

# DBHDS Semiannual Report on Employment

February 18, 2015

## **Employment First Background:**

For many years, DBHDS has recognized the importance of delivering employment services in integrated settings. Over the past few years, both in policy and in practice, the department has undertaken efforts to support individuals with disabilities in having increased access to integrated community-based employment.

In 2008, DBHDS joined the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) sponsored by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services and the University of Massachusetts-Boston Institute for Community Inclusion. DBHDS developed a Virginia-specific SELN Advisory Group made up of over 30 members representing a variety of organizations involved in providing employment services to Virginians.

In 2009, the members of the Virginia SELN Advisory Group completed the *SELN State Strategic Assessment*. The major barriers to employment identified in this assessment were:

1. Lack of incentives for employment service organizations to provide integrated community-based employment;
2. Lack of standard policies across agencies regarding employment services and definitions;
3. Need for review and revision of current regulations impacting the disincentive for people to choose integrated employment (such as the limited flexibility of the current waiver system for people to move from day services to integrated employment);
4. Lack of funding for long term supports;
5. Need for increased education of service providers and individuals about the opportunity for community-based employment and work incentives to support moving into employment; and
6. The need for a greater coordination of employment outcome data collection across and within state agencies.

In 2010, the DBHDS strategic plan, *Creating Opportunities: A Plan for Advancing Community-Focused Services in Virginia (Creating Opportunities Plan)*, was developed. The *Creating Opportunities Plan's* strategic employment priority seeks partnerships among CSBs, the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and Employment Services Organizations (ESOs) to "Provide training and consultation to services providers on implementing innovative supportive employment (SE) models and establishing integrated supported employment teams that include CSBs, DARS, and ESOs."

In October 2011, DBHDS organized an Employment First Summit to begin addressing statewide training and technical assistance needs. As part of this summit, Governor McDonnell issued a Certificate of Recognition to officially promote the Employment First Initiative in Virginia. The department hosted the Second Employment First Summit in October 2012. Additionally, DBHDS set a goal of conducting Regional Employment First Summits around the state in order to present Employment First concepts and ideas to the broadest geographical audience in an effort to improve employment outcomes.

In January 2012, Virginia reached a Settlement Agreement with the US Department of Justice (DOJ), which requires Virginia to further expand and build upon its community-based system of supports and services for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. The agreement contains a section related to integrated day opportunities and enhancing opportunities for employment for individuals with I/DD.

In 2012, DBHDS developed, with advice and consultation from the SELN Advisory Group, an Employment First policy.

### **Employment Data Background:**

The department is committed to collecting and refining the data it gathers to document improvement in the initiative to increase employment of people with IDD. A review of that effort is detailed below.

DBHDS and the SELN AG initially looked at using DBHDS' CSB Community Consumer Submission data collection (CCS3) system to collect employment data. Upon looking more closely at this system we discovered that CCS3 collected data on employment status; this, however, did not indicate employment support received or hours worked.

Another major drawback was that the data in the system was not maintained well, so there was a question regarding the accuracy of the data.

Subsequently, we explored using data sharing agreements DBHDS had with Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Department for Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), and the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). When the data was cross-referenced, the results indicated that not many individuals showed up in all three systems, which made doing a comprehensive analysis and gathering the needed data impossible.

Another avenue explored was the DBHDS service authorization system (IDOLs) to collect service and outcome data for people using ID waivers for supported employment. This would require the inclusion of new data collection elements to the system, and because the platform was going to be discontinued in a couple years, investment in this was not plausible.

The data targets are based on information gathered through the DBHDS' data sharing agreement with DMAS. Employment service billing data from DMAS for ID and DD waiver consumers is collected and broken down to distinguish individuals receiving one of three services: (1) individual supported employment, (2) group supported employment, and (3) prevocational services.

Under the settlement agreement, the Commonwealth must set targets to meaningfully increase the number of individuals who enroll in supported employment each year and the number of individuals who remain employed in integrated work settings for 12 months after the start of supported employment. At their 1/8/13 meeting, the SELN AG Data Subgroup reviewed the different data points normally collected by employment service organizations to determine which would address the areas to set targets for. It was decided that the number of new starters each quarter would represent the number of individuals who enroll in supported employment each year. It was decided that the length of time a person had billing records for individual supported employment would represent the number of individuals who remain employed in integrated work settings for 12 months after the start of supported employment.

We determined from this data source that:

1. The number of individuals receiving Supported services were: 176 in individual services, 634 in group services, and 135 individuals had enrolled in Individual Supported Employment (ISE) in the past 4 quarters.
2. The number of individuals who received employment services for 12 or more months was 133.
3. From DARS average earnings data, it was estimated that the average wages were \$1,171.08 per month.
4. There were 819 individuals in prevocational services and of those individuals, 675 had been receiving prevocational services for 12 months or more.

All members of the SELN AG Data sub group agreed on the following assumptions and targets:

- 1) "The number of individuals who enroll in supported employment each year". This number will be targeted to increase by 20% over the next year, thereby raising the number of new starters to 162.
- 2) "The number of individuals who remain employed in integrated work settings at least 12 months after the start of supported employment". This percentage will be targeted to increase by 9% from 76% to 85% of employed individuals retaining employment for 12 months or more.

The results of this analysis are presented in graph form to the SELN AG on a quarterly basis. This data is only able to show the following: (1) the cumulative count of individuals receiving the service, (2) the individuals who continued the service from the last quarter, (3) the number of individuals who discontinued the service in the quarter being analyzed, and (4) the number of individuals new to the service in the quarter. The length of time an individual has billing records for one of the three employment services is also compiled.

We recognize this data is inadequate and that the data measures we have developed do not accurately measure the increase in access to integrated employment. This report explains how DBHDS has worked to improve our data collection and analysis.

In a subsequent review of data, the targets from the previous year were revised and new targets based on national data were established. This national data indicates that the average number of individuals with ID/DD in employment services, as a percent of total individuals receiving ID/DD services, is about 20%\*. Virginia adopted this target. In order to achieve this outcome, the number of individuals in employment services will increase by 5% a year for 5 years to reach the target of 20% by 2019. The targets for each year are outlined in the chart below.

FY	SE Total- Start of FY	Total in Day/Emp	% at start of FY	% by end of FY	SE Total- End of FY	Increase in Base %
15	204	7292	2.79%	7.79%	568	5%
16	568	7292	7.79%	12.79%	932	5%
17	932	7292	12.79%	17.79%	1297	5%
18	1297	7292	17.79%	22.79%	1661	5%
19	1661	7292	22.79%	27.79%	2,026	5%

However, these benchmarks do not take into consideration a number of factors that the growth is dependent on, including the addition of new waiver slots and the development of a sufficient number of providers who provide waiver employment services. These benchmarks also only account for a portion of the ID/DD population and do not include all individuals who receive funding through DARS for their employment.

\*Butterworth, J., Smith, F. A., Hall, A.C., Migliore, A., Winsor, J., & Domin, D. (2014). StateData: The national report on employment services and outcomes. Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion

## **Current Data**

The SELN AG decided that gathering data from the ESOs would be the best way to get comprehensive data as well as meet the needs of the initiative. A pilot of the survey was conducted by SELN AG ESO members to determine how challenging it would be to compile the data as well as time required. All four employment providers were able to collect the data in a matter of days. DBHDS consolidated the data and was able to see data on the outcomes of employment services.

As a result of the pilot survey, modifications to the employment data survey were made to include all data elements that would allow us to track progress and to send the surveys directly to ESOs in the state. This survey will be completed twice a year.

The survey and instructions for completion were emailed to the ESO Executive Directors for sixty-three ESOs in mid-October 2014 for return by 12/1/2014. Participation in the survey was voluntary; therefore, a response rate of nearly 50% was considered good. Responses from 28 ESOs were received. The ESOs which responded represented all regions of the state and it is estimated included approximately 70% of the individuals receiving integrated employment services in Virginia. Efforts continue to solicit data from the nonresponsive ESOs. However, the existing data is an accurate representation of employment services across the state.

The data gathered has been reviewed and analyzed by the SELN AG Data subgroup and reviewed by the Regional Quality Councils. The graphs below show that data for the state and each region. New targets will be set based on this new data in consultation with the SELN AG and the Regional Quality Councils.

## **Results**

The results of the data analysis are represented graphically below. When referring to Health Planning Regions (HPR) I through V these graphs are referring to the DBHDS Developmental Disability Services HPRs which break down as follows:

### **HPR I**

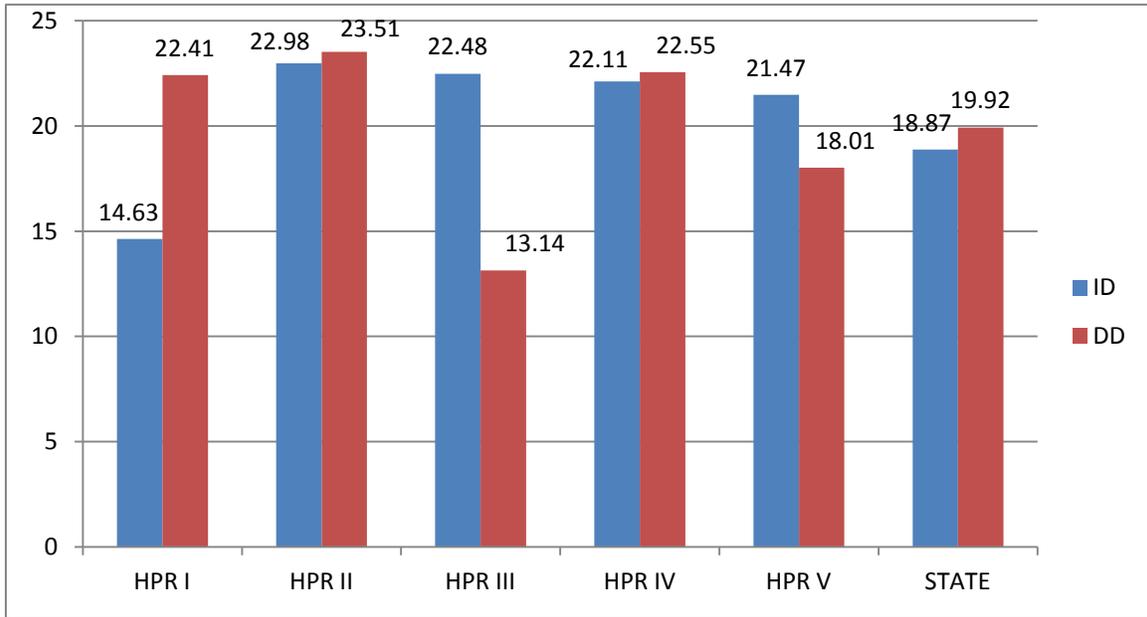
Harrisonburg- Rockingham	Region 10	Rappahannock Area
Horizon	Rockbridge Area	Rappahannock- Rapidan
Northwestern	Valley	

### **HPR II**

Alexandria	Loudoun
Arlington Co.	Prince William Co
Fairfax-Falls Church	



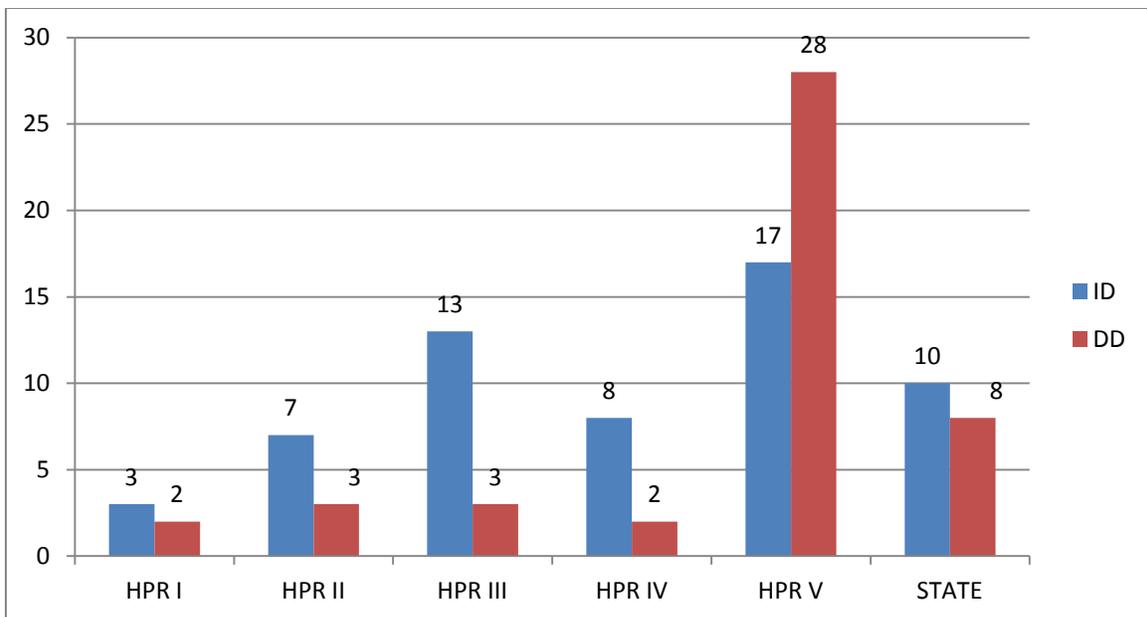
**Average Hours Worked per Week**



The average hours worked per week in Virginia for individuals with ID is 18.87 hours per week. For individuals with DD, the average hours worked per week is 19.92 hours per week.

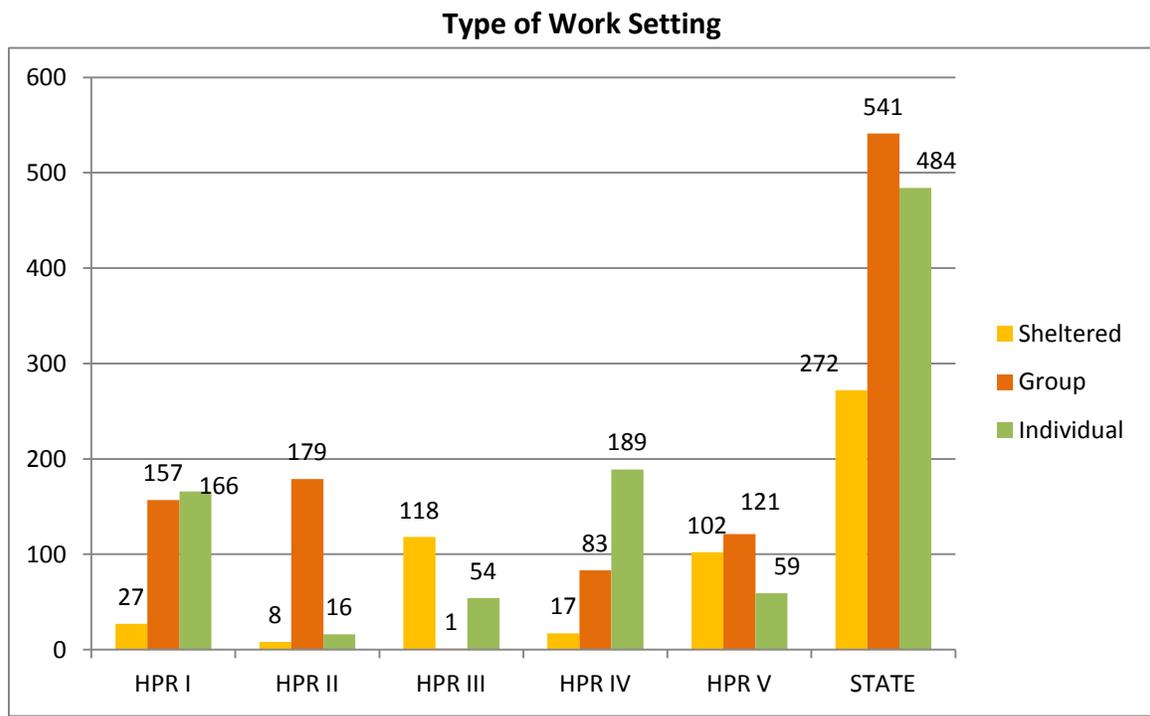
With regard to hours worked per week, the chart above shows that, in general, individuals work about 20 hours per week. The exceptions to this are individuals with ID in Region I who work about 15 hours a week and DD individuals in Region III who work about 13 hours a week.

**Average Length of Time at Current Job (in Years)**



The average length of time at current job in Virginia for individuals with ID is 121.9 months (about 10 years). For individuals with DD, the average length of time at current job is 98.5 months (about 8 years).

From the chart above it is clear that the state wide average was strongly influenced by individuals in Region V. This may be due to the fact that many of the jobs reported in this region were long-term, contractual work. If the data from Region V is removed from the calculations the average time on the current job for individuals with ID is 96.12 months (8 years) and individuals with DD is 37.87 months (about 3 years).

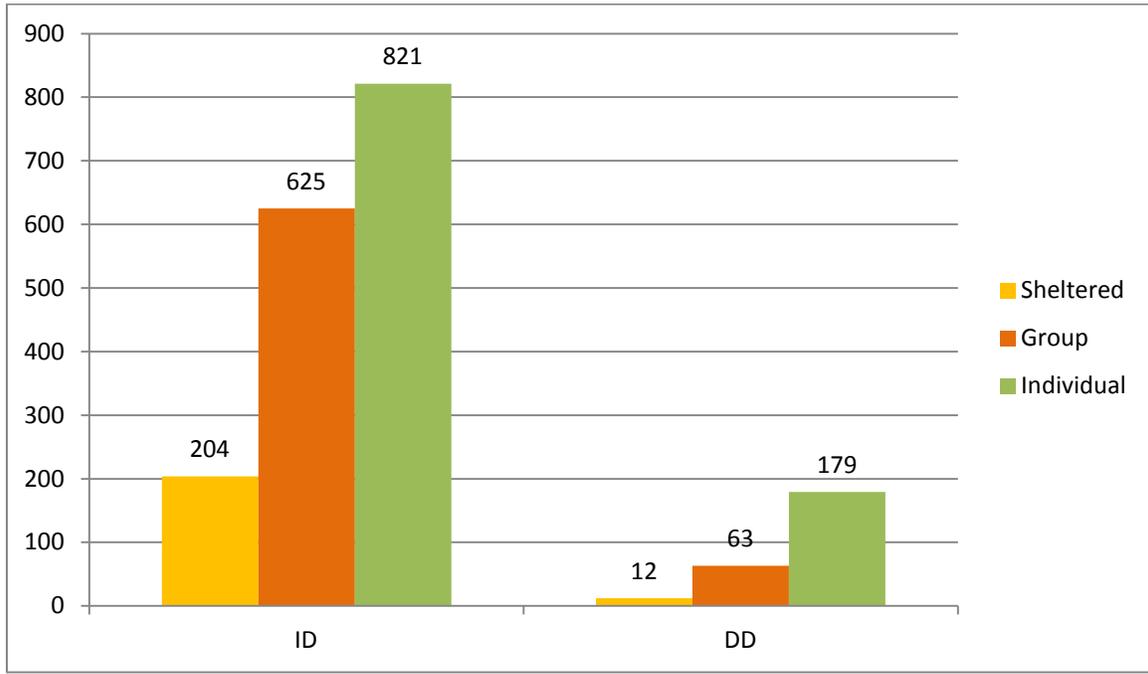


When represented graphically we can see that across each region there is variability in where individuals are employed across the regions.

Region III, which is extremely rural, has a high number of individuals in facility-based employment. Based on conversations we have had with ESOs in the Regional Quality Councils, this may be explained by the fact that there are not many employers in this area, and individuals who wish to work need to rely on programs designed to offer work to individuals with disabilities. Region II has the most individuals working in group employment settings; this may be explained by the large number of federal contract jobs being reported.

Region I and Region II have very few individuals working in facility-based employment settings, but we believe this is due to the low reporting in these areas from facility based ESOs.

### Setting by Disability



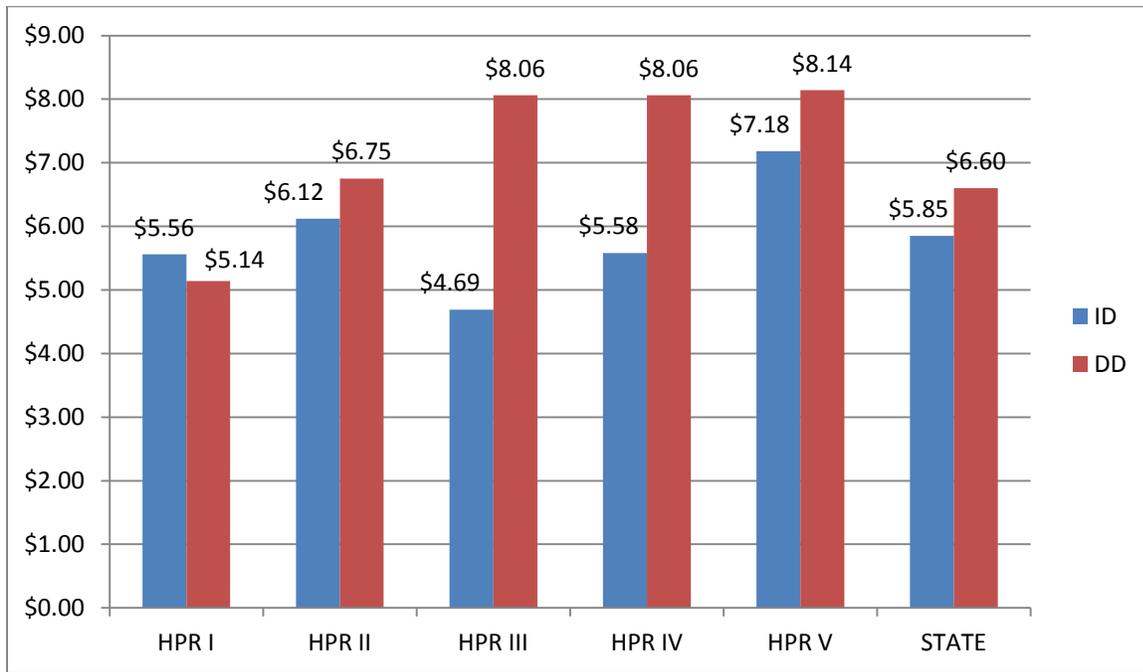
The chart above shows that in terms of setting, individuals with ID and individuals with DD work in the same proportions at the different settings. Most are in individual settings and the least in facility-based settings.

### Wage Information

When interpreting wage data in the following graphs it is important to understand the population we received wage information on. Below is a breakdown of how many individuals we had wage information for in each region and in each category. This the number divided into the total wages for that category to determine the average wage.

	HPR I	HPR II	HPR III	HPR IV	HPR V	Total
<b>Number of individuals with ID with wage information</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>1332</b>
<b>Number of individuals with DD with wage information</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>148</b>

**Average Wage per Hour**

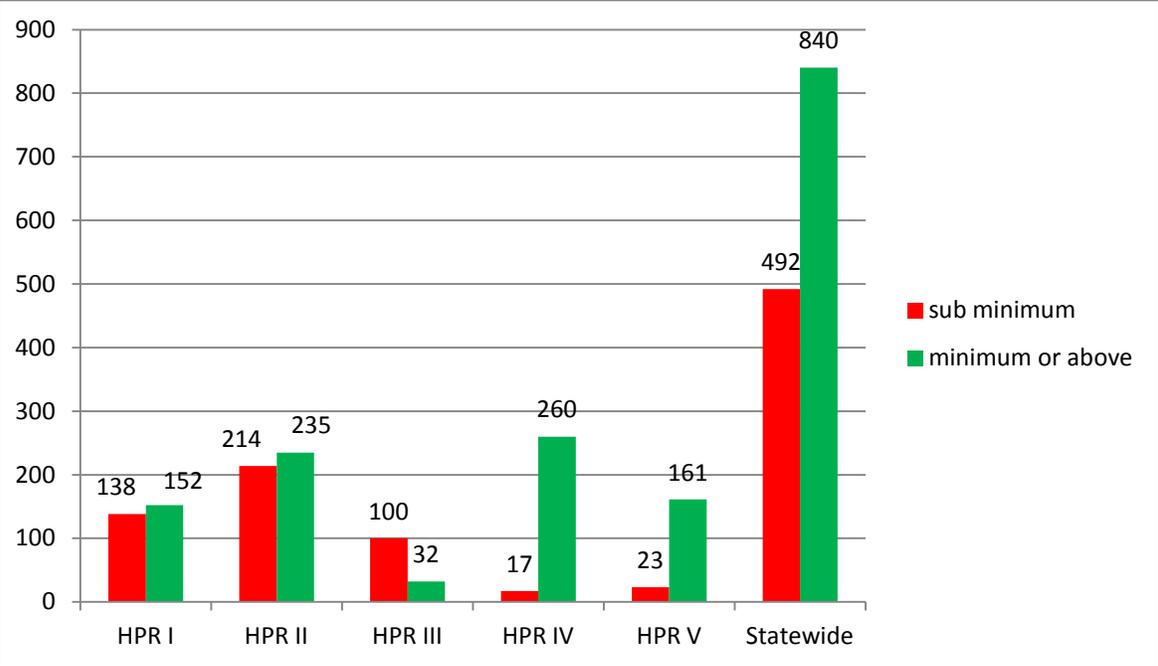


The average wage earned per hour in Virginia for individuals with ID is \$5.85. For individuals with DD, the average wage earned per hour is \$6.60.

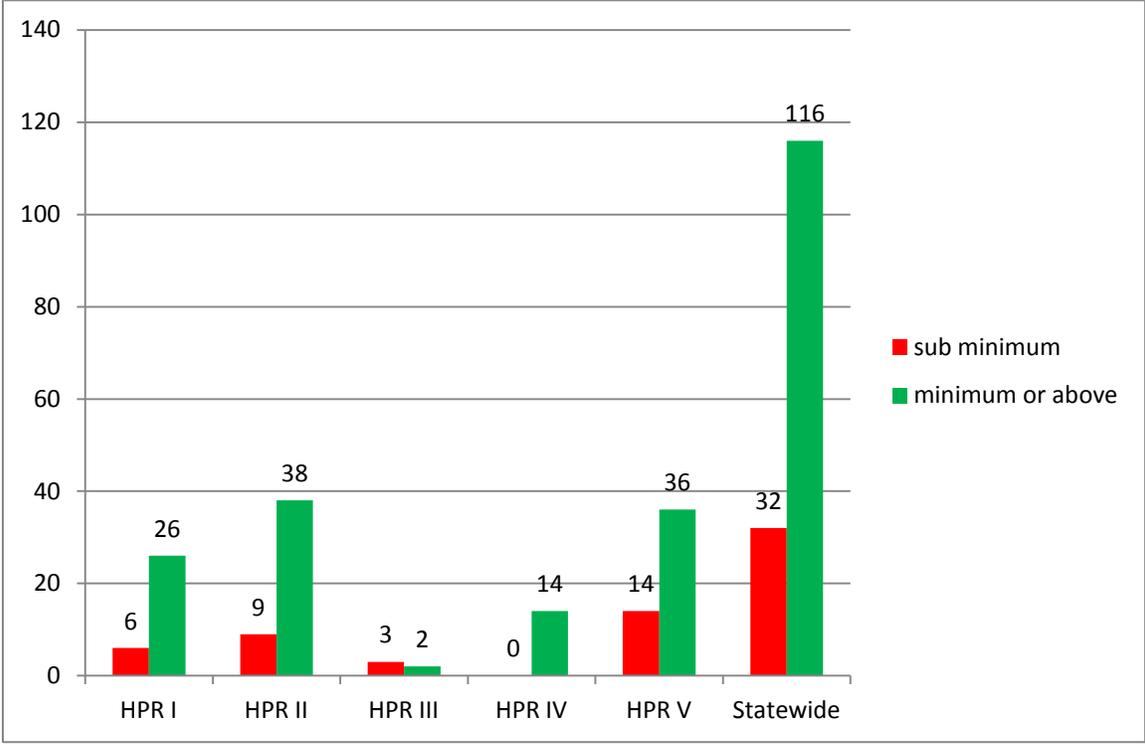
With regard to earnings, the chart above shows that individuals with ID and individuals with DD earn about the same when averaged across the state, but there are regional differences. In Region I, individuals with ID tend to earn more on average than individuals with DD. In Regions II, III, IV, and V, this trend is reversed with individuals with DD earning more than individuals with ID on average.

When we break the average hourly earnings down, we see that there is a great disparity between individuals who are earning sub-minimum wages and individuals earning minimum wage or above

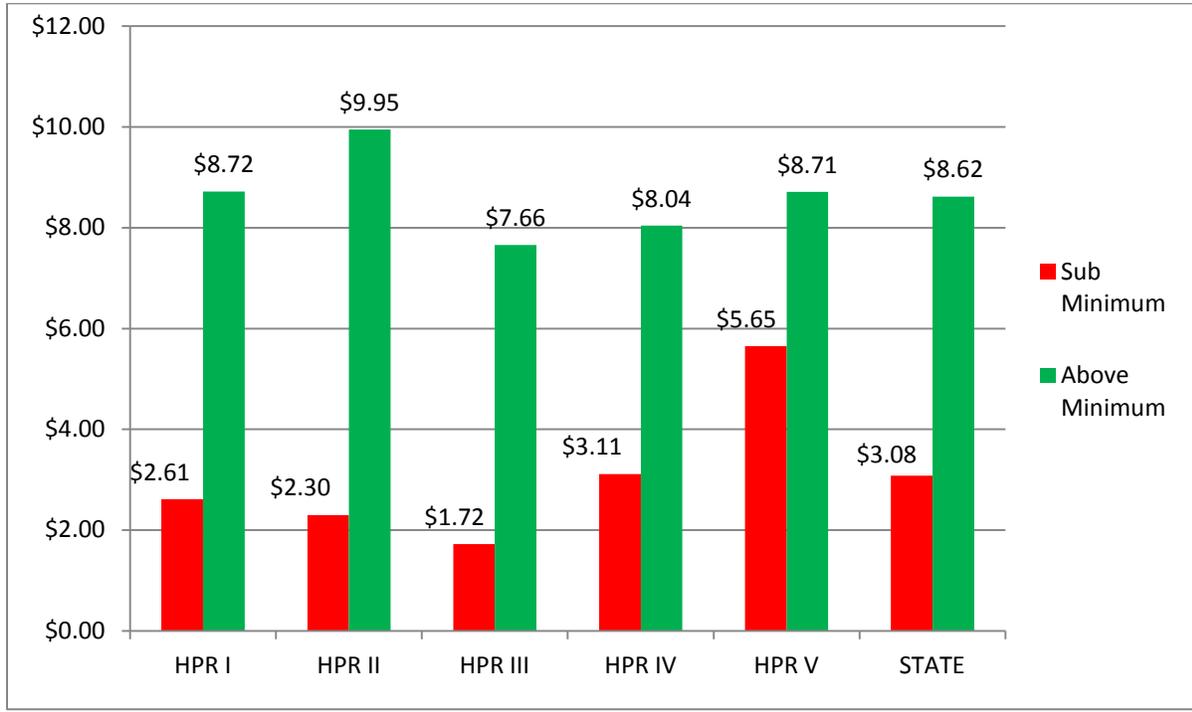
**Number of Individuals with ID earning sub minimum Wage or Minimum Wage or Above**



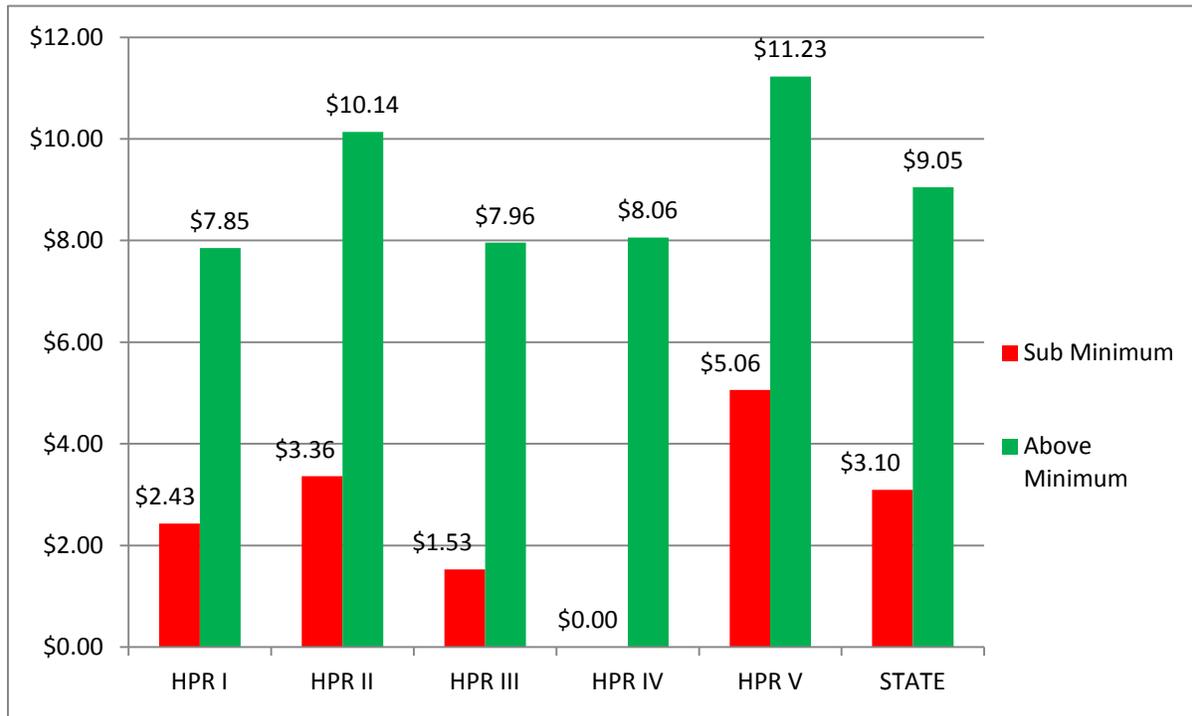
**Number of Individuals with DD earning sub minimum Wage or Minimum Wage or Above**



**Minimum Wage vs. Sub- Minimum Wage Average by Region  
For Individuals with ID**



**Minimum Wage vs. Sub- Minimum Wage Average by Region  
For Individuals with DD**



The tables above highlight areas in which DBHDS and our employment service partners can make positive changes to increase the positive outcomes for individuals who want to work in the community.

It is important to note that in this report we are providing average wage data. In collecting the data, it was found that the highest wage reported in our study was \$32.00 per hour and the lowest wage reported was \$.03 per hour. In future reporting, we will provide average and median wage data.

A second area is the disparity of available competitive jobs across regions. Through the Regional Quality Council meetings in HPR III, we are hearing that the more rural regions need to rely on more facility-based employment options for those individuals who want to work, where as the more developed regions have a larger pool of private employers to develop jobs with. It has been suggested that another factor impacting this is the low number of ESOs in these areas.

### National Core Indicators Study

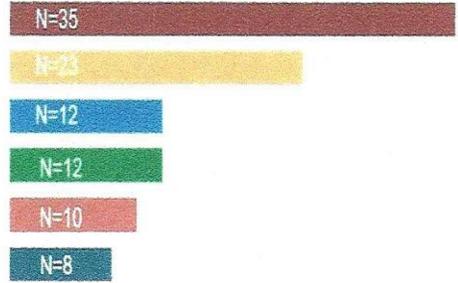
DBHDS has engaged an independent agency to conduct National Core Indicator surveys on a regular basis in Virginia. Below are the results of the 2013 round of surveys. The survey identified a total of 914 individuals who were asked questions about employment options and discussions about employment options with their case managers. On the next page are the results of the survey.



Yes No

Paid Community Job

102 people work in paid community jobs



Buildings/grounds Other Retail Assembly  
Materials handling Food service

Type of Job

The average income in a two week period was \$141

56% did not make above minimum wage

The average time worked in a two week period is 25 hours

For those who don't work and responded to the question about wanting to work

44%

(N=90)

want a job



Of those 90 people who want a job

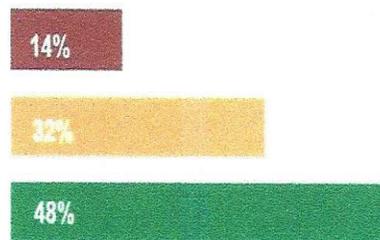
16 have employment as a goal in their plan

58% (N=45) reported that their support coordinator told them about work options

Other day activities

715

people engage in various types of activities during the day



paid facility-based work unpaid community activity  
unpaid facility-based activity

Day Activities

Produced by the Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University. Questions? Please contact Parthy Dinora at [padinora@vcu.edu](mailto:padinora@vcu.edu)



From the results above we can determine that 102 of the 914 individuals interviewed were working, which is a 12% employment rate for individuals with I/DD. 44% of the individuals who were not currently working expressed a desire to work yet only 16% of those individuals had an employment goal in their Individual Service Plan.

This data is very helpful to Virginia as another measure of the effectiveness of our efforts to increase employment options for individuals. But it also shows work that needs to be completed with getting people talking about employment. Revision to the ISP and new CCS Data elements should assist with this initiative as well as the employment first training that is now available on line.

### **Tracking Employment First Conversations**

DBHDS has worked to develop new measures as part of the CSB performance contract, which specifically collects data on:

1. discussing employment with individuals receiving case management services, and
2. developing individual goals increasing the number of individuals engaged in integrated opportunities.

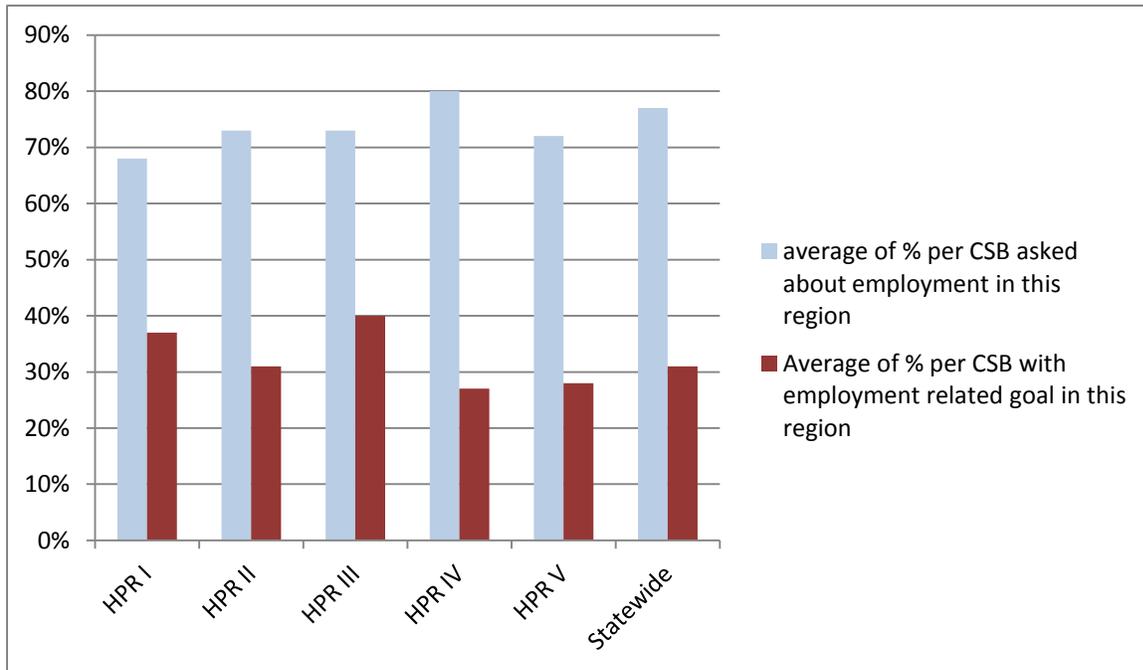
The results of the data collection are presented below for the first half of this year (7/1/14-12/31/14).

There were a total of 4,848 adults whose case managers conducted annual ISP meetings or updates in this semi-annual report period. Of these 4,848 individuals, a total of 3,736 individuals had their case managers discuss integrated, community-based employment with them during their annual ISP meetings or updates in this semi-annual report period. This results in a statewide average of 77.06% of individuals having a discussion of integrated employment when their ISP was reviewed.

In analyzing the data, we see that of the 4,848 adults whose case managers conducted annual ISP meetings or updates in this semi-annual report period, a total of 1,526 have employment or employment related goals in their ISP. We are using all individuals who had an ISP review during the reporting period, rather than the number of individuals who were asked, because we expect that all individuals should have discussion about setting employment goals or learning about employment. This results in a statewide average of 31.48% of individuals who had an annual ISP review in this reporting period who have an employment or an employment related goal in their ISP.

When the data is broken down by Health Provider Region we see some slight variation across the regions but not enough of a difference to suggest one region is much different from another as is evidenced by the state total column.

**Responses to Exhibit B Data Elements on Employment**



### Summary and Recommendations:

Our new method of data collection allows us to gather good outcome data such as wages per hour, hours worked per week, and retention at jobs. This data, coupled with the service delivery data we already have, is giving Virginia a good picture of the involvement of the individuals we serve in employment options and the outcomes they are getting from these services. We still need to be able to account for the full populations of individuals being served, and to do this, DBHDS and its partners need to collect data from all providers of employment services. Case managers need to be educated on how to discuss employment options, and individuals and families need to be educated on their options.

DBHDS has worked to develop trainings and reference materials for case managers to ensure they understand the requirement of discussing employment goals and how to have this conversation. In addition, many trainings have been conducted in concert with DARS to community based employment teams including case managers, ESOs, and DARS representatives for the region, as well as ESOs in the region. This methodology of bringing

employment regional teams together with state representatives ensures a more consistent roll out of the initiative.

Revisions to the structure of the ISP itself, as well as the information required to be collected by the document, are designed to emphasize the person-centered development of employment goals. The positioning of the employment section in the beginning of document is meant to stress employment as the first and priority service option. We have developed an ISP which reflects the emphasized areas of concern for DBHDS service delivery, person-centeredness, and focus on integration into the community.

DBHDS' new data collection process allows ESOs the flexibility to submit data in a manner that makes it easiest for the ESO. The Department, however, may want to identify an electronic means of gathering data. One thing we will need to explore is dual/triple data entry, as ESOs and DARS have separate data entry systems, and a third system may be cumbersome and redundant. The SELN AG will need to discuss best means to sustain data collection going forward.

To ensure more compliance with data collection, the department will be working with DARS around potential solutions to get even more comprehensive statewide data.