



Competitive Integrated Employment Engagement, White Paper & Conference

System Gap Addressed

Why is NCCDD funding this initiative?

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) contracted with i2i Center for Integrated Health to engage the I/DD community and stakeholders in dialogue and visioning for North Carolina's transition to Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has made a commitment to increase CIE and has several initiatives moving this forward. There have been significant questions, concerns, and interest in increasing CIE.

What is Competitive Integrated Employment?

Competitive Integrated Employment is a national and local effort to increase inclusive employment for individuals with disabilities in integrated settings at competitive wages. Through federal legislation and policy, the federal government is prompting States to create plans of action that will move the States toward Competitive Integrated Employment principles, policies, and processes. Governor Cooper has issued an Executive Order outlining the Employment First initiative. In addition, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has developed a Five-Year Strategic Plan to increase Competitive Integrated Employment. There are many perspectives on how North Carolina should proceed with this transition, the timing and important considerations.

Initiative Goals and Objectives

The i2i Center for Integrative Health interviewed individuals representing all stakeholders in the Competitive Integrated Employment discussion and then engaged in an initial information session with stakeholders, providers, and state leaders, and developed a [White Paper](#). Then, i2i took the "leveling the knowledge" component of the initial discussion and placed alongside it national perspectives and lessons learned from NC and other States to ensure that all participants have the same basic understanding of the intent behind Competitive Integrated Employment. Hosting a pre-conference to its semi-annual conference, i2i embedded in the pre-conference this information and these perspectives, serving to meet the following goals of the initiative:

1. Learn about and educate on New Funding and Initiatives for Competitive Integrated Employment in North Carolina.
2. Further an understanding and inclusion of all CIE perspectives as the state increases Competitive Integrated Employment opportunities.
3. Find common ground on moving CIE forward in NC.
4. Hear updated information as well as a national perspective.

Achievements and Outcomes to Date

Key 12-Month Goals Identified at Summit: Topic Areas

Policy and Funding for Competitive Integrated Employment:

- Funding for providers to transform service models.
- Discuss as separate concepts, 14(c) & ADVP
- Providing funds to ADVPs/subminimum wage employers (in addition to SPARK pilot sites) to transition to paying participants at least minimum wage. Funds can be used to support hiring and training job coaches for individuals that need an individual job coach.
- Dismantle workshops *after* implementing something better / somewhere better to go to.

Train Providers of Supported Employment and Tailored Care Managers:

- Consider the creation of a Supported Employment training all providers should utilize across the state for Direct Support Workers so there is consistency amongst job coaches.
- Ensure adequate training of MCO staff (Care Managers) so they can properly educate on CIE/SE.

Educating Employers Around the State and Building Employment Opportunities:

- Create FAQ sheet to be provided to potential employers educating on labor laws / benefits of SE.
- Fund provider transformation to help employers who are competitive transition toward inclusion.
- Utilize peer employers to share their success stories.
- Educate employers about employing people with disabilities (e.g., Windmills Trainings).

Strengthening Components of Supported Employment:

- Job and Benefits Coaching
- Increase Employment Supports
- Build Workforce Competencies
- Interface with Individuals living with I/DD around CIE

Address Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) that Impact Employment:

- Address SDoHs that negatively impact employment for individuals living with I/DD – e.g., transportation, communication barriers.
- Promote more transportation options (e.g., Lyft, mileage rates, support rates).
- Recognition/Funding of transportation as a stand-alone, life-long service (as needed).

Additional information

Who is the contractor and how can I get involved?

The [i2i Center for Integrated Health](#) is the contractor. Contact Ann Rodriguez, MHA, Executive Director at ann@i2icenter.org to learn how to get involved or if you have questions.

Download the CIE White Paper: [North Carolina Transition to Competitive Integrated Employment: Valuing all Perspectives \(2022\)](#)