



Exceptional Persons, Inc. FY15 Accessibility Plan Progress Report

The Accessibility Committee's goal is to cultivate an accessible workplace and community by addressing barriers that may exist within EPI and/or the surrounding community. This annual Accessibility Plan Progress Report provides a mechanism for tracking progress toward the removal of identified accessibility barriers in the lives of persons served by EPI, as well as its employees and other stakeholders. It should be noted the report does not necessarily include all barriers but does identify trends, patterns, information, and data which support the presence of a particular barrier. The report highlights the barriers addressed during this fiscal year (October 1-September 30).

Architectural

Architectural or "physical" barriers refer to barriers that impede physical access to an environment.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Current housing does not consistently meet changing needs of persons served. Accessible housing is especially important as people with disabilities work to become independent, productive members of their communities.	Maintenance and Property Department will make modifications to renovate homes of persons served as well as EPI facilities. Modifications will increase accessibility for persons served	Continuous
	Community Services Department will seek out and secure accessible housing for persons served to rent/lease within the community.	Continuous
Sidewalks are not available to allow access to bus routes and other areas within the community.	EPI's Accessibility Committee will develop a list of needed sidewalks and present it to members of the Waterloo Building Inspections Department, City Sidewalk Department, and the ADA Compliance Commission. This list will be presented annually to the City of Waterloo	June 2015 <i>(completed 6/15)</i>

Progress

Modifications made by the Maintenance Department:

Exterior Modifications:

- Modified hand railings on exterior of 4 homes to reduce fall risk for individual with impaired balance.
- Replaced standard front doorknob with lever knob to improve access to home
- Mounted motion-activated light onto house to make backyard and walkway more accessible

- Repaired tripping hazards along concrete walk/driveways in 2 locations

Interior Modifications:

- Installed high rise power flush toilets to support individuals with balance issues and those who take medications which impact digestion in 6 locations.
- Relocated a specialized toilet/bidet for a person served who moved between locations
- Installed hand rails to reduce risk of falls for individuals with impaired balance around:
 - Bath tub (3)
 - Walk-in shower (3)
 - Toilet
- Installed tub surround and shower head for person with mobility issues which make bathing in a tub difficult
- Changed shower head to a hand held with hose to accommodate bathing using a shower chair
- Removed lip at edge of walk-in shower to make access with walker possible
- Put Lexan on windows within home to prevent injury from breaking windows
- Built 2 wood stools - one with an 8" step and the other with a 6" step to use when transitioning into or out of vehicles. These stools are used together to make a small stairwell to access the van.

Secure accessible housing:

EPI has developed new housing opportunities by establishing and cultivating relationships with external landlords who provide accessible housing. Ten new locations were developed this year through a combination of new service development and current service movement to find better housing opportunities as well as a result of closing five large and/or licensed group homes.

Sidewalk recommendations:

The City of Waterloo's Building Inspector, Craig Clark, made plans for a study on sidewalks included in the FY14 request made by the Committee. Due to this, the FY15 sidewalk recommendations did not include any sidewalk or curb cuts recommended in previous years. Instead, the FY15 request focused specifically on University Avenue in Waterloo in direct response to the proposed sidewalk and recreation trail the City of Cedar Falls is developing along University Avenue. This committee expects the lack of consistent sidewalk along both the north and south sides of University Avenue in Waterloo will become a more prevalent barrier for persons with and without disabilities in the Cedar Valley area once the Cedar Falls sidewalk and rec trails are completed in 2019.

Environmental

Environmental barriers include any location or characteristic of a setting which compromises, impedes, or hinders service delivery and the benefits gained from service.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Cold temperatures within offices on the East side of the Ansborough office	Test current heating units and explore necessity of additional heating options.	11/30/14 (completed 12/14)
Lighting, temperature (heat needed), and privacy concerns within an enclave setting	Update lighting, rearrange heating units, creation of a private work area for job coach with access to electrical outlet.	10/31/14 (completed 10/14)

Progress

Ansborough cold temperatures:

The Maintenance Department investigated heating ducts and airflow to the east end of the Ansborough office. The thermostat for the affected area was located in the hallway outside of the room and initially adjustment of 1-2 degrees on that unit was effective. However, with colder temperatures in mid-November, thermostat adjustment was no longer meeting the needs in this room without making other office areas very warm. The thermostat unit was moved into the affected office on 12/17/14 and set at 74 degrees, which proved to be a comfortable setting for all staff with offices in this area.

Lighting, temperature and privacy within enclave:

Easton Technical made the following modifications on 10/29/2014 to make the working environment more accessible:

- Updated lighting throughout the workspace
- Installed heaters to ensure a warmer environment
- Bolted break room lockers to the wall to prevent accidents
- Installed a wall rack to keep cleaning supplies out of walkways
- Provided space and a desk (and outlets) to allow private conversations with employees

Attitudinal

Attitudinal barriers are behaviors or perceptions which prevent people from communicating properly. Persons with disabilities face attitudinal barriers related to misperceptions of their abilities. Often these attitudes patronize people with disabilities, usually relegating them to low-skill or child-like positions.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Misperceptions of abilities of persons served impact service quality and effectiveness - need to raise internal awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities	EPI staff training to promote the value and individual needs of each person served at orientation, during Community Service meetings, and at initial/recertification training for Crisis Prevention Institute.	9/30/2015 (completed 10/14)
	Annual training by Dr. Tomas E. Pomeranz from Universal LifeStiles, LLC designed to address building positive relationships with persons served.	4/30/2015 (completed 4/15 via alternate training opportunities)
Misperceptions of the abilities of persons served impact overall community awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities	Provide information to the community through training, speaking events, and development of community partnerships.	Continuous
	EPI will facilitate opportunities for persons served to attend events focused on self-advocacy.	9/30/2015 (In progress)

Progress

Internal awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities:

Instead of training offered by Dr. Thomas E. Pomeranz from Universal LifeStiles, LLC to address building positive relationships, EPI focused on adjusting the on-boarding experience for new hires. Effective 4/1/2015, orientation training was adjusted to include additional trainings which promote of the value and individual needs of persons served. This adjustment was also intended to better help prepare new hires for their role as Direct Support Professionals (DSP) and/or supervisory staff.

Trainings, offered both in person and via Direct Course (College of Direct Supports and College of Recovery and Community Inclusion), include:

Additional Orientation trainings for all CS staff:

- CPI: Crisis Cycle training (1 hour, Orientation Day 2)
- Service Delivery Philosophy (1 hour, Orientation Day 2)

New Lessons for ID services:

- Cultural Competence: Communication
- Supporting Healthy Lives: Working With Health Care Professionals
- Community Inclusion:
 - Matching Community Resources with Individual Interests
 - The DSP Role in Community Inclusion
 - Natural Supports
- Everyone can Communicate:
 - How People Communicate
 - The Role of the DSP as a Communication Partner

New Lessons for BI services:

- Everyone can Communicate: How People Communicate
- Community Inclusion: Natural Supports
- Cultural Competence: Communication
- Supporting Healthy Lives: Working With Health Care Professional
- Introduction to Mental Health and Mental Illnesses:
 - Lesson 1: Overview of Mental Health and the Role of the DSP
- Understanding Community Inclusion:
 - Lesson 1: Defining Community Integration, Participation, and Inclusion
 - Lesson 8: The Challenges of Community Inclusion
- Introduction to Mental Health Recovery and Wellness:
 - Lesson 6: The Eight Dimensions of Wellness, Part 1
 - Lesson 7: The Eight Dimensions of Wellness, Part 2
 - Lesson 9: Creating a Culture of Recovery
- Seeing the Person First: Understanding Mental Health Conditions:
 - Lesson 1: Seeing the Person First
 - Lesson 2: Acknowledging Individual Hopes, Dreams, and Desires
 - Lesson 3: Participating in Community Life
 - Lesson 6: Understanding the Causes of Mental Health Conditions
 - Lesson 8: Promoting Participation for Individuals Living with Mental Health Conditions
- Cultural Competence in Mental Health Service Settings:
 - Lesson 6: Understanding Diversity

Throughout the year, additional specialty trainings were made available to staff in a live format, then recorded and posted to Direct Course for staff who could not attend the live meeting:

- Activity & Community Inclusion – November 2014
- Cultural Competency Training – December 2014
- Accessibility – December 2014
- Mental Health – January 2015
- Community Integration – September 2015

Community awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities:

EPI continues to work to raise internal and community awareness of persons with disabilities. Through quarterly newsletters, electronic communications (eNews), blogs, videos, social media, donor stewardship mailings, speaking engagements, 1:1 donor visits, , information about what EPI does is

getting out into the community. This year, a multitude of events focused on raising awareness within the community:

- Trunk or Treat (October 25, 2014) – EPI staff welcomed the community to enjoy a safe trick-or-treating experience in the Ansborough parking lot.
- 2014 annual Giving Tree donation drive (November/December 2014) – EPI partnered with Waterloo Police Protective Association, Larry K. Fox & Associates - Ameriprise Financial, and the Waterloo Warriors hockey team to meet the needs of those who might not otherwise have gifts during the holiday season. This year, with the help of these entities, EPI staff were able to fulfill over 200 needs.
- PDCM provided funding for EPI staff and persons served to access the community and attend a local hockey game on February 21, 2015.
- Drea Nelson and Nicole Rand met with UNI students on March 12, 2015 to discuss transitioning youth with disabilities from school to employment.
- Nicole Ericson, Brittney Montross, and Alicia Hurmence met with Black Hawk-Grundy Mental Health Integrated Health Home Team to discuss the benefits of employment and Day Habilitation services for those living with a serious mental illness (March 20, 2015). Nicole Rand followed up this conversation when meeting with the Integrated Health Homes at their quarterly meeting on April 9, 2015.
- NEI3A Walk on Main Street (May 21, 2015) – Participants from EPI's CHOICE Day Habilitation program joined the Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging (NEI3A) for their sixth annual Older Americans Month one mile walk.
- My Waterloo Days People in the Park Booth (June 11-12, 2015) - In partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health EPI gave away helmets to 50 children attending the My Waterloo Days festivals to promote Brain Injury Awareness. Child Care Resource and Referral staff were present as well to provide public service information focused on car seat safety and safe sleep for infants.
- Blood Drive (June 12, 2015) – EPI hosted a blood drive at the Deery Center in partnership with the American Red Cross.
- Sturgis Falls Gateway Market Booth (June 26-28, 2015) - In partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health EPI gave away helmets to 50 children attending the My Waterloo Days festivals to promote Brain Injury Awareness. Child Care Resource and Referral staff were present as well to provide public service information focused on car seat safety and safe sleep for infants.
- ADA 25th Anniversary Walk (July 28, 2015) - EPI and UNI's Student Disability Services joined together to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act at UNI. UNI Provost Jim Wohlar welcomed everyone, followed by a speech by Tyler Greene, and a walk around the UNI campus.
- EPI Walk (7/18/2015) – Zsavooz Sports Lounge & Grill sponsored a walk for EPI Participants paid \$5. All money raised from the event went back to EPI including 15% of each participant's food bill. Children's activities were offered as well.
- Business partnerships - EPI added 27 businesses partners to employ persons with disabilities this year. EPI staff are made aware of businesses employing persons with disabilities through listing on the main page of the Epicenter and at the Ansborough office, where business logos are posted on the peg board outside of the Copy Room.

There has been turnover in members on the Self-Advocacy committee, with each member being involved on the committee for only a short time. This has made it challenging for the committee to accomplish goals. This committee worked specifically with people with intellectual disabilities. The committee continues to work toward stability and plans for MI/BI service populations to start up their own group are being explored.

Financial

Financial barriers include lack of adequate county and state funding for services.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Low reimbursement rates offer insufficient funding for services/supports.	Fundraising for Providers PAC allowing EPI employees to engage in policy change with state government for adequate financing so EPI can continue to meet service obligations.	Continuous
	Exploration of additional resources outside of major funding streams to assist in meeting the needs of persons served and maintaining financial health of the organization.	Continuous
	Remain active at both the local and state levels in advocating for increased funding to cover the cost of services and provide regular increases to providers. Inherent in this request is the need to be able to pay adequate wages to both recruit and retain a quality workforce. EPI joins the efforts of others and is part of a larger voice through its membership in ANCOR (a national organization) and IACP (our state association of providers).	Continuous
Limited incomes for persons served result in situations where individuals cannot meet monthly obligations, unusual expenses or one-time expenses	Use of the Essential Needs Fund to assist those who do not have the resources to meet these financial obligations.	Continuous

Progress

Internal fundraising for policy change for adequate financing:

EPI employees were involved in several events focused on fundraising for Providers PAC. Internal events included:

- Annual soup day - "Gobble 'til You Wobble" - November 2014
- May Baskets – May 2015

Exploration of additional resources outside of major funding streams:

EPI continues to seek out options, including grant opportunities through foundations and organization to assist with quality service provision.

The Communications and Development department completes an online and direct mail appeal annually and raised funds specifically for the Newell renovations through major donor support this year.

The Second Annual More Than You See Dueling Pianos/Silent Auction Fundraiser (November 2014) - an entertaining fundraising event which showcased and celebrated the value persons with disabilities contribute, raising funds to support persons with disabilities in finding meaningful employment and fund critical housing needs

Grant requests include (those funded are noted as well):

- Walmart corporation - December 2014 (donor declined)
- John Deere – Submitted December 2014
- Cedar Valley United Way – Multi- year grant 2012-2014
- Wells Fargo – submitted December 2014 (pending)

In January 2015, the Communication and Development Department provided information to stakeholders regarding the benefits of making a recurring donation in January 2015.

In July, Zsavooz Sports Lounge & Grill sponsored a walk for EPI. Participants paid \$5. All money raised from the event went back to EPI including 15% of each participant's food bill.

Exceptional Persons Foundation Kick-Off event was August 5, 2015 at the side yard of the Ansborough office. All EPI staff were invited to come for a lunch, lawn games, and the opportunity for staff to learn about where their donations to the foundation go.

State/local activity advocating for increased funding for service:

EPI remains active at both the local and state levels in advocating for increased funding to cover the cost of services and provide regular increases to providers. Inherent in this request is the need to be able to pay adequate wages to both recruit and retain a quality workforce.

Since September 2014 EPI's Employment Services have taken part in the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Network, through the Office of Disability Employment Policy to help us move our day hab from a facility-based day hab to a community-based day hab. This project is helping providers in Iowa realize the importance of community-based services in employment and day hab, with hope to make a positive, long-term impact on funding. Currently in Iowa a substantial amount of employment funding (about 80%) that goes to facility-based services as opposed to getting jobs out in the community.

Additionally, EPI joins the efforts of others and is part of a larger voice through its membership in the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1000 private community providers of services to people with disabilities, and the Iowa Association of Community Providers (IACP), our state association of providers supporting children and adults with disabilities. Currently, Chris Sparks, EPI Executive Director is the President of the ANCOR Board of Directors and Susan Seehase, EPI Services Director sits on the IACP Board of Directors.

With the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) Request for Proposal for Governor Branstad's Medicaid Modernization last February, and subsequent contracting with four Managed Care companies, EPI anticipates change in funding and service delivery expectations for all Medicaid services. EPI remains proactive with the intent to adapt to the upcoming changes as they will impact the agency in FY16.

Essential Needs Funds assistance:

Challenges to meet financial obligations continue to impact persons served. The Essential Needs Fund provided over \$10,000.00 of support this year in the following capacity :

Category	# Funded
Personal Needs/ Milestones	13
Rent Assistance	14
Temporary Child Care Emergency	5
Home Furnishings	2
Child Care Start Up/ Expansion	1
TOTAL	35

Employment

Employment barriers include those which inhibit people from obtaining or maintaining employment.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
The hiring and orientation process results in a long timeframe between application and start date.	Human Resources and Community Services supervisors continue to meet to streamline the hiring and orientation process in order to bring DSPs in more quickly while ensuring they are adequately prepared for their jobs.	Continuous
Retention of trained, effective staff.	Continued focus on staff appreciation/celebration to positively impact staff satisfaction and retention.	Continuous
Growth in the program and increased interest (waiting list) of persons served to gain employment have increased administrative tasks and limited ability to develop and access a network of interested employers.	Hire staff specifically focused on development of a network of employers.	10/31/2014 (completed 10/14)
	Increase opportunity for community employment within Enclave and Job Development services through connection between SES and community employers.	Continuous

Progress

Streamline hiring and orientation process:

Acute DSP shortage continues to be a major concern for EPI, as for similar provider agencies looking to hire staff to fill a caregiving role. In recognition of this shortage, EPI continues to take strides to improve hiring and orientation. Solutions include:

October 2014

- Institution of a generous sign on bonus (\$750-\$1,000 for DSP positions, paid incrementally over 6 months)
- Streamlining the online application
- Developing weekend packages for staff interested in working at EPI on the weekends only.

April 2015

- Changing orientation from a one (1)-day to a two (2)-day training, with three (3) hours of day two (2) designated to completing trainings in Direct Course instead of having to complete the trainings inbetween their scheduled work shifts.

September 2015

- Transition to POD scheduling in community living services where staff are hired for specific positions, based on their availability and will only work within their established PODs,

Ongoing

- Participating in community job fairs and holding EPI specific job fairs at the Deery Center

Staff retention and appreciation:

A lump sum benefit was provided to Program Managers and Service Coordinators in October 2014 in recognition of how those within these positions selflessly filled in for direct support shifts and worked to maintain a healthy attitude and good morale.

EPI celebrated the role of DSP during an annual holiday meal in December 2014. Meals were boxed and taken to staff working at the time of the event so all could be involved. The 5 Star DSP of the month program continued within the Community Services department. Three of the monthly winners were submitted to ANCOR for DSP of the year and attended the ANCOR conference held in Washington DC in May 2015.

All EPI staff were offered an additional benefit in February 2015, when reduced-price membership at the Cedar Valley Sports Plex became available.

Supervisory staff were offered a training series between February and May 2015 with Dr. Celina Peerman to address Leadership Best Practices. Within these trainings, supervisors were provided insight and direction regarding topics including 'Coaching for Performance,' 'Increasing Teamwork,' and the 'Leadership Journey – Building on our Best.'

A fresh and affordable lunch option was made available to staff working in office locations in March 2015, when Healthy2You became available. With this program, staff can pre-order menu items for the following week. Chosen items are delivered each morning to the office.

In celebration of Direct Support Professionals Week (September 13-19), EPI DSPs invited for a breakfast in their honor on the UNI campus. Each DSP of the month with was also recognized by members of the EPI board and agency staff at this event.

Increase opportunities for integrated employment:

To address the need to continually market Employment services, a Business Developer position was created. Deborah Terhune was hired in October 2014 and tasked with increasing opportunities for community employment for persons with disabilities within enclave and individual community jobs. Hiring this position has allowed EPI to build partnerships with businesses throughout the Cedar Valley and has resulted in:

- Growth of current enclaves from 12 to 19. With new employment available at:
 - Montage – janitorial (January 2015)
 - Surplus GM – warehouse (March 2015)
 - Western Home – senior living assistant (May 2015)
 - Auto Plus – janitorial/warehouse (May 2015)
 - Kailo – janitorial (June 2015)
 - Edgecore – janitorial (June 2015)
 - Lutheran Services in Iowa Waverly Campus – janitorial (July 2015)
 - EPI Southbrooke office – janitorial (July 2015)
 - Red Lobster – restaurant prep (September 2015)
- Locating independent community employment for 24 persons served with the following employers:
 - Brown Bottle – Waterloo (2)
 - A-Line Iron & Metals
 - Steamboat Garden
 - Simpson Furniture
 - Den Herder Veterinary Hospital
 - Perkins
 - J's Homestyle Cooking
 - Fresh Start Janitorial
 - Popcorn Heaven

- YMCA of Black Hawk County
- Walmart – Waterloo (2)
- Kohls
- Furguson
- Peppers (2)
- Ruby's Gymnastics Academy
- Screaming Eagle American Bar and Grille
- Fareway – Waterloo
- Home Depot (2)
- Kimco Cleaning
- Always Best Care
- Grin & Grow Daycare

Communication

Communication barriers include the absence of materials needed to adequately communicate with all persons.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
A significant portion staff work outside of the central office setting. Dissemination of information regarding such things as forms, needs of persons served, employee benefits, training opportunities, and open positions presents challenge to service consistency.	EPI communicates with employees on a regular basis through the EPIcenter. Expansion of the use of the EPICenter will continue to develop a resource of consistent information for staff.	Continuous
	EPI will provide training to supervisors and staff as appropriate to ensure understanding of how to access information within agency intranet and other online formats.	Continuous
EPI recognizes the need to increase use of technology to communicate with stakeholders.	Research and explore opportunities to expand communication avenues with stakeholders.	Continuous

Progress

Internal communication to offer consistent information to staff:

EPI communicates with employees on a regular basis through the EPIcenter. Expansion of the use of the EPICenter has proven successful with last year's implementation of Maintenance and Supply requests. This year, expansion of EPICenter use to streamline agency procedures includes reporting accessibility barriers, access on-call beeper schedules, an update to the Maintenance request module, as well as an area for Employment Services to track business contacts, job placements and enclave development. Training was offered to staff to access and use the accessibility form online during a CS meeting in December. Updated FAQs and 'How To Guides' for software and agency processes continue to serve as a valuable resource to supervisors and staff.

EPI invested in technology this year designed to increase access and improve connectivity across a staff who work all across the Cedar Valley. Skype for Business was made available to all office staff in July. This communication tool provides further ability to stay connected across multiple locations.

Features include instant messaging, presence (or availability) indication, location and status settings, video chatting and screen sharing.

Updates to wiring have increased internet speed for office staff and are designed to accommodate connecting to fiber optic lines in the future. This adjustment allowed EPI to use VPN access to the network and enabled DSPs working within the community to have secure, electronic access to Individual Service Plans for persons served. This adjustment enables live viewing of current plans and remediates concerns of updated plans getting to sites timely.

During this same wiring update, new ports were added in office spaces to create the necessary framework for a Voice Over Internet phone package which will be implemented in October 2015. The VOI phone system will better connect the Ansborough Office to satellite locations at the Deery Center and Southbrook office locations and allow for increased connectivity options for mobile staff.

Expand communication avenues with stakeholders:

EPI provides information via newsletters, emails, social media (Facebook, YouTube, etc.), news releases, visits, phone calls, special thank you mailings, media interviews (specific to events), dinner & discussion, and our fall annual appeal. Updates such as Skype for Business and the VOI phone system are expected to have a positive impact on stakeholder communication as well.

Technology

Technology barriers occur when a technology can't be modified to support varied assistive devices.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Increase accessibility of agency intranet and website.	Collaboration between IT and the Communications and Development Department to update the agency intranet and website to meet to or exceed accessibility requirements.	9/30/2015
Progress		
<p>Updates were made to the EPIcenter, with a new version launched in December 2014. This was followed in April with an extensive update to the agency website. Both updates were intended to streamline information and make the experience more intuitive and accessible for the end user.</p> <p>In an effort to resolve IT needs as quickly as possible, keep staff informed, and better track data regarding the typed of technical difficulties staff experience, the IT Help Desk was created in August 2015. This has formalized inquiries to IT and provides an acknowledgement to staff by a member of the IT team that their issues have been noted and when changes are made.</p>		

Transportation

Transportation barriers impact persons from participating in the full range of services or access activities in the community.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Inadequate public transportation for persons served limits opportunities to engage in community activity; persons served are unable to access community opportunities in which they are interested	EPI will continue collaborating with local transportation services and act as advocates for persons with disabilities to encourage the continued expansion of accessible public transportation systems.	Continuous
	To increase the opportunity for persons served to engage in community activities, EPI will investigate internal prospects for transportation services outside of traditional hours or services offered by the public transportation system	Continuous
Progress		
<p>EPI continues to collaborate with local transportation services to act as advocates and encourage continued expansion of accessible public transportation systems. CMS decided the state of Iowa was not appropriately funding medical transportation, which resulted in an end to using \$1,570 funds for medical transportation on July 1, 2015. Training regarding non-emergency medical transportation services and how this impacts staff and persons served was made available.</p> <p>One of the largest barriers within Supported Employment Services continues to be transportation, making it difficult for persons served to access employment when positions require availability after 4PM. Exploration of options, including review of the transportation provider IVRS uses have thus far proved cost prohibitive. Employment Services staff continue to pursue possible options with local taxi companies and development of Uber services locally.</p>		

Community Integration

Community Integration barriers include those which keep persons served from fully participating within their community.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Events focused on persons with disabilities, while open to the public and held within the community, may still prove segregated.	Encourage and assist persons served with moving away from attending segregated events, instead exploring and accessing integrated activities within the community.	Continuous
Limited knowledge of available community events as well as how to best support persons served in each environment may impede community access and integration.	EPI will continue using and exploring assessment tools to aid in identifying under developed skills of persons served and their individual challenges when attempting greater connection to the community.	4/30/2015
	Offer information/training in the area of community integration focused not just on understanding individual needs of each person served in a community setting, but how to access information regarding community events.	9/30/2015

Progress

Accessing integrated community activities:

Persons served continue to increase involvement within integrated community activities, many times accessing support to arrive at these locations via natural supports or community bussing rather than depending on transportation from EPI staff. Some notable involvement for EPI persons served include:

- East and West High School Warriors games
- Black Hawks hockey games
- Waterloo Community Playhouse events
- UNI basketball/baseball games

To meet community need, Day Habilitation services designed to support persons with mental illness began in February, with services occurring in the community more than 80% of the time. In May, this program transitioned fully into the community.

CHOICE Day Habilitation services implemented more volunteering opportunities in preparation to transition to a community based service. A trial group began in August 2015 with great success and plans are in place for CHOICE to fully transition from the Deery Center to the community in December 2015.

Explore community events and increase understanding of persons served:

As an agency, EPI encourages persons served to volunteer and participate in community activities and events. Outcome measures for volunteer and community access are being tracked monthly.

An update of the Individual Service Plan is in development that will roll out within the first part of FY16. Additionally, Program Managers now have direct access to SIS assessments rather than having to rely on an outside source (case managers) for this. Supervisors will be given a log-in to be able to access these assessments.

Both scheduled and impromptu discussions regarding access of community events occurred this year within CS Meetings. Most recently, a formal Community Inclusion training was done in September, which included website information for local event and activity calendars.

Other Barriers

Barriers identified by EPI persons served, staff, or stakeholders within the community (identified through Accessibility Barrier Forms). While improvements have been made, the Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro area presents challenges to persons with disabilities which create potential safety concerns.

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
As identified through submission of Accessibility Barrier Forms	A representative from EPI's Accessibility Committee will address issues and concerns with business owners, the ADA Compliance Commission, and/or the city to seek improvement.	Continuous

Barrier	Solution	Completed
From FY14 Plan – January 2014 Physical Barrier in community - lack of accessible sidewalk to enter Cost Cutters at 3026 Ansborough Avenue	<p>Photos were taken of this location to clarify for the committee. The building is owned by Family Video and sidewalk was adjusted with the addition of Marco's Pizza in the building within the last several months, making access to Cost Cutters unavailable. Forwarded to Waterloo ADA Committee to see if action was necessary on their end (may not be possible if modification to the sidewalk happened long ago enough to 'grandfather in' this adjustment). Waterloo ADA accepted the concern and is working with the owners to allow access to Cost Cutters.</p> <p>The owner of this location agreed to make the location accessible, but has not completed the project.</p> <p>7/16/2015 update: Dan sent an email to Craig Clark to inform him this has not been done yet. Dan has been out to this location to look at where the curb cut needs to go, and in his opinion, it is an easy and inexpensive fix. In the meantime, all we can do is continue to make the suggestion. Dan will work on getting concrete bids. Someone from this committee can present it to the owner of the building to find out if he'd be willing to accept the offer of EPI doing the work. Prior to doing this, Dan will contact the owner of Cost Cutters to make sure they would also approve of the work being done.</p>	

Barrier	Solution	Completed
10/28/2014 Physical Barrier – Crosswalk and curb cuts at Cedar Heights/University Avenue.	Nicole Rand - In Cedar Falls, the City Engineer is responsible for sidewalk concerns. Contact made with Randy Lorenzen, City Engineer: The city of Cedar Falls took ownership of University Avenue from the state in August 2014. On February 23, 2015, the Cedar Falls City Council approved moving forward on a new design concept for University Avenue, which includes priority to construct safe pedestrian and mass transit links to ensure safe movement on both the north and south side of University Avenue. This project also includes accessible crosswalks at the intersection of Cedar Heights and University Avenue. Slated to begin the summer of 2016, the project is anticipated to take 3 years. No decision has yet been made regarding when the Cedar Heights/University Avenue intersection will be addressed within the construction timeline. Committee accepts the proposed University Avenue Reconstruction Project as a viable solution for this issue. No suggestions or comments were recommended by the committee to follow up with Cedar Falls City Engineer, Randy Lorenzen.	4/16/15

Barrier	Solution	Completed
11/3/2014 Physical Barrier – Sidewalk needed to bus stop on Cedar Heights/University Avenue. Curb cut at bus stop.	Nicole Rand - In Cedar Falls, the City Engineer is responsible for sidewalk concerns. Contact made with Randy Lorenzen, City Engineer: The city of Cedar Falls took ownership of University Avenue from the state in August 2014. On February 23, 2015, the Cedar Falls City Council approved moving forward on a new design concept for University Avenue, which includes priority to construct safe pedestrian and mass transit links to ensure safe movement on both the north and south side of University Avenue. This project also includes accessible crosswalks at the intersection of Cedar Heights and University Avenue. Slated to begin the summer of 2016, the project is anticipated to take 3 years. No decision has yet been made regarding when the Cedar Heights/University Avenue intersection will be addressed within the construction timeline. Committee accepts the proposed University Avenue Reconstruction Project as a viable solution for this issue. No suggestions or comments were recommended by the committee to follow up with Cedar Falls City Engineer, Randy Lorenzen.	4/16/15

Barrier	Solution	Completed
11/24/2014 Physical Barrier – Bridge built on walkway to North Star Community Services is slippery and unsafe.	Dan Bigler - Close bridge for winter to ensure no one else is injured. In the spring, North Star will update the bridge to make it slip- resistant.	12/19/2014

Barrier	Solution	Completed
12/16/2014 Communication Barrier – No pictures on restrooms clarifying gender at YMCA of Black Hawk County	Brittney Montross – Confirmed male and female locker rooms do not have pictorial representation designating gender. The family locker room does have a pictorial sign, which would be possibly confusing for persons who cannot read, along with raising the potential for persons to enter the family locker room when they do not mean to. Notified the YMCA regarding the issue and requested change. YMCA reported pictorial signs were placed on the locker rooms on 3/11/15.	3/11/2015

Barrier	Solution	Completed
1/7/2015 Transportation Barrier - Public transportation not available evenings and only for a short timeframe on Saturdays. Impacts agility to obtain and maintain employment	Nicole Rand – This transportation barrier reflects an issue focused on within EPI's FY15 Accessibility Plan for Transportation. The committee agreed to continue to address this issue as a formal part of the Accessibility Plan and track progress within the plan rather than through this barrier request.	2/19/2015

Barrier	Solution	Completed
1/7/2015 Physical Barrier – Front steps at 309 Yoder are very steep. Landlord has agreed to make improvement but not followed through.	Dan Bigler – We will not be able to make the landlord make changes. With the lease agreement, tenants agree to live in the house as it sits. The person who signed the lease needs to address with the landlord and Program Manager continue to advocate. The landlord may choose not to make adjustments and the tenant may move. Should the tenant move, they would be expected to meet any agreements related to vacating the property/ending the rental agreement indicated within the lease.	2/19/2015

Barrier	Solution	Completed
7/8/2015 Physical Barrier – Doors at NEIA Podiatry are not automatic and are difficult for people using walkers or wheelchairs to open.	Nicole Rand – This issue was raised in June 2014, at which time the Committee reached out to NEIA Podiatry. NEIA Podiatry had already attempted to have automatic doors installed, but the layout of the building will not allow this. NEIA Podiatry staff attempt to remain aware of persons needing assistance and open the door for them. The Committee determined this issue has already been addressed within the community. No further actions necessary at this time.	9/17/2015

Barrier	Solution	Completed
7/8/2015 Physical Barrier – Doors at the Iowa Adult Medical Clinic are not automatic and are difficult for people using walkers or wheelchairs to open.	Jaclyn Hansen – Possible need for 2 handicapped buttons at that office. Parking is at the end of the building where the one ramp is located. Access to the building requires a person to walk up a the straight short ramp, turn left onto the sidewalk, walk a few feet and arrive at the office door Iowa Adult Medical Clinic. The door does open into the building (push), so if a button was placed, a person would not have to move/step back to allow the door to pass. Within the entry there is a second door to the left to access the reception area. This door also needs a button. The door opens outward toward the entry (pull) and a person may have to move/step back. The front nursing receptionist indicated they are aware of the need for accessible entry. Without an office manager, communication needs to go directly to Dr. Bogandic. Jaclyn provided a business card at time	Move to FY 16 barrier list & continue to track progress

Barrier	Solution	Completed
8/18/2015 Attitudinal – A nurse working at NEIA Podiatry was speaking about a person with a disability in a derogatory manner in front of staff and other persons served.	Brittney Montross – The Office Manager at North East Iowa Podiatry in Waterloo was made aware of the situation and concerns regarding the impact on perceptions of persons with disabilities. The Office Manager indicated NEIA Podiatry would follow up with the staff/ nurses about these concerns right away.	10/5/2015