



Proposed Final Report

Employment and Community Inclusion Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

January 2019

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) prioritizes services that help clients get jobs in the community. It does not determine how its services impact individual clients' quality of life.

Ryan McCord and Melanie Stidham

Contents of presentation

- Overview of services and DDA's prioritization of individual supported employment.
- Legislative Auditor recommendations and supporting evidence:
 1. Measure quality of life.
 2. Ensure clients offered choice of community inclusion.
 3. Strengthen and expand community inclusion.

DDA offers employment and community inclusion services

Employment services help clients find and maintain jobs that match their goals and skills



Individual supported employment



Group supported employment



Prevocational services

Community inclusion helps clients develop skills, foster independence, and form relationships with non-disabled community members

DDA prioritizes individual employment



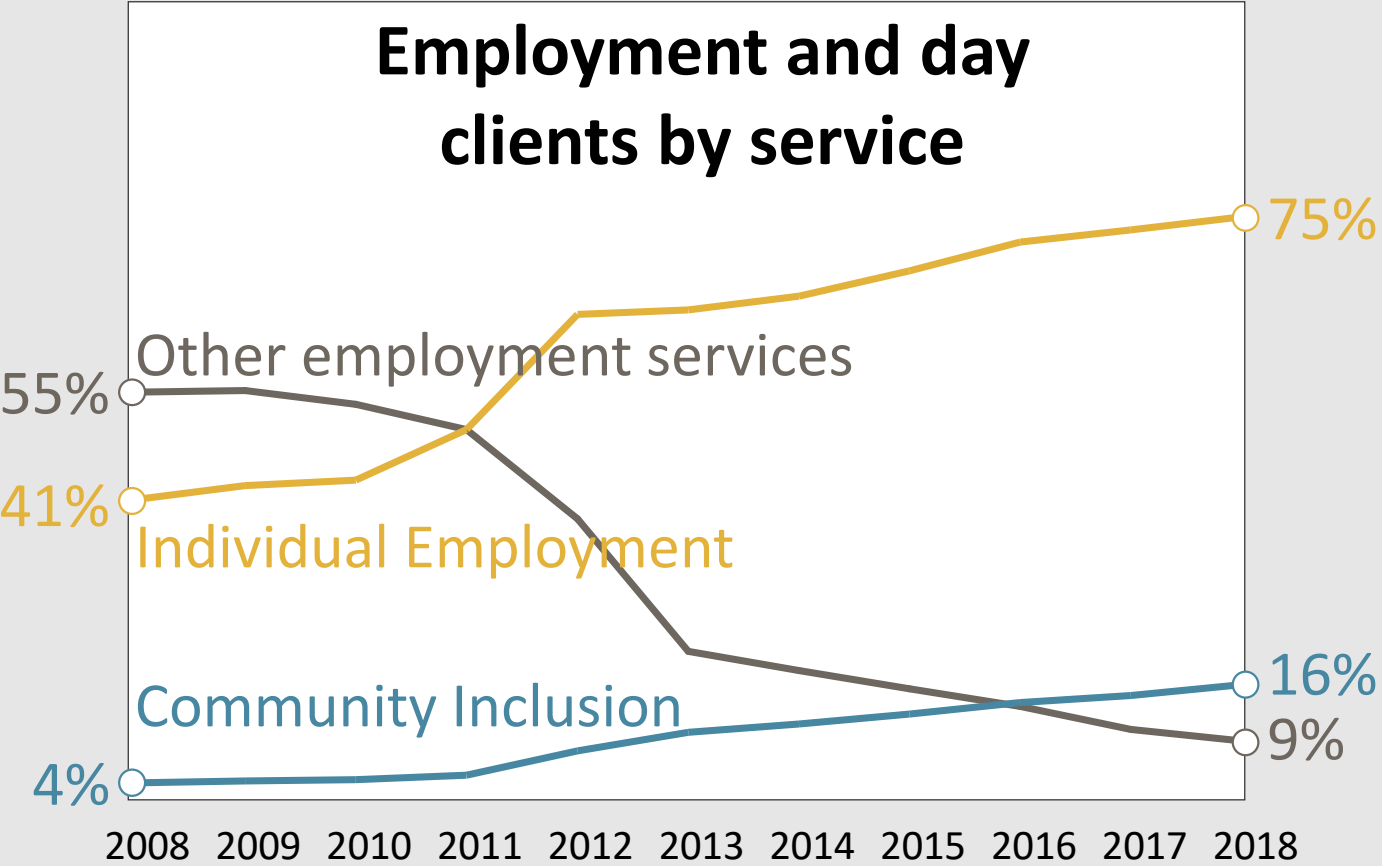
Reimbursement rate caps are structured to incentivize individual employment.

- Individual = \$75/hour
- Group supported = \$65/hour
- Community inclusion = \$35/hour



Additional funding and support services are available to clients enrolled in individual employment.

Prioritization has led to more clients and increased spending for individual employment



73%

OF CLIENTS ENROLLED IN INDIVIDUAL
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES WERE EMPLOYED
IN FISCAL YEAR 2018



They worked an average of 47 hours per month and earned an average wage of \$583 per month.

DDA's living wage objective not met by most clients

Total individuals below/above the poverty line



Recommendations

The Legislative Auditor makes three recommendations regarding DDA's employment and community inclusion services.



Recommendation #1: Quality of Life

DDA should plan and implement a system to measure whether employment and community inclusion clients are achieving quality of life outcomes.



DDA's quality of life benefits



Power and Choice



Integration



Relationships



Competence



Status/Contribution



Health and Safety

The data DDA currently tracks does not measure whether clients are achieving these quality of life outcomes.

In the absence of systematic measurement, there is only an untested assumption that services are improving the clients' quality of life.

Experts recommend measuring quality of life

- Measures allow the state to make more informed decisions about policy, resource allocation, and programs.
- Measuring quality of life is a complex task but best practices and examples can help.

Legislative Auditor Recommendation #1

DDA should plan and implement a system to measure whether employment and community inclusion clients are achieving quality of life outcomes.

- DDA should identify resources needed for the measurement system, including options for implementing it within current budget levels.

DSHS concurs, estimates four FTEs will be required.

Recommendation #2

DDA should verify and track whether staff offer clients the choice to switch to community inclusion services.



“

*Clients age twenty-one and older who are receiving employment services **must be offered** the choice to transition to a community inclusion program **after nine months** of enrollment in an employment program.*

”

RCW 71A.12.290

DDA policy and practice may limit switching to community inclusion services

- DDA staff training materials imply only those who haven't found a job in nine months are eligible.
- Clients may have to specifically request the service.

DDA does not verify or track whether clients are offered choice to switch.

Legislative Auditor Recommendation #2

DDA should verify and track whether staff offer clients the choice to switch to community inclusion services after nine months in employment services.

DSHS concurs.

Recommendation #3

DDA should report to the Legislature on efforts to strengthen and expand community inclusion.



“

*The department shall work with counties and stakeholders to **strengthen and expand** the existing community inclusion program.*

”

RCW 71A.12.290

DDA has made changes that strengthen community inclusion

- Offered training and technical assistance to providers.
- Created frequently asked questions document for clients.
- Developed quality monitoring tool.

- King County: staff report capacity issues for new community inclusion clients.
- Some providers and county staff reported that the reimbursement rate does not cover cost of delivering the service.

**But more
remains to be
done**

Community inclusion rate cap = \$35/hour

Individual employment rate cap = \$75/hour

Legislative Auditor Recommendation #3

DDA should report to the Legislature on its efforts to strengthen and expand community inclusion, including analysis of provider capacity and rate structure.

DSHS concurs, says additional resources required and results may have fiscal implications.



Full Report

<http://leg.wa.gov/jlarc/reports/2018/DDA/pf/default.html>

Contact Us

Research Analysts

Ryan McCord

(360) 786-5186

ryan.mccord@leg.wa.gov

Zack Freeman

(360) 786-5179

zack.freeman@leg.wa.gov

Josh Karas

(360) 786-5298

joshua.karas@leg.wa.gov

Valerie Whitener

(360) 786-5191

valerie.whitener@leg.wa.gov

Melanie Stidham

(360) 786-5190

melanie.stidham@leg.wa.gov

Casey Radostitz

(360) 786-5176

casey.radostitz@leg.wa.gov

Project Coordinator

