

Partners with Business Annual Report to the Legislature, June 2019 - May 2020

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Partners with Business initiative in 2017 to assist businesses interested in hiring and employing people with disabilities using an evidence-based coaching model. In its second year, Partners with Business provided grant funds and coaching to 5 employment service providers.¹

Cost Savings through Stronger Partnerships with Employers

Employment results from 13 participants with disabilities was collected to determine the impact on Medicaid savings when employment service providers invest in creating stronger partnerships with employers.



Before Partners with Business		After Partners with Business	
Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching : 5.5 hours/week	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job: \$7,150	Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching Support 2.2 hours/week	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job \$2,860
5.5 hours/week	\$7,150	2.2 hours/week	\$2,860

The Partners with Business investment resulted in a 60% reduction in the number of Medicaid funded job coaching support hours. This saved the Medicaid system on average \$4,290 annually per person or about \$55,770 total per year for the 13 participants with disabilities in this year's Partners with Business cohort.

Ten of the thirteen pilot participants were essential workers, maintaining employment during the COVID-19 pandemic, with average wages of \$10.29 per hour for 16 hours per week.

“ I love the time I am working with [their employee with disabilities]. It ...reminds me of what my job as a manager really should be. Instead of jumping in immediately to put out fires - I step back and allow my crew to do their jobs. I take this time to look at the big picture of how things are working in my store and how I can make it better. ”

Manager at McDonalds in Luxemburg

Partners with Business Success Stories:

One grocery store employee works 65 hours per month and had a Medicaid funded job coach with him at work more than 50% of the time. After working with the employer and his coworkers to provide on-the-job support, he now only receives one hour of Medicaid funded job coaching for a check-in every month, saving Medicaid over \$9,700 per year.

¹ Aptiv, Employment Resources Inc., Valley Packaging Industries, and Portal Inc, and My Choice Family Care.

Another employee had a job coach 100% of the time when at her Boys and Girls Club job where she worked 24 hours per month. By working with her employer and coworkers to provide on the job support, the employment service agency was able to reduce her Medicaid funded supports to a one-hour check-in, resulting in \$6,900 in Medicaid savings per year. In addition, she is much happier and more successful on the job with employer provided supports, rather than Medicaid funded job coaches.

Partners with Business Capacity Building:



Ensure good job matches between employers and job seekers with disabilities;



Empower employers to directly train and supervise their employees with disabilities;



Cultivate workplace inclusion and natural supports;



Maximize independence on the job for workers with disabilities; and



Reimburse employers for the costs of providing formal support above and beyond the “natural supports” typically found in the workplace to their employees with disabilities, rather than relying on outside job coaches provided by a vocational agency.

After implementing the Partners with Business best practices illustrated above, participating employment service organizations reported significant improvements in both the competency of their staff and in partnerships with employers as a result of the Partners with Business support they received. Outcomes include:

- Better matching between employer needs and job candidates with disabilities
- More effective approaches in training new hires
- Stronger partnerships with employers to provide extra support to employees with disabilities to ensure their success, rather than relying on Medicaid funded job coaches from the employment service organization

Listen to how Aptiv, Inc., based in La Crosse, used the Partners with Business strategies to increase the number of people they support on the job while decreasing the number of hours they spend job coaching.

For more information about Partners with Business visit: <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/partners-with-business/>



Having [co-worker] support in place, I didn't have to worry about whether a job coach showed up...I know a co-worker is there when he is there.



Employment Resources, Inc.



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.