

Fact Sheet: Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs)

Definition

Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) are collaborative groups from two or more service systems that bring together various service providers and stakeholders to address the specific needs of an individual facing barriers to employment.

These teams work in a coordinated manner to develop comprehensive support plans that leverage the resources and expertise of each participant. The goal is to streamline services and optimize outcomes for the individual, ensuring they receive the holistic support necessary to achieve successful employment.

Purpose

The primary purpose of IRTs is to support individuals with barriers to employment by providing a cohesive and personalized plan that addresses their unique challenges. By pooling resources and expertise, IRTs facilitate access to necessary services such as job training, education, transportation, mental health services, and assistive technologies. This integrated approach helps individuals overcome obstacles, build relevant skills, and secure sustainable employment.

Applicability

IRTs can benefit any individual with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, veterans, youth, individuals with criminal backgrounds, and people experiencing homelessness. The inclusive nature of IRTs allows them to be tailored to meet the diverse needs of each participant, making them a versatile tool in employment support.

Implementation Steps

1. **Formation of the Team:** Identify and invite relevant stakeholders, including vocational rehabilitation counselors, educational institutions, social service agencies, employers, and other community organizations.
2. **Assessment of Needs:** Conduct a thorough assessment of the individual's barriers, strengths, and employment goals.
3. **Development of a Plan:** Collaboratively create a comprehensive support plan that outlines specific roles, responsibilities, and services provided by each team member.
4. **Coordination and Delivery of Services:** Implement the plan, ensuring regular communication among team members and the individual to monitor progress and make adjustments as needed.
5. **Evaluation and Follow-Up:** Assess the effectiveness of the support plan, make necessary modifications, and provide ongoing support as the individual transitions into employment.

Tips for Effective IRTs

- **Clear Communication:** Establish open and transparent communication channels among all team members and the individual.

- **Person-Centered Approach:** Focus on the individual's goals, preferences, and strengths, ensuring they are actively involved in the planning and decision-making process.
- **Flexibility:** Be adaptable to changing circumstances and needs, allowing for adjustments to the support plan as necessary.
- **Resource Sharing:** Maximize the use of available resources by sharing information and coordinating services efficiently.

Resources

One valuable resource for implementing and understanding IRTs is **YourDreamYourTeam.com**, a website dedicated to providing guidance and tools for building effective support networks for individuals with disabilities. The site offers resources such as training materials, templates, and best practices for developing IRTs and other collaborative support models. Additionally, it provides success stories and case studies that illustrate the positive impact of IRTs on employment outcomes.

Additional Resources

1. **WorkforceGPS:** Provides detailed breakdowns of the IRT model and various training resources. [WorkforceGPS](#)
2. **CDO Workforce:** Offers practical guidance on creating and managing IRTs, focusing on improving career outcomes for job seekers with disabilities. [CDO Workforce](#)
3. **Project E3:** Contains a variety of resources including planning forms, webcasts, and best practices for IRTs. [Project E3](#)
4. **Illinois workNet:** Provides insights into how IRTs integrate with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other supportive services. [Illinois workNet](#)
5. **National Disability Institute:** Focuses on leveraging resources and strategies for improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. [National Disability Institute](#)