

ODEP/NOND Alliance Report

May 7, 2012 – May 7, 2014

I. Alliance Background

Date Alliance Signed: May 7, 2012

This report describes the purpose, scope, and outcomes of the Alliance between the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities (NOND). This Alliance was one of the outcomes from ODEP's Healthcare Summit held in Chicago in 2011.

Overview

Summary of the Purpose and Scope of the ODEP/NOND Alliance

ODEP and NOND recognized the value of establishing a collaborative relationship to promote the employment of people with disabilities in the healthcare industry. ODEP and NOND formed an Alliance on May 7, 2012 to conduct outreach, education, and technical assistance activities that promote the recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities, in the healthcare sector.

Alliance Activities

- *Share expertise and information* on hiring, advancing, and retaining healthcare professionals with disabilities, specifically targeting veterans and others with disabilities interested in healthcare careers, mature workers, and employers in the healthcare industry.
- *Promote and disseminate information on ODEP resources* to NOND members, and others in the healthcare industry. ODEP resources include, but are not limited to, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN), and the Workforce Recruitment Program.
- *Develop and publicize resources on the value of hiring and retaining veterans and other individuals with disabilities* in the healthcare sector, including educational materials, success stories, and case studies developed collaboratively or by individual parties.
- *Identify issues* of specific concern to employers to which the Alliance should direct particular attention and resources, and determine how best to communicate relevant information to this constituency.

- *Speak, exhibit, and/or appear* at mutually agreed upon ODEP and NOND events.
- As appropriate, *convene and/or participate in stakeholder meetings* focused on forging innovative strategies for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting people with disabilities.
- *Provide technical assistance to employers and employees* regarding replicable disability employment strategies, policies, and effective practices.
- *Participate in meetings and/or discussions with representatives from other ODEP Alliances* to exchange information on various disability employment issues that are being addressed and to explore opportunities for additional collaborative activities.
- *Carry out other activities, as mutually agreed upon,* that promote the hiring, advancement, and retention of individuals with disabilities in the healthcare industry.

Implementation Team

The Implementation Team, consisting of representatives from ODEP and NOND, developed Alliance goals, set strategies, and took actions to accomplish them.

NOND Members: Karen McCulloh, Founder and Immediate Past President of NOND/President and CEO, Karen McCulloh & Associates Consulting and Beth Marks, President, NOND and Research Associate Professor, Department of Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago.

ODEP Members

Julie Clark, Policy Advisor, Employment Supports Team; Mario Damiani, Policy Advisor, Employment Supports Team; Serena Lowe, Senior Policy Advisor, Workforce Systems Policy Team; Carol Boyer (4.23.13), Senior Policy Advisor, Employer Policy Team; Carol Dunlap, Business Development Specialist, Policy, Communications & Outreach Team/ Alliance Manager.

Change in ODEP's Alliance Coordinator

It should be noted that Julie Clark served as ODEP's first coordinator for this Alliance. When she was assigned to other duties, Mario Damiani (7.11.12) assumed the role of Alliance Coordinator. Mario Damiani remained coordinator until February, 2014 when he left ODEP for a new position. From February through May 2014, Carol Boyer assumed the duties of Alliance coordinator.

Evaluation Period

This report covers years I and II of the ODEP NOND Alliance

May 7, 2012- May 7, 2014.

II. Team Meetings

May 7, 2012/Kickoff Meeting:

The goals and objectives of the Alliance were reviewed. Issues regarding healthcare employment and people with disabilities were identified. For example, many community colleges appear to be keeping students with disabilities out of careers in healthcare basing admittance solely on functional abilities. It was mentioned that the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) website on healthcare careers did not appear to mention people with disabilities. Also discussed in this meeting was that the nursing profession holds a narrow viewpoint that nursing tasks need to be done a certain way rather than considering doing things differently. A number of success stories were mentioned. There were two key outcomes of this meeting: (1) the need to hold a Roundtable event, and (2) the importance of getting the word out about healthcare careers for students with disabilities.

June 6, 2012: Following this meeting, all JAN materials associated with nurses and the healthcare profession were sent to NOND for review and suggestions for updating and expansion of topics.

August 10, 2012: During this meeting, three Alliance goals were identified: (1) reduce stigma and barriers by promoting NOND success-story videos, (2) hold strategic discussions to increase the ability of individuals with disabilities to enter nursing/allied health educations paths and careers, and (3) update JAN resources.

January 8, 2013: Plans were made to hold an Alliance meeting with ETA representatives. Agenda items may include video clips, discussion of ETA's website not being inclusive of people with disabilities, and a look at the medical model vs. the social model. A suggested invitation list to the Roundtable was framed.

January 23, 2013: Final preparations were made for the meeting with ETA. The ODEP NOND Alliance team provided handouts and met with five ETA representatives: Lauren Wright, Pam Frugoli, Stu Werner, Kim Vitelli, and Randee Chafkin.

March 5, 2013: Discussion of follow up from meeting with ETA included the recognition that ETA’s career path website is based in many places on functional abilities. Further discussion on Roundtable details: purpose, objectives, outcomes, venue, date(s), total attendees (30), conference memorandum; briefing with ODEP’s Assistant Secretary.

March 25, 2013: Plans for the Roundtable were discussed. The Assistant Secretary approved plans to proceed with the event and the list of invitees. Mario Damiani agreed to draft the conference memorandum. Meeting focus: functional abilities criteria and issues related to getting people with disabilities into courses of study that lead to jobs in healthcare.

April-August, 2013: A Roundtable Action Item Checklist was prepared and an invitation, an agenda, and the conference memorandum were drafted and circulated for approval.

January 17, 2014: Invitations were sent to the final list of invitees; speakers were confirmed, and packets of pertinent information were prepared including CDs of accessible information.

March 18, 2014: More than 40 diverse stakeholders from across the country, including employers, Federal, and state policymakers, researchers, and educational administrators attended the Alliance Roundtable on Health Care Professionals with Disabilities: Career Trends, Best Practices and Call-to-Action Policy. This event was held in meeting space at the U.S. Access Board.

Event comments from:
Bronwynne C. Evans, PhD, RN, FNGNA, ANEF, FAAN
Professor | Director, PhD Program
College of Nursing & Health Innovation

Thanks to your excellent planning, the session was even more successful than I had dreamed it could be, and I am personally so grateful for the service you have done for nurses and nursing students with disabilities nationwide. As a founding member of NOND, I have worked pro bono for more than a decade to support and advance this cause and it is wonderful to see it now on the national stage, thanks to you all. Please express my appreciation to everyone who helped us make this happen.

III. Outcomes

8.31.12 NOND’s “Open the Door” video and Danielle’s Story were promoted to ODEP constituents in its weekly news brief.

NOND’s Board reviewed what JAN had included on their website in regard to nursing and disability. NOND provided feedback to

JAN on what additional information on disability, accommodations and employment could be included. It was suggested that JAN add more information on their website about the aging workforce by including data from the US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. The number of nurses age 50 and older currently in the workforce is significant.

- 1.8.13 Still photos (screen grabs) were produced from Victoria's and Danielle's videos. These screen grabs can be used as images of people with disabilities working successfully in the healthcare industry.
- 1.23.13 ODEP and NOND met with representatives from ETA in an effort to increase their awareness of the need to encourage individuals with disabilities to enter nursing/allied health education paths and careers.
- 3.18.14 Roundtable Outcomes:
- A list of suggested next steps was offered by Roundtable participants.
 - NOND invited to write an article for the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) newsletter.
 - AACC is now building a disability page for its website and ODEP and NOND have sent links to resources that will be included on this page.
 - NOND has been invited by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) to present two webinars in the fall of 2014. Conference calls have been held between AACN and NOND in order to prepare for the webinars.
 - The National League of Nursing (NLN) has invited one of the researchers that participated in a panel discussion at the Roundtable to join NLN Diversity Committee. It was suggested by NOND that NLN also consider inviting a nurse with a disability to participate.
 - NOND participation in an educational conference call with members of the American Nurses Association (ANA) and their affiliates for a first-ever discussion on disability (6.24.14) and additional discussions will continue with ANA leadership to keep the momentum moving forward for ANA to address nursing and disability.
 - The California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities sent the ODEP Assistant Secretary's blog on Health Care Industry Demands and People with Disabilities to their social media contacts, and as a result of the Roundtable, they are also making tremendous progress in the commitment made at the Roundtable to develop and disseminate a model technical standard in California. They have convened meetings with the nursing education leaders to discuss the technical standards for nursing

education programs in California and the impact these standards may have on the participation of prospective students with disabilities. Conversation has been initiated to have an ADA compliance presentation and discussion at the California Association of Colleges of Nursing and the California Organization of Associate Degree Nursing Programs (CACN/CoADN) Joint Conference in the fall of 2014.

- US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) conference call with ODEP and NOND has resulted in OCR looking into publishing guidelines on essential functions/functional capabilities for nursing and allied health programs. Follow-up call with OCR to be scheduled after the alliance has ended.
- *American Journal of Nursing* (AJN) "Viewpoint" column written and submitted in collaboration with a participant of the Roundtable and NOND.

IV. Alliance Results

During this two-year agreement, ODEP and NOND collaborated to promote the educational access for students with disabilities into higher education where their functional abilities are not the criteria used for admission, and to highlight the employment of people with disabilities in the healthcare industry with emphasis on the cultural competencies they can bring to healthcare. The Alliance culminated in a Roundtable that resulted in increased national awareness of critical issues affecting many people with disabilities in being accepted in academic environments to pursue professions in the healthcare industry and the employment issues around "essential functions of the job" and reasonable accommodations that can be provided by employers in the healthcare industry. Since the Roundtable, it is recognized that many key stakeholders such as those representing national nursing and other allied healthcare fields have only just begun to review and discuss students and people with disability being included in the healthcare workforce. It is evident that more education is needed.

VI. Beyond the Alliance

ODEP and NOND will continue to work together to build the messaging about increasing employment and educational opportunities in the healthcare sector, including nursing, for individuals with disabilities. The working relationship that developed during the two years of this Alliance has allowed each organization to increase their understanding of each other. ODEP and NOND will sustain an ongoing, supporting relationship to increase the capacity of workers with disabilities to successfully navigate educational institutions of higher learning in healthcare careers and obtain and retain employment in

associated jobs and to promote more adoption and implementation of reasonable accommodations and nondiscriminatory policies and practices by educational institutions and employers.