Oregon’s P2P for Employment Project

*Submitted by*
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Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)

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## Introduction and background to the project

Oregon is implementing its Employment First policy under the authority of Executive Order 15-01 to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) access employment services, and find and keep competitive jobs in the general workforce. Yet, many people who receive services do not understand how employment services are changing and what steps they can take to pursue a competitive job.

For example, many people with IDD:

* Do not believe they can work at a competitive job in the community;
* Do not understand the benefits of having a job;
* Do not have accurate information to make decisions about work;
* Are worried about losing sheltered workshop services;
* Are worried about losing their benefits;
* Are hesitant to get help from VR;
* Want to work in the community but do not have the knowledge, skills or confidence to take the first step.

We submit this proposal to share information and encourage youth and adults with IDD to choose employment using a peer-to-peer (P2P) education approach. *“Our goal is to educate, inspire and encourage people with IDD to succeed in their employment goals. Our vision is that all people with disabilities get jobs in the community.”* (OSAC employment committee, June 2014).

This document is organized into several sections to describe the project. What follows is a description of peer education, the benefits of this approach, and standards for successful peer education projects. We also describe our project objectives and expected outcomes, proposed statement of work and activities, our monitoring and evaluation plan, logic model and associated budget and timeline.

## What is peer education?

A person’s peer group carries significant influence on the way he or she behaves. P2P education makes use of this influence in a positive way with members of the same social group intentionally teaching and supporting each other. In P2P projects, peers provide each other

with information, skills and influence to produce changes in participant knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and personal outcomes.

Peer education is empowering. It offers a social group the opportunity to participate in activities that affect them and to access information and services they need to improve their lives. This approach is useful with many populations and age groups to change behavior. It has been used extensively in Europe, Africa and the US to address many areas of public health.[[1]](#footnote-1)

As illustrated in the table below, peer education models are grounded in several behavioral theories.[[2]](#footnote-2)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theory** | **In the context of peer education** |
| **Theory of reasoned action*** A person will adopt a recommended behavior if he or she has positive beliefs about the behavior or the consequence of the behavior
* A person’s beliefs are highly influenced by others in the same social group
 | * Participants perceptions are influenced by each other
* Peers may be motivated by high expectations of peer educators
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| **Social learning theory*** Observing and modeling activities motivate people to try new skills
* Practicing activities are important to building confidence
 | * Interactive learning and practice promotes skill development
* Peers are important role models for each other
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| **Theory of participatory education*** Empowerment and full participation of people affected by a given problem is the key to behavior change
 | * Participants sharing information and deciding a course of action together is a key to the success of a P2P project
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| **Diffusion of innovation theory*** Social influence plays an important role in behavior change
* Opinion leaders influence group norms through peer-to-peer interactions
 | * Peer educators should be trusted and respected by their peers
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Another attractive feature of the P2P model is experiential learning. This method engages participants in learning based on their own experience and observation through role-plays and group activities, reflection on participant experience in the activities, discussion of lessons learned and application of knowledge and skills.

**Experiential Learning**

**Model**

This structure is similar to that of the self-advocacy movement (a civil rights movement led by people with IDD). Self-advocate leaders teach and model self-determination skills (i.e., speaking up for one’s self and others, decision-making, etc.) to the larger group. Together, they apply these skills to their own lives and to common issues.

### Effectiveness of peer education projects

Many research studies confirm the effectiveness of peer education projects on changing attitudes, knowledge, behaviors, and personal outcomes. For example, a meta-analysis of 30 peer education projects to prevent HIV/AIDS found that peer education interventions can lead to significant increases in HIV knowledge prevention behaviors within various at-risk populations.[[3]](#footnote-3) Further, a literature review of experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation studies of 28 peer education projects found that such projects led to increased:

* Employment outcomes;
* School attendance, better grades, and higher graduation rates;
* Reports of healthy behaviors (i.e., diet, exercise, seeking appropriate health care, etc.);
* Reports of prevention behaviors for drug use, chronic disease and sexually transmitted diseases. [[4]](#footnote-4)

Other benefits attributed to peer education projects include:

* Empowering people to make a difference in their own lives, communities or social groups;
* Utilizing a community-based approach that is flexible to the unique realities of local communities and social groups;
* Increasing leadership and communication skills of peer educators and creating valuable job experience.

Additionally, peer education projects compliment larger initiatives involving many organizations, groups or agencies. Taken together, these benefits make peer education an appropriate strategy to engage people with IDD in Oregon’s Employment First initiative.

### Standards for successful peer education projects

Available manuals and planning guides identify common elements that make up the framework of peer education projects. Most projects include a focus issue, target population, rationale for the project, training content and a budget. These projects also include activities to meet objectives and a monitoring and evaluation plan to capture lessons learned and identify outcomes that resulted from their efforts.

While these elements are common, the quality of peer education varies tremendously across projects. In 2004, an international group of 45 peer education experts from 22 countries compiled best practices and lessons learned to develop a set of quality standards and associated benchmarks for P2P projects. The standards focus on: (a) planning, (b) recruitment and retention, (c) training and supervision, (d) management and oversight, and (e) monitoring and evaluation.**[[5]](#footnote-5)** We will apply these standards to our project activities to help us make good use of limited resources as we develop and implement the P2P project.

## Project objectives

Our goal is toeducate, inspire and encourage people with IDD to succeed in their employment goals. To this end, our activities will address the following three objectives.

1. We will implement a P2P project according to international standards to be replicated in Oregon communities.
2. Peer educators will develop desired knowledge and skills to implement the project.
3. P2P workshop participants will experience desired changes in attitudes and beliefs about competitive employment and demonstrate increased knowledge and skills.

The logic model below (page 10) illustrates how resources and activities relate to outcomes or changes we expect to happen as a result of the project. It is serves as a tool for evaluation.

## Monitoring and evaluation plan

Our monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan will include both formative and summative evaluation questions. Formative evaluation will help us determine whether our activities were effective and provide information about how to improve our project. Summative evaluation will help us prove whether our project is effective in achieving the changes we seek to create in peer educators, participants and communities. The table below lists potential evaluation questions.

The project coordinators will monitor project implementation and work with project staff to collect evaluation data. We’ll use this information to improve implementation on an ongoing basis.

| **Formative evaluation questions** | **Summative evaluation questions** |
| --- | --- |
| As a result of implementation, are:* At least 30 youth and adults with IDD participating in each community?
* Family members, groups or organizations involved in each community?
* Local agencies and community stakeholders involved in the P2P workshops?
* Are participants satisfied with activities?
* Are local stakeholders satisfied with activities?
* Are we implementing activities according to our plan and timeline?
* Are we operating within budget?
* How can we improve our project?
 | As a result of our project, are there:* Differences in peer educator and P2P workshop participant knowledge and skills?
* Differences in P2P workshop participant attitudes and beliefs about employment?
* Increases in the number of P2P workshop participants with referrals to VR?
* Increases in the number of P2P workshop participants with individual plans for employment (IPE)?
* Changes in local collaborations?
* Increases in the number of P2P workshop participants working at competitive jobs?
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## Statement of work

We will complete the following activities to implement the P2P project with trained peer educators, P2P workshop participants and community stakeholders in four local communities (Sites 1-4).

### Onboard P2P Project Coordinators

An OSAC contractor and OCDD staff will coordinate the project with contracted consultants and maintain the project work plan and timeline. Both positions are supervised by the OCDD director. Onboarding activities will include review of the project description and objectives, budget and timeline. We will also hold a kickoff meeting with consultants when they are hired.

The OCDD coordinator is responsible to:

* Implement the project according to the project work plan and timeline;
* Work with contracted consultant(s) to adapt a quality peer education training curriculum for the project;
* Convene the advisory committee and maintain ongoing communication;
* Help the OSAC coordinator prepare periodic progress reports to the OSAC board and employment committee;
* Develop and distribute marketing materials for the project;
* Coordinate with consultants to develop the P2P training curriculum for peer educators and P2P workshop curriculum for participants;
* Work with the OSAC coordinator on outreach to recruit and hire peer educators, engage community stakeholders in Sites 1-4 and recruit P2P workshop participants;
* Convene the peer educator training with consultants, prepare materials and organize training logistics;
* Provide support to consultants and co-facilitate P2P workshops as needed;
* Implement the ongoing monitoring and evaluation plan, develop tools, gather data, and present analysis of lessons learned to advisory committee.

The OSAC coordinator is responsible to:

* Work with the OCDD coordinator and contractors to assist in planning the project;
* Work with OCDD staff and the OSAC outreach committee to develop marketing materials and conduct outreach in local communities;
* Co-facilitate peer educator trainings and other presentations related to the project;
* Co-facilitate P2P workshops in local sites;
* Help prepare for and co-facilitate advisory committee meetings;
* Give input on P2P workshop and evaluation activities and make suggestions for improvements;
* Give periodic progress reports to OSAC board and employment committee.

### Recruit project consultants

We will recruit up to three qualified consultants to help us implement the project.

* The Peer Education and Evaluation (PE&E) Consultant will develop the peer educator curriculum. This consultant will also work with the Lead Consultant to develop a project evaluation plan and a P2P workshop curriculum consistent with the content of the peer educator curriculum.
* The Lead Consultant will work with the PE&E Consultant to train the peer educators, develop the P2P workshop training curriculum for local participants and co-facilitate the P2P workshop trainings in Sites 1-4.
* The Training Consultant will work with the Lead Consultant and others to train the peer educators and co-facilitate the local P2P workshop trainings as needed.

### Recruit Advisory Committee members

The Advisory Committee (AC) members represent key stakeholders involved in the process of helping people with IDD find competitive jobs. Each will serve as a subject matter expert related to their professional or personal role to inform the development of the P2P workshop curriculum and implementation of activities. The committee will include people with disabilities (including OSAC members), family members and representatives of community stakeholders (i.e., VR, county DD project, brokerage, teachers and transition staff, transition network coordinators, peer educators, and employment service providers).

### Convene Advisory Committee

We will convene the Advisory Committee at least three times during the project to present updates on implementation and evaluation activities, share what we learn and seek input to improve project activities.

### Recruit up to eight peer educators from four local communities

We will recruit and select up to eight qualified peer educators residing in or near four local communities where we intend to hold the P2P workshops (Sites 1-4). Peer educator qualifications will include:

* Representation of the target population (i.e., demographics, experience, etc.);
* Availability and willingness to make required time commitment;
* Personal traits (i.e., friendly, team player, potential for leadership, outgoing, etc.); and
* Experience relevant to the project. We will seek candidates that have attended a sheltered workshop, worked at a competitive job, believe people with significant disabilities can work, and are interested in helping their peers pursue competitive employment goals.

Project staff will announce the positions and distribute the application through the advisory committee and local community stakeholders. We will work with OSAC leaders and others to form a selection committee. This committee will review applicants, conduct interviews and select up to eight peer educators for the project. Peer educators will be responsible to:

* Attend an intensive peer educator training;
* Request any needed accommodations;
* Prepare materials and supplies and co-facilitate scheduled workshops;
* Collaborate with community stakeholders;
* Co-lead monthly support meetings;
* Assist with training new peer educators;
* Attend advisory committee meetings as requested; and
* Give community presentations as requested.

### Develop peer educator and P2P workshop curricula and an evaluation plan

We will work with the project consultants to develop a peer educator training curriculum, a P2P workshop curriculum and an evaluation plan. Consultants will also train peer educators and implement P2P workshops in local communities.

*Peer educator training curriculum*. The PE&E Consultant will develop a peer educator curriculum for this project. This curriculum will be culturally appropriate, interactive, participatory and well structured. The curriculum will have clear goals and objectives based on methodological findings and include an evaluation component.

*P2P workshop curriculum*. The PE&E and Lead Consultants will work together to develop the P2P workshop curriculum for participants. The curriculum will include interactive activities, role-plays, games and related materials intended to equip participants with knowledge and skills to achieve competitive integrated employment. Representatives from local schools, VR offices, CDDPs, brokerages and employment service providers will have an important role in these P2P workshops, and in supporting participants to follow up on individual goals.

*Evaluation plan*. Monitoring and evaluation activities will occur throughout the project. We will collect data to monitor our progress and the effectiveness of project activities. We anticipate using pre and post-test measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the peer educator and P2P workshop curricula at producing desired changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal outcomes.

### Conduct community outreach to market the P2P project

The project coordinators will work with OCDD staff and OSAC members to engage community stakeholders and participants in the project. They will develop materials and market the project through the advisory committee, community stakeholders, local Employment First teams and others.

We recognize that parents and families have a critical role in supporting a person to pursue and maintain competitive employment. We will make a specific effort to invite and engage family members, groups and family advocacy and support organizations to have a role in the project.

### Train peer educators

Project coordinators will arrange logistics and work with project consultants to train the peer educators. Based on our initial review of peer education curricula, we anticipate training time will range from 40 to 60 classroom hours. Peer educators will observe each other co-facilitating P2P workshops and provide each other feedback.

### Schedule P2P workshops in four local communities

Project coordinators will work with consultants, advisory committee members and others to schedule the P2P workshop series in Sites 1-4. If interested, peer educators will assist with community outreach. We will prioritize communities that welcome the project, agree to participate in the P2P workshops and commit to helping people reach their employment goals.

### Convene the P2P workshop series in Site 1

We will convene a series of P2P workshops with up to 30 people in Site 1. We anticipate participants will meet up to six times to complete the curriculum. During the P2P workshops, the project consultants, coordinators and peer educators will co-facilitate interactive curriculum activities to develop changes in attitudes and beliefs about employment and develop participant knowledge and skills. Representatives of local schools, VR offices, CDDPs, brokerages and employment service providers will also have a role.

Participants will develop personal goals and identify steps they will take to reach them. During monthly support meetings, participants will share progress, challenges and celebrate success. Local agency representatives will provide appropriate support to help participants pursue their goals.

### Use monitoring and evaluation data to improve project

We will use what we learn from implementation of the P2P workshop series in Site 1 to make improvements to the P2P workshop curriculum and implementation activities. Thereafter, we will continue monitoring the project to compile lessons learned from peer educator, participant and community partner experiences during each P2P workshop. We anticipate implementing pre and post-tests with P2P workshop participants to measure changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as personal outcomes resulting from the project. We will share evaluation data with the advisory committee and use it to improve the curriculum and project activities on an ongoing basis.

### Schedule and convene the improved P2P workshop series in Sites 2-4

We anticipate changes to the P2P workshop curriculum based on what we learn from initial implementation and evaluation of activities and participant experiences in Site 1. The project coordinators will work with our consultants and others to schedule and convene the improved P2P workshop series in Sites 2-4. Evaluation activities will continue throughout the project.

### Explore opportunities to expand the project

As a result of our efforts, eight peer educators will be highly skilled at talking to their peers and others about the benefits of employment and how to get a job using VR and DD services. Additionally, we anticipate a number of P2P workshop participants will be actively pursuing competitive employment goals. Moreover, some participants may find competitive employment during the project period. We will use such outcomes and participant stories to promote project expansion to new communities and seek additional funding. We will also look for opportunities to engage peer educators in local and statewide Employment First efforts.

## P2P Project Logic Model

| **Resources** | **Activities** | **Outputs** | **Outcomes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *To accomplish our activities, we need the following resources:* | *To address our goal, we will accomplish the following activities:* | *We expect these activities will produce the following evidence:* | *We expect these activities will lead to the following changes in 1-5 years:* |
| DHS & OCDD funding BudgetAdvisory committee National peer education standardsJob descriptions for peer educators and P2P coordinatorsRelationships with community stakeholdersSupport from OCDD staff and stakeholdersPeople with intellectual and developmental disabilities  | Hire P2P project coordinatorRecruit advisory committee (AC)Convene AC Monitor and evaluate activitiesRecruit 8 peer educators (PE)Hire consultantsTrain peer educatorsConvene P2P workshop in Site 1Use data to improve curriculum Convene P2P workshop series in Sites 2-4 | Evaluation planPeer educator training curriculumP2P workshop curriculum 8 peer educators trainedNew relationships developed 3 AC meetings convenedLocal agencies have role in project At least 120 people participate (30 in 4 sites) Evaluation data P2P project improved | Increase in PE knowledge and skills *1 – 2 years*Changes in P2P workshop (WS) participant attitudes and beliefs re: employmentIncreased PE and WS participant knowledge of DD and VR services; how to use services to get a jobIncreased PE and WS participant self-determination skillsIncreased number of WS participants:* Want a job
* Get referrals to VR
* Develop IPEs

*3 – 5 years*Strengthened agency & community partner collaborationIncreased number of WS participants have competitive jobs  |

## Budget and timeline

The table below shows the project timeline and costs associated with activities to implement the P2P project.

| **DHS 2015-2017 Biennium (July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2017)** | **Due** | **Cost** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Q2 October 1, 2015 - December 31, 2015 |   |   |
| Marketing Materials | 12/31/15 |  $3,000  |
| Onboard project coordinators and staff | 11/31/15 |  $8,500 |
| Submit Strategic Plan for P2P | 11/31/15 |  $3,500 |
| Q3 January 1, 2016 - March 31, 2016 |  |   |
| Submit plan outline for application process to recruit and select 8 peer educators | 1/15/16 |  $1,340  |
| Submit plan outline for application process to recruit and select 4 training sites | 1/15/16 |  $1,500 |
| Initial draft of Workshop Curriculum and Evaluation Plan | 2/28/16 |  $12,000  |
| Recruit and select 8 Peer Educators | 3/31/16 |  $6,240 |
| Final draft of Workshop Curriculum and Evaluation Plan  | 3/31/16 |  $4,800 |
| printing of curriculum materials  | 3/31/16 |  $1,000  |
| Recruit and Select Self Advocate Outreach team | 3/31/16 |  $1,170 |
| Q4 April 1, 2016 - June 30, 2016 |  |   |
| SME Peer Educator Training Prep | 4/30/16 |  $3,840  |
| Peer Educator Training 3, 2 day sessions | 5/31/16 |  $11,785  |
| Host 1st advisory group meeting | 6/30/16 |  $300  |
| Peer Educator Training follow-up | 6/30/16 |  $4,480 |
| Q5 July 1, 2016 - September 30, 2016 |  |   |
| Retain 8 Peer Educators | 7/1/16 |  $3,744  |
| Continue Self Advocate Coordinator (monthly) | 7/1/16 |  $6,760  |
| Continue Self-Advocate Support provided by OCDD (monthly) | 7/1/16 |  $7,500  |
| Continue P2P Project Coordinator (monthly) | 7/1/16 |  $7,500  |
| Retain 3 Self Advocate Outreach team | 7/31/16 |  $1,170  |
| Host Workshop training planning meeting with Site1 | 7/31/16 |  $640  |
| Printing of curriculum materials | 7/31/16 |  $1,000  |
| Conduct 6 day Workshop in site 1 | 8/31/16 |  $12,835  |
| Site 1 follow-up  | 9/30/16 |  $1,920  |
| Q6 October 1, 2016 - December 30, 2016 |  |   |
| Marketing Materials | 10/31/16 |  $2,000  |
| Host Workshop training planning meeting with Site 2 | 10/31/16 |  $640  |
| Revise Workshop Curriculum and Evaluation Plan | 10/31/16 |  $3,200  |
| Conduct 6 day Workshops in sites 2 | 11/31/16 |  $10,263  |
| Host 2nd advisory group meeting | 12/31/17 |  $300  |
| Workshops in site 2 follow up | 12/31/17 |  $3,840  |
| Q7 January 1, 2017 - March 31, 2017 |  |   |
| Host Workshop training planning meeting with Site 3 | 1/31/17 |  $640  |
| Conduct 6 day Workshops in sites 3 | 2/28/17 |  $6,423  |
| Workshops in site 3 follow up | 3/31/17 |  $1,920  |
| Host Workshop training planning meeting with Site 4 | 3/31/17 |  $640  |
| Q8 April 1, 2017 - June 30, 2017 |  |   |
| Conduct 6 day Workshops in site 4 | 4/30/17 |  $6,423  |
| Workshops in site 4 follow up | 5/30/17 |  $1,920  |
| Final Evaluation report | 6/30/17 |  $6,400  |
| Host 3rd advisory group meeting | 6/30/17 |  $300  |
| **Total** |  |  **$151,434**  |

1. Peer to Peer: Using peer to peer strategies in drug abuse prevention. *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, Global Youth Network*, October 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Peer Education Training of Trainers Manual. *UN Interagency Group of Young People’s Health, Development and Protection in Europe and Central Asia, Sub-Committee on Peer Education,* July 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Peer Education: Rigorous Evidence – Usable Results. *USAID Project Search*, December 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Peer Programs: Looking at the Evidence of Effectiveness, Literature Review. *Garfein, Golub, Greenberg, Hagan, Hanson et al,* 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Standards for Peer Education Programs. *Youth Peer Education Network,* 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)