



Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program: Ohio Moving Forward

Brie Lusheck
Public Policy Associate

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Introduction

On July 1, 2016, Ohio rolled out its new Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP). CCMEP was a part of the previous State Operating Budget, House Bill 64, and is a program that was established as a collaboration between funds from two federal programs—the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds.

The aims of CCMEP are to positively change the work outcomes for one of Ohio’s most vulnerable populations: youth, 16 to 24 years old. Helping young people can transform the amount of assistance they will need throughout their life. Creating more stability and better employment outcomes can greatly contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty for these individuals and for future generations.

A few common themes have emerged within counties administering CCMEP. The transition to in-house case management and to serving a specific population have created both opportunities and challenges that should be closely examined and monitored as the program moves forward.

Background

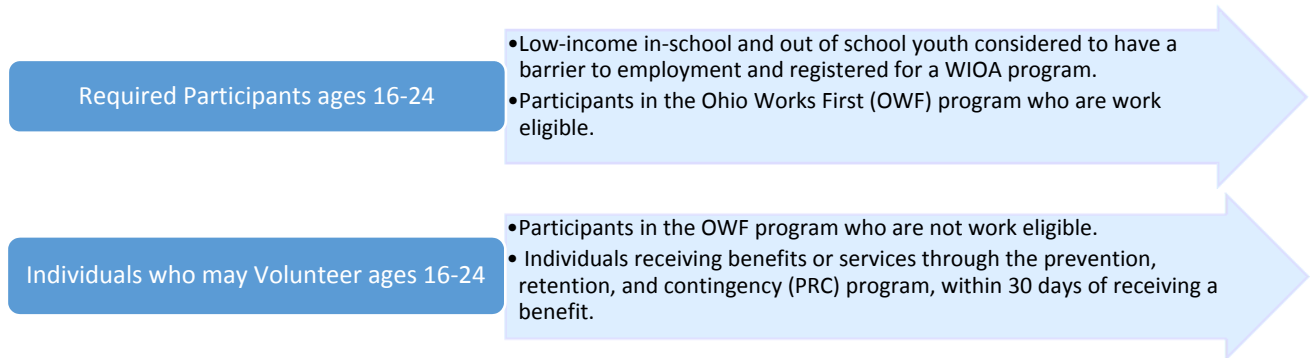
Federal WIOA funds¹ are used by the state for individuals who have barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment. These funds are used to provide employment training, skills and credentials to support individuals in reaching employment goals.

TANF is a federal program that provides block grants to states to provide cash assistance to low-income families with children,² with additional matching funds contributed by the state. Ohio’s TANF cash assistance program is Ohio Works First (OWF). Adults with children whose income is at or below 50 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible and may receive benefits for up to 36 months. States are flexible on how they use the funds as long as one of the

four guidelines of the program are met. More information on TANF can be found [here](#), in a recent The Center for Community Solutions report³.

A portion of WIOA and TANF funds are set aside for CCMEP for those between 16 and 24 years of age who have barriers to furthering and realizing their employment goals. This age group accounts for the highest rate of unemployment in the state⁴.

Listed below are the criteria to be either a required or a volunteer participant in CCMEP, as outlined by the Office of Human Service Innovation⁵.



One of the initial steps in the rollout of CCMEP was assigning a lead agency to oversee the program at the county level. County Commissioners for each county chose between the County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) and the regional Workforce Development Boards (WDB). For the majority of the counties, the Department of Job and Family Services was chosen as the lead agency with the expectation that the regional Workforce Development Board would be a partner. Lead agencies are held accountable for the administration of the program and the evaluation of outcomes.

Initially, concerns were raised by the U.S. Department of Labor ⁶ regarding how WIOA funds would be allocated to a CDJFS when statute permits that the funds must be directly allocated by the WDB. At this time, CCMEP has been implemented as planned with WDBs explicitly authorizing the county to use WIOA funds for CCMEP. In addition, WDBs will maintain their oversight responsibility when delivering WIOA specific programs⁷.

As a part of CCMEP, individuals participate in an assessment and develop an individual employment plan with their case managers. These employment plans focus on ways to provide work experiences to individuals in the program by developing meaningful solutions to remove barriers to employment. Many counties partner with other agencies through contracts to provide dropout recovery services, study skills training, on-the-job training, leadership development, linkage services, and other services to move individuals into employment.

Clear patterns have developed around implementation by two Ohio counties who have been particularly active in the CCMEP development and rollout. These are patterns that the State of Ohio can look at to further advance its aims for the program.

Case Management

Case management is the backbone of the CCMEP. It is a change that lead agencies are embracing with large scale modifications, as they shift their models from contracting these services out to providers to moving them in-house with a transitioning staff.

Counties such as Licking⁸ and Marion have been using a combined county model, a close partnership between the county JFS and the Workforce Development Board, for some time. They have traditionally been blending services to provide a common client experience. For counties like these, CCMEP enhances this basic structure. Still in the early phases of the program, they have begun to streamline customer experiences by allowing the customer to have the same experience no matter what program they walk in the door for.

At Licking County Department of Job and Family Services, one of the greatest changes that has occurred with the rollout of CCMEP is how they have provided services as a combined county. Traditionally, the county has contracted workforce services out with a Request for Proposal (RFP), usually contracting a large portion of the WIOA program out to providers. Providers were then responsible for recruiting individuals into the program and for providing personalized one-on-one case management for these individuals. The lead agency and the county would be responsible for indirect forms of case management such as handling the eligibility determination and verifying that the outcomes are in accordance with the county's goals.

In transitioning to CCMEP, staff at the Licking County JFS realized it needed to be more hands on with the program. The county decided that they would bring the case management and assessment component of CCMEP in-house, utilizing tools available through the Ohio Means Jobs. The county has begun recruiting individuals into the program, making references to programs based on needs, checking in with individuals, and monitoring cases.

Staff expectations have drastically changed; staff are now expected to develop relationships with clients compared to the minimal involvement with clients that existed before. The transition to a customer-service based system has highlighted the need to educate staff on services available in the community, such as basic education and social services.

Licking County JFS has begun to transition into comprehensive case management by having on staff a licensed social worker and a licensed chemical dependency counselor who work specifically with the CCMEP population. These staff members and four additional caseworkers are being trained by a local community college on the basics of social services, in addition to providing other staff development. The county has also worked to develop other resources and improve current education for staff with the help of the state.

At Marion County Department of Job and Family Services, they too have found that their past model did not involve staff providing comprehensive case management. Case management, as

in Licking County, was contracted out to providers, leaving a large gap in the skills that staff were using under the old model.

Marion County JFS decided to hire a staff person, who is not a licensed social worker, with strong ties to the community, organizations, and individuals who best represent the CCMEP populations and community providers. This staff member has a background in advocating for youth in the community as a local youth pastor and foster parent.

Marion County JFS believed this staff member, with a unique kind of enthusiasm and passion for working with the CCMEP age group, would help to transition the agency into in-house case management and bring about a transformed environment for the staff to easily make the changes needed with CCMEP.

It is important to highlight that each county may approach staffing the program differently. Once the program rollout is further materialized, staffing can be adjusted based on available community supports and the CCMEP population's needs. The state has communicated that they will be flexible and work with counties to make the necessary resources available.

Numbers Served

As each county's TANF and WIOA populations differ, so too will the numbers served by CCMEP. The two counties mentioned in this brief have expressed a desire to start with the required individuals and move toward expanding the program to the volunteer population, after they develop a sound understanding of what the program will look like in their counties and the demands the programs will place on their staff.

In Licking County, 19 out-of-school age youth have transitioned from the TANF summer youth employment program¹ to CCMEP. Twelve WIOA out-of-school age youth are being transitioned into CCMEP. As a county, they are averaging roughly 12-15 individuals a month to transition from a work required OWF program to CCMEP. Initially, Licking County is planning on 50 individuals being enrolled and served through CCMEP.

In Marion County, they are planning for an initial 30 individuals to be transitioned into CCMEP. They are also exploring the possibility of an RFP for case management contracts as they begin to understand the demands on staff CCMEP will bring.

Specific numbers for TANF youth eligibility by county can be found in Appendix A.

¹ TANF summer youth employment program is a program many communities in Ohio utilize as a way to provide youth with employment skills in addition to a safe and productive way to spend their time. Youth receive subsidized wages through TANF funds in addition to on the job training and skills.

Barriers

Ohio is finding that there are rather significant barriers in attracting large numbers of individuals to participate in CCMEP. This is an even greater concern when looking at the disconnected population the state has focused on serving with the program. Many youth in this age range struggle with homelessness and lack of transportation; attending the initial assessment is a rather large hurdle at such an early stage in the process. If individuals do not provide a good cause for failing to comply with minimum hours per week for their employment plan, they may be sanctioned⁹ and removed from cash assistance and the program.

If an individual is sanctioned from OWF cash assistance, he or she is not automatically removed from CCMEP. OWF and CCMEP outline different activities that count for minimum hours an individual earns per week. For example, if during an individual's assessment it is determined that he or she needs to work towards receiving a GED, hours used to prepare for improving test results would not be counted toward TANF hours but would be counted towards the minimum hours for CCMEP.

During an individual's assessment and with the development of his or her individual opportunity plan, services are determined based on the barriers that deter the person from finding and retaining employment. Wraparound services to address these barriers are determined on a case-by-case basis. If a sanction does occur, TANF cash assistance would be lost if an individual was removed from CCMEP, due to OWF work requirements. However, Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are not contingent on CCMEP or work requirements; the exception to SNAP would be if an individual is an able-bodied adult without dependents. If an individual is sanctioned from the program, he or she would remain able to receive Medicaid and SNAP until he or she no longer financially qualifies.

At Marion County Department of Job and Family Services, the above barriers have already arisen and been addressed in their rollout of CCMEP. No CCMEP individuals, thus far, have been sanctioned from either program. However, individuals have made the decision to forgo cash assistance and continue with their individualized plan. Individuals may forgo cash assistance for reasons such as the TANF requirement to initiate a child support order.

The TABE assessment is an aptitude test that assists with further assessing where an individual is academically on their path to employment. It is one of many aptitude tests that are required by both WIOA and the CCMEP initial assessment, and it is a long process. Individuals are tested and scored, and a skill level is determined which makes it a time-consuming process for both staff and clients. It may become a barrier that many individuals will initially face when participating in the CCMEP. It could also deter individuals from continuing with the program. Case workers need to work with individuals to truly understand the benefits this test will provide in moving them along their path to employment.

Data sharing and interaction between agencies is also time consuming. This adds another burden on staff who have transitioned into new roles as case managers with CCMEP and are

less likely to have the time and resources for extensive back-and-forth communication with outside agencies.

Marion County JFS has seen a lack of parent cooperation, which is necessary to work with minors who are a part of CCMEP. Such cooperation is crucial for the youth in CCMEP to receive the benefits and support that will help them be successful with the program.

The lead agency has also noticed obstacles in getting youth to fully commit to participating in the program. Lead agencies are finding that the initial Individual Opportunity Plan is fluid and dependent on many external variables and community resources.

A large component of CCMEP is looking at individuals in a holistic way and incorporating resources that may not be readily available at a CDJFS or another state entity. If there is a lack of knowledge about community resources that exist—or a lack of community resources, as in more rural areas of Ohio—CCMEP may experience large setbacks to innovative case management that will need remedied as the program continues.

Conclusion

Ohio is still in the early stages of CCMEP. There will be more to learn and issues to work through as the program materializes. With a strong base, CCMEP can lead to drastic changes for not only the population of those from 16 to 24 years of age, but also for other individuals in Ohio who are eligible for TANF and WIOA benefits.

Moving forward, it is important that counties, like the ones mentioned in this brief, and the state administration continue to work together to develop resources and best practices for CCMEP.

¹ “Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act.” www.jfs.ohio.gov , February 11, 2016. Accessed September 9, 2016. <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wioa/index.stm> .

² “The TANF Budget” www.communitysolutions.com, April, 2015. Accessed August, 2016. http://www.communitysolutions.com/assets/docs/Public_Policy_incl_testimony/PrimerResources/2015/the%20tanf%20budget_043015_embedded_updated.pdf .

³ Ahren, Joseph. “Twenty Years Later, Ohio’s Work First Is a Poor Safety Net for Ohio Children in Deep Poverty.” www.communitysolutions.com , May, 2016. Accessed August, 2016. http://www.communitysolutions.com/assets/docs/Major_Reports/Other_Publications/owf_chil_deep_pov_050516_final.pdf .

⁴ Jordan, Anne. “Making “Work First” Work Better: A Descriptive Analysis of Ohio’s TANF Program & Options to Improve its Cost-Effectiveness.” www.communitysolutions.com, July, 2016. Accessed August, 2016. http://www.communitysolutions.com/assets/docs/Major_Reports/Other_Publications/makingworkfirstrworkbetter_annejordan_07152016.pdf .

⁵ “Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program.” humanservices.ohio.gov, Accessed August, 2016. <http://humanservices.ohio.gov/ccmepimplementation/CCMEP-Fact-Sheet.stm> .

⁶ Wu, P. (2016, March 18). Concerns regarding the Ohio CCMEP and Ohio’s Obligations Under WIOA [Letter to The Honorable John Kasich]. Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Washington, D.C.

⁷ Wu, P. (2016, June 6). Re: Resolutions and Further Concerns regarding the Ohio CCMEP and Ohio’s Obligations under WIOA [Letter to Cynthia C. Dungey, Director]. Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Washington, D.C.

⁸ “Update on Ohio’s New Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program Webinar.” [advocatesforohio.org](http://www.advocatesforohio.org), August 29, 2016. Accessed August 29, 2016. <http://www.advocatesforohio.org/post?s=2016-08-29-update-on-ohios-new-comprehensive-case-management-and-employment-program-webinar>.

⁹ “Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).” www.humanservices.ohio.gov , March 24, 2016. Accessed August, 2016. <http://humanservices.ohio.gov/ccmepimplementation/CCMEP-program-FAQs-032416.stm> .

Appendix A



Program Age Summary

For the period: 4/1/2015 - 12/16/2015

ID	County	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19 to 24
1	ADAMS	0	0	3	13	27	9	14
2	ALLEN	0	0	10	44	33	20	19
3	ASHLAND	0	3	5	10	11	2	2
4	ASHTABULA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	ATHENS	0	0	0	25	29	15	18
6	AUGLAIZE	0	0	2	6	7	1	11
7	BELMONT	0	0	7	23	25	11	11
8	BROWN	0	0	2	21	13	9	9
9	BUTLER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	CARROLL	0	0	3	9	9	5	7
11	CHAMPAIGN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	CLARK	0	0	4	39	29	18	29
13	CLERMONT	0	1	6	12	11	6	2
14	CLINTON	0	0	1	5	11	6	4
15	COLUMBIANA	0	0	2	57	68	43	38
16	COSHOCTON	0	0	2	44	24	21	37
17	CRAWFORD	0	0	2	18	11	6	11
18	CUYAHOGA	42	364	547	1090	900	315	41
19	DARKE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	DEFIANCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	DELAWARE	0	0	2	5	11	8	17
22	ERIE	0	1	11	17	13	6	10
23	FAIRFIELD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	FAYETTE	2	5	9	9	14	5	6
25	FRANKLIN	25	205	275	421	366	176	219
26	FULTON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	GALLIA	0	1	3	24	27	14	38
28	GEAUGA	5	12	14	15	15	5	11
29	GREENE	0	0	3	10	11	8	26

30	GUERNSEY	0	1	5	22	22	14	14
31	HAMILTON	2	63	105	160	148	67	183
32	HANCOCK	0	3	3	10	5	5	6
33	HARDIN	1	10	14	12	11	3	0
34	HARRISON	0	0	4	9	9	3	4
35	HENRY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	HIGHLAND	0	0	4	10	12	9	26
37	HOCKING	0	1	2	7	3	2	5
38	HOLMES	1	13	10	12	8	4	3
39	HURON	0	0	1	11	11	5	7
40	JACKSON	0	0	11	30	20	6	14
41	JEFFERSON	0	0	2	34	42	19	15
42	KNOX	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	LAKE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	LAWRENCE	0	0	1	17	30	17	22
45	LICKING	0	0	6	22	40	14	29
46	LOGAN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
47	LORAIN	0	0	14	95	84	32	52
48	LUCAS	0	0	14	80	105	69	189
49	MADISON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
50	MAHONING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
51	MARION	0	0	15	38	39	28	23
52	MEDINA	0	0	4	30	31	18	6
53	MEIGS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
54	MERCER	0	1	2	5	6	2	5
55	MIAMI	0	0	1	5	0	0	4
56	MONROE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
57	MONTGOMERY	57	412	408	386	259	32	0
58	MORGAN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
59	MORROW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
60	MUSKINGUM	2	2	13	33	25	19	31
61	NOBLE	0	0	1	9	7	6	4
62	OTTAWA	0	1	3	5	4	3	8

63	PAULDING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
64	PERRY	0	0	4	24	28	7	3
65	PICKAWAY	0	0	6	30	18	17	14
66	PIKE	0	0	3	16	16	9	16
67	PORTAGE	0	0	3	40	40	36	32
68	PREBLE	0	0	0	6	1	1	3
69	PUTNAM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
70	RICHLAND	2	23	30	28	26	15	31
71	ROSS	0	1	4	15	19	7	14
72	SANDUSKY	0	0	2	15	8	5	20
73	SCIOTO	0	0	0	29	36	33	35
74	SENECA	1	7	16	16	14	10	17
75	SHELBY	0	0	2	7	8	6	16
76	STARK	0	2	20	103	116	36	72
77	SUMMIT	0	0	52	301	259	122	200
78	TRUMBULL	0	0	1	2	9	2	1
79	TUSCARAWAS	0	1	7	30	36	31	11
80	UNION	0	0	0	2	2	3	0
81	VAN WERT	0	0	0	5	6	5	6
82	VINTON	1	0	2	6	6	3	7
83	WARREN	0	0	4	18	15	5	9
84	WASHINGTON	0	1	9	46	41	16	16
85	WAYNE	1	8	13	25	21	11	4
86	WILLIAMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
87	WOOD	0	2	4	10	20	4	5
88	WYANDOT	0	1	3	9	7	0	5
100	Statewide	142	1145	1741	3742	3338	1470	1767



Comments and questions about this blog may be sent to blusheck@CommunitySolutions.com.
1501 Euclid Ave., Ste. 310, Cleveland, OH 44115
101 E. Town St., Ste. 520, Columbus, OH 43215
P: 216-781-2944 // F: 216-781-2988 // www.CommunitySolutions.com