location you will report to each day is 123 Apple Peartree Lane, Warwick, RI 02888, with flexible scheduled hours each week. The position pays \$18.50/hour. I would like to have you begin on June 10th.

This offer is conditional on successfully passing a Rhode Island background check and providing evidence of valid auto insurance.


On your first day, please bring documents proving your eligibility to work in the United States. This can include your driver's license, social security card, or passport. You will complete a Federal I-9 form, RI W-4, and an employee record form.

I am excited to hear your response to this offer. I would appreciate hearing from you by June 4th. If you could sign the letter signifying your acceptance. I look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

Your Signature
Your Name

 Your_email@me.com

 123-456-7890

 123 Apple Peartree Lane, Warwick, RI 02888



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP – Prepare your Direct Support Professional

Prepare Your DSP

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

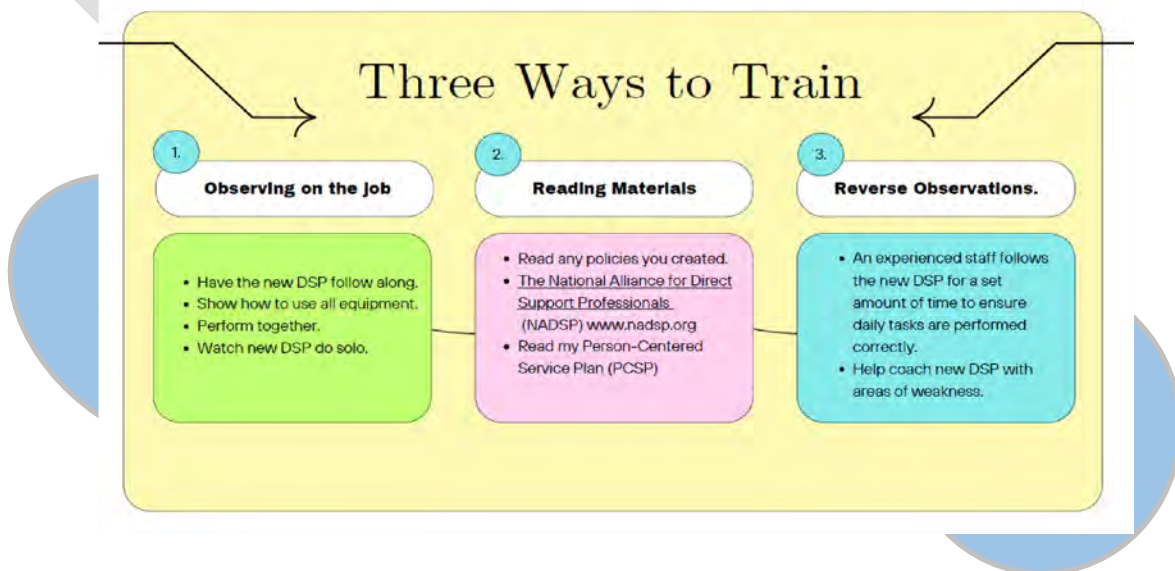
What are your expectations for your DSP(s):

Timeliness: starting your shift, transporting to my job, reporting hours worked each week, communicating concerns to others, following schedule for cleaning and other routines, and completing training materials for position.

Communication: always talk with respect to you, other DSP(s), and family, contribute to the plan of community activities for the month, and maintaining your daily care notes.

Safety: ensure all equipment is in good working order, the emergency numbers are always accessible, there are not any safety hazards within the home, and supplies needed for my care are in stock.

Rules: respectfully follow house rules (i.e.: no smoking, eating my food, excessive cellphone usage...), work regulations for employment, and reporting hours and work notes.



Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP – Prepare your Direct Support Professional



TOOL

Prepare Your DSP

Quick ways to have a stronger connection

Be prepared with the paperwork that needs completed

Introduce the new DSP to important people in your life

Talk about experiences of great times with other DSPs

Be 100% yourself

Allow plenty of time for questions

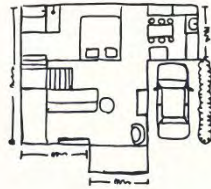
Take the time to connect on areas of common interest



On-boarding Checklist



Review Schedule
& Job Description



Tour of Home



Review Supplies &
Medications



Daily
Schedule/Needs



Together Review
the PCSP



Discuss Family
Involvement



Review the House
Rules



Medical Team



Community
Involvements

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP – Prepare your Direct Support Professional



TOOL

Prepare Your DSP

“The more we share, the more we have”

- Leonard Nimoy

“ Our fingerprints don’t fade from the lives we touch.”

- Judy Blume

TAKING THE TIME TO GET TO KNOW YOU

Telling your story is important. Create a list for your DSP and share:

- List of items that every DSP needs to know about you.
- List of those most important to you.
- Who is part of your support team.
- Places you like to travel.
- About your job.
- Things you dislike.
- Your everyday routines.
- What your DSP’s must help with.
- Tips in working with you.
- Things you enjoy for fun.
- Things you want to learn.

An example of a person’s story is on the next page.

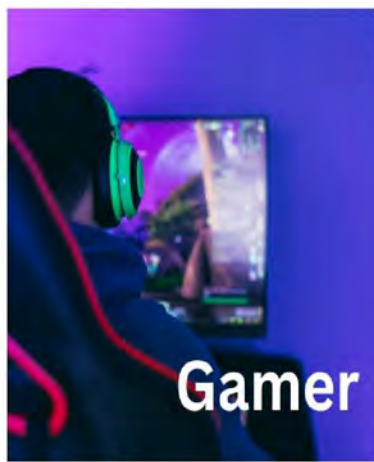
Who I Am

Family



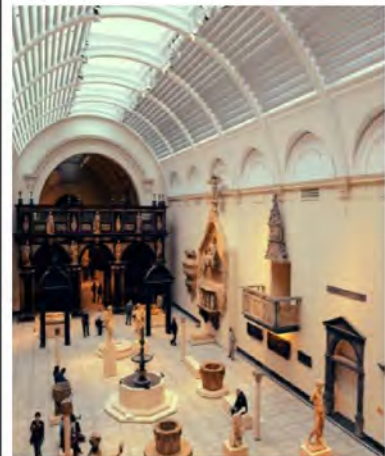
Hard To wake

Need Help With



Love Horses

Love Vegetables



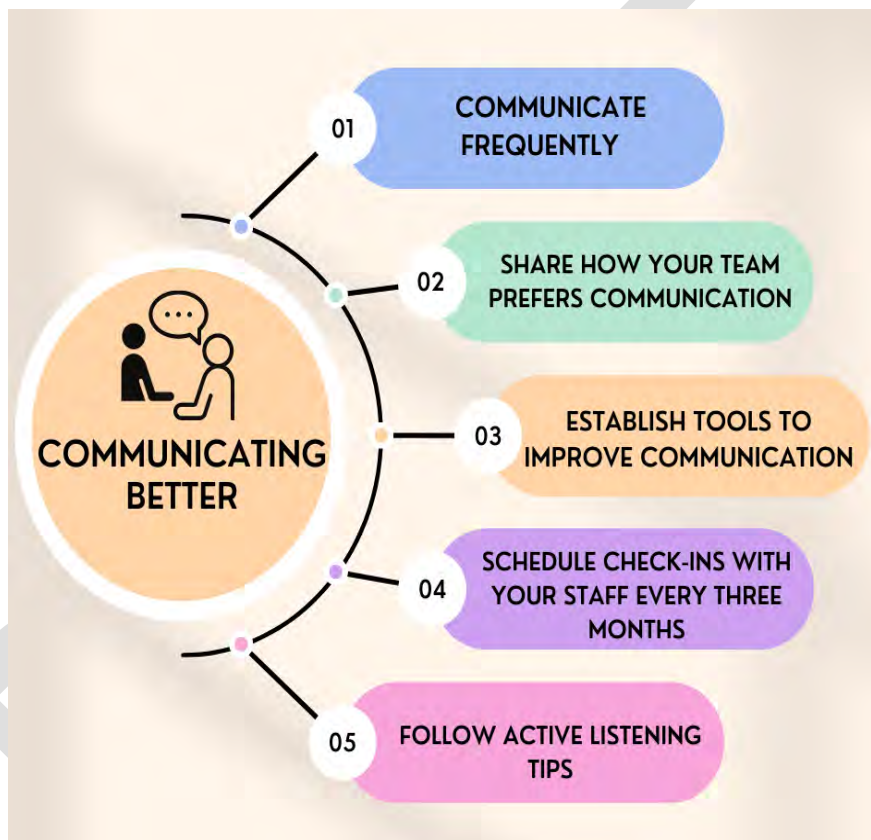
Love Museums

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP – *Communication* with your Direct Support Professional



Communication with Your DSP(s)



The Art Of Active Listening

How To Really Listen & Not Just Hear

Pay Attention

Make eye contact as a sign that you care about what they say

Show That You Understand

It can be by nodding, or saying yes, mhhm, aha, or okay

Give Feedback

Respond to them by asking or expressing your thoughts

Don't Judge

It's important to be open-minded and save your negative thoughts

Give The Right Gesture

Non-verbal communication shows your true intention

Just Listen

Sometimes it is best to just be there and listen. No comment, no judgment!

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP – Communication *with your Direct Support Professional*



TOOL

Communication with Your DSP(s)

Communication Cues

CONSIDERATIONS DURING A CONVERSATION

NON-VERBAL	VERBAL	ASK QUESTIONS	WHEN TO PAUSE	GIVE FEEDBACK
Be careful of arm crossing, eye-rolls, sighs, and poor eye contact.	Watch tone of voice and choose words wisely.	Be curious when you are trying to understand by asking questions.	When you are uncertain or emotions are running the conversation, just pause before responding.	Share what was heard and you understand and how it matters to you.

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP –Direct Support Professional Performance (DSP)

DSP Performance





Review DSP Performance

Regularly meet with your staff.

Arrange one-on-one meetings with each staff every three months.

Remember active listening skills and communication cues from the previous lessons.

Poor Performance Management Can Result in Abuse

Examples of a DSP Taking Advantage of You

- Takes something that belongs to you
- Tells embarrassing stories about you
- Wants to exchange something of unequal value
- Purchases items in your name
- Wants access to your bank account

Examples of Physical Harm

- Bruising from excessive grabbing
- Slapping, punching, or pushing
- Tripping you on purpose

Examples of Mental Abuse and Neglect

- Leaving you alone when you need care
- Withholding food and beverages
- Devaluing your worth through words and actions
- Preventing you from receiving medical care or medications

Examples of Sexual Abuse

- Inappropriate touching of your body
- Sexual activity you do not want

How to hold tough conversations



Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative



Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Three: Train Your New DSP –Direct Support Professional Performance

TOOL

DSP Performance

COMMUNICATION TIPS ON PERFORMANCE

When talking about performance, please remember these helpful points:

- Communicate often.
- Talk in a private space.
- Be clear with expectations.
- Express your concerns with performance.
- Provide written responses.
- Refer to steps on how to hold a tough conversation.

Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:

Section Four: Keep Your Direct Support Professional – Stress Less

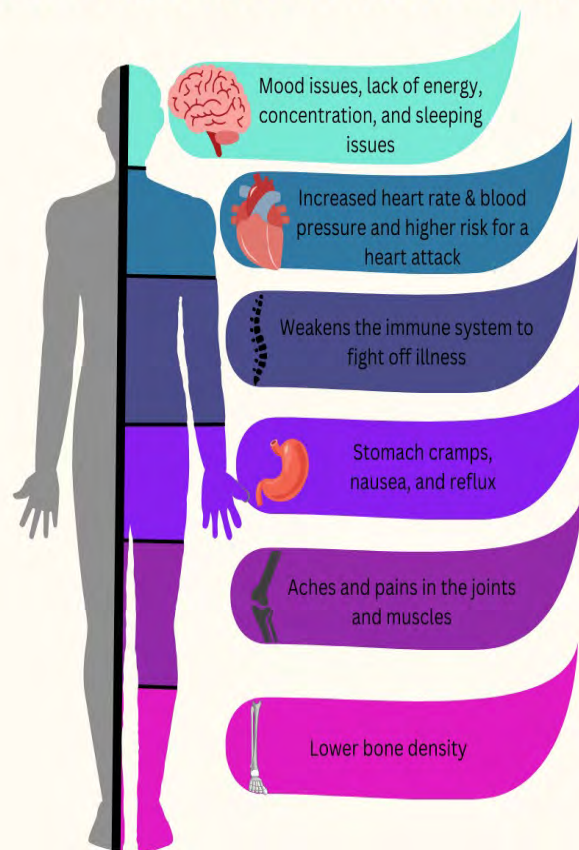


Stress Less

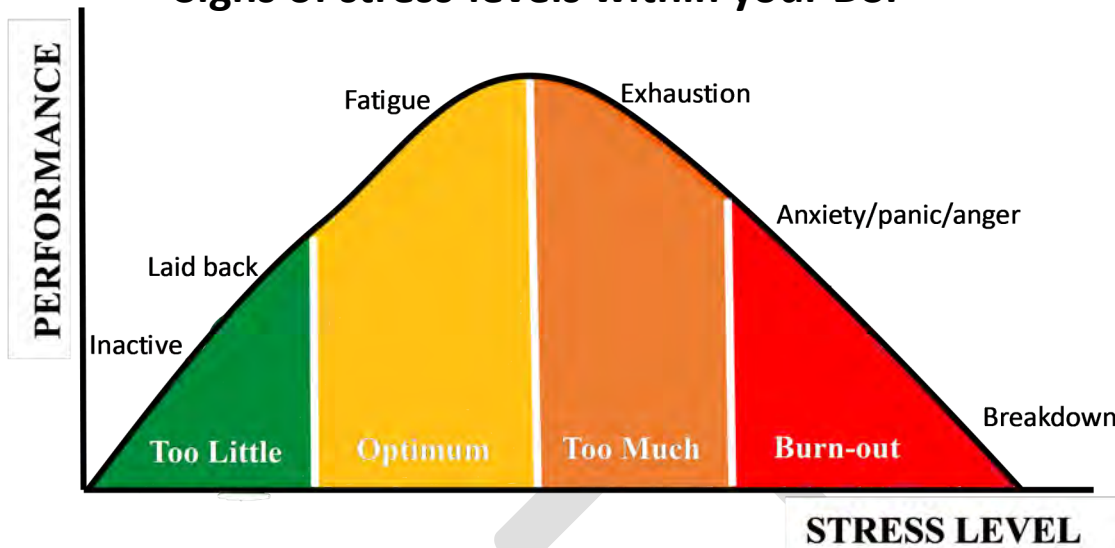
Featured Points:

- *How stress can lower your health and well-being.*
- *Signs that show when your DSP is getting too stressed.*
- *How to help your DSP decrease stress levels.*

HOW STRESS AFFECTS AREAS OF THE BODY



Signs of stress-levels within your DSP



DSP's taking care of themselves is important. Signs to look for:

- Feels tired or has trouble sleeping.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Anxiety or depression.
- Neglect their own personal needs.
- Overly impatient.
- Feelings of helpless/hopeless.
- Gets sick often.
- Not doing their job.
- Resentful attitude.
- Overreacts many times.



Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

Self-Directed Supports Employer Toolkit:



Section Four: Keep Your Direct Support Professional – *Celebrate!*

Celebrate!

CELEBRATE YOUR DSP'S!!

Employee of the
Month

Celebrate
Birthdays

Provide
Additional
Education

Tell Others
About Your
Amazing Staff

Reward Above &
Beyond Care

Recognize
Anniversary
Dates in Job



Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report

BHDDH Narrative



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

6 Harrington Road – Simpson Hall
Cranston, RI 02920

TEL: (401) 462-3421

FAX: (401) 462-2775

Capacity – Workforce Required Outcomes

The Statewide Workforce Initiative (SWI) was established to build capacity within the Adult DD Provider Organizations and to assist individuals Self-Directing their services with workforce related concerns. This work took the form of establishing workgroups (Recruitment/Retention; Credentialing/Standards; Training/Professional Development; and Institutions of Higher Education) to assist with addressing specific areas of work-related needs and to address ways to effectively increase number of DSP. This also meant that the staff would need to be trained so they have the skill set to do the work, feel competent in their roles, and remain in their positions. Throughout this past year a lot of work has been done. Two Statewide Workforce Summits were held, one in December and one in January. Both were well attended with a variety of stakeholders. There was work done at these Summits to direct the course of action the SWI will take.

There was a subject matter expert, Amy Hewitt, consulted for these Summits. Amy Hewitt was able to be a part of both Summits and help inform the agendas. As a direct result of her organization's participation, she has now taken on the scope of the SWI work. Direct Workforce Solutions is now providing the support for the SWI. There has been some reframing of the work currently underway. The workgroups tasked with implementing many of the tasks and activities have shifted. The new groups are Marketing and Recruitment, Data and Reporting, Policy Guidance and Worker Voice, Training and Professional Development, and Selection and Retention. There is also the Coordinating Council, which plays a supporting role to the above-named workgroups. Work will continue to be done with Provider Organizations and with those in the Self-Direct Service Model. Direct Workforce Solutions Subject Matter Expert (SME) Amy Hewitt will be engaging with these two groups to develop a sustainable statewide workforce development infrastructure over the course of 2.5 years. (See Sage Squirrel May Status Report)

Fully implement the expectations of the Statewide Workforce Initiative

Redefining the Position to Reflect Community-Based Responsibilities.

Effective Recruitment – Broadening Recruitment Populations and Demographics, Realistic Job Previews, Broad Public Campaigns, Creating Apprenticeships and Pathways for Secondary and Post-Secondary Students and other strategies referenced (in the report).

Training Requirements based on the various core competency sets listed (in the report) and unique needs of the Rhode Island workforce.

Credentialing Aligned with Training Requirements.

Effective Retention Strategies – Strategies that support personal and career growth including facilitating completion of degree programs, exploration of public service loan forgiveness, supporting staff to develop plans to achieve personal career goals.

Detailed plan (with dates) for accomplishing these functions

Please see Direct Workforce Solutions contract, which details SWI work to be done over the next 2 years.

Please also see the work being done with RI EOHHS. The EOHHS is on a parallel track doing Statewide Workforce efforts. DD partners with them in the activities they are doing, and one of the state leads for this work is highly engaged in the DD SWI activities. They are a co-lead on one of the workgroups mentioned in a section above. Please see attached Rhode Island Health and Human Services Workforce Initiative Annual Progress Report. In the appendix, it lists public/private partnerships in the work. Many of the DDOs are engaged with this work as well.

There are also the Transformation Phase I activities that were dedicated to increasing workforce capacity. This work was started in February of 2022 when the funding was disbursed for the Transformation Phase I activities. Please see the Transformation Fund Phase I Activities List attached, which provides details on this work. Providers engaged in recruitment and retentions activities, which included bonuses and trainings. These activities are still in progress and align nicely with the SWI work.

Documentation of involvement from higher education in recruitment and retention strategies

In the SWI Marketing and Recruitment group, there are plans to engage Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) in a more meaningful way to make solid connections. They are looking to assign interested providers to each of the IHEs. One provider would be assigned to each IHE to form relationships with each of the internship program managers. These assigned liaisons would be able to find out what program's DSP qualify for in the provider organization to do internships, what the requirements are, and what the supervision requirement entails. This information can be shared with providers interested in working with interns. By understanding the requirements and having a person the providers know who can connect them to intern candidates makes the process much less cumbersome, and therefore, providers more willing and open to utilizing interns. (See Snapshot of Rhode Island's State Workforce Initiative (SWI))

Some work did begin with looking at Secondary Education to find out about internships with high school students. Needing to know what the requirements were, information was gathered from different sources to understand if there is an interest in the CTE programs partnering with the SWI. Please see the attached Memo regarding Age Requirements for Direct Support Professional Interns. The EOHHS is working with the CTE Director to expand upon the technical careers

currently offered. The issue with DSP is that it is not a recognized career field, there is no Federally recognized code for this career, and it falls under personal care and home healthcare.

Documentation of specific outreach and guidance to those who self direct their services

Individuals who self-direct their services and advocates/family members representing those who self-direct are engaged in the SWI workgroups. There was a presence from those self-directing at both Statewide Workforce Summits. In the Direct Workforce Solutions contract there is details of the work that will be done with individuals self-directing their services. Please see Deliverable 3 in the Direct Workforce Solutions contract. There will be 3 cohorts with up to 8 self-directed employers in each. Activities for each of the cohorts is listed in the attached contract under Deliverable 3.

In addition, Sage Squirrel put together a comprehensive RI Self-Directed Services Employer Toolkit. This toolkit will be shared with individuals self-directing their services. It will be provided to Fiscal Intermediaries, RIPIN, it will be put out on the Self-Directed Users Listserv, made available on the DD website, the Sherlock website, and it will be shared with partner agencies and advocates to disseminate.

The work RIPIN is beginning under their new contract will help with outreach efforts. They will be tasked with assisting to disseminate any materials put together in the SWI workgroups. They will begin to hold webinars late Summer and trainings in early Fall on several topics related to self-direction. These sessions will be an opportunity to get information out to those self-directing their services. There have been discussions with Direct Workforce Solutions to make sure that we align the work being done under that contract with the work being done under the RIPIN contract. When there is information and materials generated from the self-direct cohorts in the SWI work, RIPIN will be able to partner to disseminate that work product to a broader audience.

Statewide Workforce Initiative will meet the benchmarks defined in the 5/3/2022 court order and will include ALL partners public and private in development and implementation of workforce initiatives.

Number of actual (not simply hits on a website) applicants – both agency-directed and self-directed

Please see attached Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report, which details the number of applicants per Agency.

There currently is no way to track the number of applicants for those self-directing their services. Individuals self-directing receive the applicant's information or applications themselves as they are the employee. It is not until the employee is being hired is there a record of the applicant in the system.

Number of new employees – both agency-directed and self-directed

Please see attached Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report which details the number of new employees per Agency.

The total number of hires for those self-directing their services was 686 from July 1, 2022 – June 27, 2023.

Number of paid internships and partnerships with higher education – higher education entities involved, provider organizations involved, number of internships by discipline or role

The Court Milestone DSP Hiring Report has information on the number of interns. There are not many at this point and time, but it is an area where work is being done to increase these numbers as referenced above.