

## **Testimony on Senate Bill 195 Senate Commerce Committee**

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March 13, 2013

Madame Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral testimony on SB 195. First, KDHE is committed to advancing and supporting competitive and integrated employment as the first option for Kansans with disabilities. KDHE along with other state agencies recognize that the benefits of integrating all clients into their communities and employing those with disabilities in competitive and integrated settings.

KDHE has collaborated with the Employment First Commission to work towards these goals. In addition to those efforts, KDHE has planned or started several initiatives which will be effective in achieving competitive and integrated employment.

### **KanCare Pilots:**

#### **SSI Employment Support Pilot**

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Employment Support Pilot is designed for up to 400 individuals currently on the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Developmental Disability (DD) or Physical Disability (PD) waiting lists who are employed 40 hours per month or more at federal minimum wage in competitive and integrated settings. In addition to Medicaid coverage, pilot participants will receive up to \$1,500 per month to pay for personal assistance and employment support services to enable them to live and work in the community.

#### **Social Security Alternative Pilot**

The Social Security Alternative Pilot is designed for up to 200 Kansans with disabilities who have not yet been determined eligible for Social Security disability. The goal of this pilot is to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain employment with employer-based health insurance as well as avoid unnecessary dislocation from the workforce and impoverishment in order to obtain health insurance.

### **Certification of Employment Services Professionals**

KDHE/HCF funded the provision of the Certified Employment Services Professional (CESP) in two locations during 2012. The CESP is a newly developed credential governed by the APSE Employment Services Professional Certification Council (ESPCC). Individuals who earn the CESP credential have demonstrated knowledge of the facilitation and advocacy skills necessary to help establish and expand equitable employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

### **Education of Medical Personnel regarding Disability and Employment**

KDHE/HCF contracted with Webility Corporation to conduct a medical education initiative, the purpose of which was to increase awareness among healthcare providers of the health risks of unemployment as well as the benefits of preventing needless work disability whenever possible. The target audience was physicians and other clinicians who provide advice to their patients and sign benefits forms. Webility Corporation developed

and delivered a series of short continuing medical education sessions (CME) to physicians and other types of healthcare practitioners in 26 geographically-dispersed locations around the state.

### **Coordination of Data**

During 2012, the University of Kansas Institute for Health & Disability Policy Studies, the program evaluator for KDHE/HCF's employment programs, requested and received 2009-2011 aggregate income and tax data from the Kansas Department of Revenue and quarterly Unemployment Insurance (UI) earnings data from the Kansas Department of Labor. Consistent with earlier findings, analysis of these data sets indicated higher earnings for Working Healthy enrollees – with WORK participants having the highest earnings - compared to other dual-eligibles not enrolled. Average annual income of Working Healthy enrollees in 2011 was nearly 3 times that of those not enrolled, \$8490 and \$2940 respectively. KU partners are also working on completing a third edition of the Data Inventory on the Employment and Health of Kansans with Disabilities with updated information reflecting the Governor's reorganization of state agencies.

KDHE supports continued conversations among stakeholders and the Legislature in order to refine our efforts towards competitive and integrated employment for those with disabilities. KDHE will continue to work to achieve this important goal.