

4-25-14

**To: Employment First stakeholders**

**From: Statewide Employment First Coordinator Mike Maley**

**Re: Employment First: Partnering with National Agencies**

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

As part of the Employment First effort, we strive to partner with outside agencies that offer helpful resources and guidance. This week's message is to inform stakeholders on our efforts, specifically around Oregon's participation in the [National Association of States Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services](#) (NASDDDS), and how this relates to the Employment First initiative.

Over the years, Oregon's Department of Human Services (DHS) through its Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS) has been very active in NASDDDS. The association's goal is to "promote and assist state agencies in developing effective, efficient service delivery systems that furnish high-quality supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)."

NASDDDS has two projects to help member states improve employment outcomes for people with I/DD. One is the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN). The second is the National Core Indicators (NCI).

SELN is a network of 28 states that provides technical assistance and guidance to state agencies to develop more effective employment systems and partnerships to serve individuals with I/DD. The network is a place where states can connect, collaborate, problem solve and share resources.

SELN started in 2006 and Oregon was an early member of the network. Due to budget reductions Oregon was not able to renew membership. But Oregon joined again in January 2014 and is now actively involved with SELN.

The goal of SELN is to assist member states in increasing the number of people with I/DD working in the general labor force by assisting states to:

- Develop more effective employment systems and partnerships
- Use data to guide program management at the local and state level
- Improve employment-related staff competencies
- Maximize resources such as funding and employment services
- Share resources for systems change across states

In May, leaders from SELN will be visiting Oregon to meet with leaders from DHS and the Oregon Department of Education, as well as providers, self-advocates and other stakeholders. The purpose of the visit will be to gather information on program strengths and possible barriers and identify desired project outcomes. SELN's assessment will help advance Oregon's objectives to further develop communities of interest among participating states and identify issues of common concern.

The second project of NASDDDS is the National Core Indicators (NCI). NCI is to "support NASDDDS member agencies to gather a standard set of performance and outcome measures that can be used to track their own performance over time, to compare results across states, and to establish national benchmarks."

Oregon has just completed its initial participation in NCI and joined 39 other participating states. Through randomly-selected structured interviews, NCI obtains information on a number of "core indicators." The core indicators are standard measures used across member states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals and families.

NCI data measures address areas including employment, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety. Participating states receive reports for quality assurance and system improvement purposes.

Thank you all for your continued involvement, support, and advocacy for services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. If you have comments or other questions, please email them to [employment.first@state.or.us](mailto:employment.first@state.or.us).

~ Mike

Here are some websites that may be helpful:

- SELN, <http://www.nasddds.org/projects/state-employment-leadership-network-seln/>

- NCI, <http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>
- To view the core indicators that relate specifically to employment, go to: <http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/indicators/domain/individual-outcomes/work/>