Implementation Findings from Three Random Assignment Studies of Career Pathways Programs

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Presentation Overview

- What is PACE?
- Study Methods
- Implementation Findings
  - Bridge to Employment in Health Care (San Diego Workforce Partnership)
  - Patient Care Pathways Program (Madison Area Technical College)
  - Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA)
- PACE next steps
What is PACE?

- Evaluation of nine different “career pathways” approaches that aim to increase education, training, employment and self-sufficiency among low-income, low-skilled adults
  - 3(+) are Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG)

- Study components
  - Impact study using random assignment methodology
  - Implementation study

- Sponsored by the Office for Planning, Research and Evaluation, ACF

Key Career Pathways Ideas

- A series of connected education and training programs and support services
- Enables individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance within that sector
- Each step prepares participant for the next level of employment and education
- Partnerships between education and training providers, social service providers, workforce
- Signature program components
  - Comprehensive assessment, basic and technical skills instruction, academic and non-academic supports, connections to employment
San Diego Workforce Partnership

Bridge to Employment in the Healthcare Industry Program
Bridge to Employment in the Healthcare Industry Overview

- San Diego Workforce Partnership (WIB) partnered with three CBOs to deliver services
- **Key components**
  - Formal and informal assessments
  - “Navigation” services and case management
  - Individual Training Accounts to fund occupational training
    - Three occupational groups supported, each with multiple levels
  - Supportive service funds
  - Employment services
- **Target population**: San Diego County residents, income < 200% Lower Living Standard Income Level, GED or high school graduate, eligible to work, reading and math levels above 6\textsuperscript{th}-8\textsuperscript{th} grade level
Participation Patterns over 18 Months

ASSIGNED TO BRIDGE TO EMPLOYMENT: 100%

ATTENDED TRAINING: 82%
- COMPLETED TRAINING: 70%
- STILL PARTICIPATING AT FOLLOW-UP: 2%

DID NOT ATTEND TRAINING: 18%

ATTENDED ONE TRAINING PROGRAM: 80%
ATTENDED TWO TRAINING PROGRAMS: 17%
ATTENDED THREE OR MORE TRAINING PROGRAMS: 3%
Implementation Study

Findings

- Program screened out few applicants during assessment process
- Participants engaged with navigators soon after enrolling; however, navigators provided limited guidance on training research and selection
  - Limited navigator “check in” once in training
- High navigator turnover meant periods of high caseloads; implications for service delivery
- Most participants selected private, for-profit training providers; many referred to program by these providers
- Provision of work readiness training varied by CBO
Implementation
Modifications

- Midway through study, program encouraged participants to pursue a second “bundled” training or subsequent training concurrently to:
  - Improve employment opportunities
  - Increase wages

- Common training bundles included medical assistant/phlebotomy, CNA/home health aide or CNA/home health aide/electrocardiogram technician
Madison Area Technical College

Patient Care Pathway Program
Patient Care Pathway Overview

- Patient Care Academies (PCAs)
  - One semester clusters of fully-defined and sequenced basic skills and occupational training courses
    - PCA1 laddered into one-year certificate programs in health care
    - PCA2 laddered into two-year degree programs in health care
    - PC Nursing Assistant (PCNA) laddered into PCA1 or PCA2 or completers could obtain employment as a nursing assistant once they passed a state licensing exam
  - Accelerated and contextualized courses
  - Dedicated, proactive advisors

- Target population: Prospective healthcare students in the Madison, WI area with test scores too low to be admitted to healthcare training program of choice
Participation Patterns over 18 Months

Assigned To Patient Care Pathway Program: 100%

Participated In Any Training: 94%

- Participated In PCNA: 8%
- Participated In PCA1: 27% (26% enrolled directly after RA; 1% moved from PCNA to PCA1)
- Participated In PCA2: 75% (57% enrolled directly after RA; 18% moved from PCA1 to PCA2)
- Enrolled Directly In Other Credit-Bearing Courses: 4%

Enrolled In Other Credit Or Occupational Courses: 77%

Admitted To A PCA1 Or PCA2 Destination Program: 7%
Implementation Study
Findings

- Recruitment challenges led the program to operate at a smaller scale than expected
- The program delivered training largely as designed, although advising was less intensive than planned
- A change in healthcare program admissions policies at Madison College made it more difficult for PCA2 completers to transition to targeted destination programs
  - TEAS
- Other institutional factors further delayed enrollment and completion of credentials
Implementation Modifications

- The program incorporated additional instructional supports in response to identified student needs
  - Supplemental instructor for PCA2 Chemistry class
  - Group tutoring sessions for PCA1 students
- To help students prepare for the TEAS assessment, PCA2 instructors designed and implemented a TEAS workshop
Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA) Program
VIDA Overview

- Two decades of experience; based on “Project QUEST” model
- Key components
  - Requires full-time college enrollment in an occupational program VIDA supports at a partner college
  - Requires participation in weekly group or individual counseling session
  - Extensive financial support for tuition, books, other training costs and transportation
  - College Prep Academy for non-college ready who have 10th grade or higher basic skills
- Target population: Resident of Lower Rio Grande Valley, at least 18 years old and low income, unemployed or underemployed, or on public assistance
Participation Patterns over 24 Months

- 97% of treatment group members received occupational training
  - 91% earned college credits
  - 66% earned 30 or more credits
- 55% earned one or more college credentials; 42% were still in school at the end of 24 months
- 75% of participants were in nursing and allied health training
  - 52% were in Licensed Vocational Nurse and Associate Degree of Nursing programs
- 9% started in College Prep Academy, and 85% continued to occupational training
Implementation Study
Findings

- Treatment group members received a substantial dosage of counseling services.
- 99% of participants received VIDA financial assistance, averaging almost $7,000 per participant.
- The College Prep Academy prepared participants for entry into college-level occupational training, although VIDA was not able to increase enrollment or expand to additional colleges as intended.
- Training in nursing and allied health professions were the most commonly attended, followed by programs in education, social services, and specialized trades.
PACE Next Steps

- Finalize implementation and early impact reports
  - www.career-pathways.org

- Intermediate and long-term outcome reports will present impacts at ~ 36 and 72 months after random assignment
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