State Employment Leadership Network

Technical Assistance Overview
Benefits of SELN Membership

SELN member states have access to direct state-specific technical assistance (TA) throughout each 12-month membership period. Requests for TA vary widely across states and may shift during the membership year as internal or external forces impact strategic goals. The most challenging aspect typically is prioritizing numerous activities in a time of limited resources.

Employment systems change is different in every state. Building from a comprehensive state assessment, the SELN project team builds familiarity with a state's infrastructure to guide suggestions. System change work is one part of each state's continuous quality improvement process, which in turn guides TA decisions.

Examples of SELN Member Technical Assistance

The SELN is a nimble organization, allowing for quick responses to the needs of our customers. The following examples illustrate the wide variety of TA our project team provides to member states each year.

In each category below, our overarching goal is to support member states to determine and carry out the most realistic and achievable activities. In doing so, we support states to measure the impact of their actions on employment outcomes for their citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Leadership, Policies, and Goals

States must show depth of knowledge and tenacity as they move toward employment systems change and must communicate effectively with a wide range of players. TA from our project team includes:

› Hosting leadership capacity building sessions with state and regional staff.

› Supporting the development of requests for proposals (RFP), such as applications for piloting new employment-related activities.

› Suggesting terminology illustrating the relationship of funding issues to other systems work (e.g., a policy on "post-eligibility treatment of income" as reflected in home and community-based waiver applications).

› Developing and evaluating policy and strategy marketing documents on the state and national landscape for employment of people with IDD (e.g., legislative briefs and data snapshots).

Training and Technical Assistance, Including Workforce Development

States need a strong, competent workforce to increase the number of people with IDD who are successful in individual competitive integrated jobs. TA from our project team includes:

› Educating members regarding nationally known training providers and curriculums to increase professional competencies of paid staff.

› Providing training to increase the key role support coordinators play in assisting individuals.

› Supporting development of capacity building strategy and investments including how states build infrastructure for and invest in training and TA.

› Providing members access to and assistance with technology for implementation of state efforts (e.g., online platforms for hosting and marketing events, surveys, project management).

Interagency Partnerships and Collaboration

State IDD agencies must form effective relationships with other state and community partners. TA from our project team includes:

› Hosting strategy sessions with a range of players to discuss new or renewed employment initiatives (e.g., families, businesses, vocational rehabilitation (VR), education departments, health services, and other state agencies).

› Assisting with creating or revising memorandums of agreement/understanding.

› Conducting analysis of shared VR–IDD policies and practices.

› Sharing strategies and examples to improve collaboration and partnerships.

Provider-Level Organizational Change

State systems have a role in supporting provider transformation and organizational change toward high-quality community-based employment services. TA from our project team includes:

› Facilitating development of communities of practice to engage in discussions, identify challenges, and address those challenges.

› Identifying systemic approaches and strategies to promote provider transformation.

› Reviewing current provider qualifications as outlined in Medicaid waivers and recommending edits.

› Offering examples of provider organizations that have successfully shifted toward enriching and robust community-based options.

Financing, Contracting, and Funding Realignment

Member states must identify funding-related barriers to achieving integrated employment outcomes and develop funding and contracting strategy. TA from our project team includes:

› Engaging in an analytic approach to increase a state's understanding of funding options. This includes examining how current funding strategies and methodologies need to be modified in support of integrated individual employment.

› Working in partnership with the member state to ensure sequenced funding across systems is well understood and federal regulations are clarified in support of the state's employment goals.

› Analyzing and helping develop a detailed plan to realign resources to reflect employment as the preferred outcome of day and employment services.

Performance Measurement and Quality Management

Data-driven decision-making is a key state strategy for lasting employment systems change and outcomes. TA from our project team includes:

› Analyzing state-specific data and generating reports for information-sharing.

› Designing web-based platforms for data collection and management (through new or existing systems).

› Assisting member states to develop realistic data management goals.

› Evaluating current quality management strategies.

Services and Service Innovation

States must structure publicly funded services to lead to high-quality employment outcomes. TA from our project team includes:

› Providing expertise on writing service definitions, developing support strategies, and creating policies that support employment goals.

› Reviewing employment-specific resources (e.g., individual plan tools, assessment processes) and suggesting adjustments.

› Addressing future service needs and making targeted recommendations.

Online Events

States have access to all needed technical support for customized online events. TA from our project team includes:

› Hosting and managing online events in coordination with the member state's needs.

› Connecting members to experts in the field on content that demonstrates innovative and emerging practices in service delivery and addresses key challenges.

› Addressing topics such as provider transformation, community life engagement, individuals with criminal backgrounds, role of families, case manager competencies, funding realignment, and informed choice. Many examples can be viewed online (contact the SELN team for links).

Learning Community

A hallmark of SELN membership is the range of unique opportunities to learn with others around the country. TA from our project team includes:

› Hosting monthly network meetings on timely and relevant topics.

› Leading small working group discussions with states doing similar work.

› Maintaining and growing an extensive library of resources and connecting states with the most relevant ones based on their presenting concerns.

› Running an annual member meeting with access to federal partners and extensive networking.

› Building virtual community through the SELN Hub, a members-only online portal for resource sharing, dialogue, and critical updates.

Please contact the SELN project team with questions and to discuss your employment and day supports' systems change priorities.

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The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

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