



Exceptional Persons, Inc. FY17 Accessibility Plan Progress Report

The following plan has been developed to address accessibility barriers that may exist within EPI and/or the surrounding community. Members of the Accessibility Committee and the EPI Management Team were involved in the creation of the plan.

A barrier to accessibility is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully taking a part in society because of their disability. To determine the level at which EPI influences a barrier-free environment, both within and outside the organization, the following methods are used:

- Frequent and ongoing internal facility programs and policy review.
- Regularly scheduled surveys/program review from external agencies, such as:
 - Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 - Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA)
 - Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - Fire Marshall
 - Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
- Solicitation of input from persons served and stakeholders through surveys, planning meetings, informal conversations and involvement in various agency committees.
- Education of persons to report barriers they experience within their homes and community within agency program handbooks, printed brochures, and fliers.
- Availability of Accessibility Barrier Forms at program sites with training on form use at new hire orientation and annually thereafter. These forms are used to help identify barriers within the organization and community.

The following plan 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 plan does not necessarily include all barriers but does identify trends, patterns, information, and data which support the presence of a particular barrier. This plan, highlights the barriers to be addressed during this fiscal year (October 1-September 30). Progress and results are analyzed annually and considered during the annual budget planning process.

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 2017 |

Progress:

Modifications made by the Maintenance Department:

Exterior Modifications:

- Repaired/replaced lighting on exterior of building and within parking lot at Deery Center
- Install automated door system at PDM Center
- Backfill/level dirt around sidewalks at four homes in the community to prevent tripping hazards
- Updated the front door of a home with a passage knob set and dead bolt to help reduce instances of tenant getting locked out
- Added sidewalk extension at a home, to allow exit/entry for person using a walker
- Installed motion sensor porch light to provide adequate exterior lighting to a home

Interior Modifications:

- Installed high rise power flush toilets to support individuals with balance issues and those who take medications which impact digestion in 4 locations.
- Installed digital thermostat and provided training to allow person to easily adjust temperature within their home
- Replaced shower doors with curtains to allow easy access to shower/tub
- Installed a hand rail to reduce risk of falls for individuals with impaired balance around stairwell
- Installed grab bars to reduce risk of falls
 - Toilet (2)
 - Bath tub (2)
 - Pantry (1)
 - Closet (1)
 - Bedroom Door (1)
 - Next to an egress window to allow for safe exit in an emergency (2)
- Provided training and cleared pathways to allow safe egress in the event of a fire in 3 locations
- Updated flooring to laminate in a home, creating an even surface across all common areas
- Remodel 2 homes to improve overall accessibility. Included flooring, bathrooms, kitchen, halls, doorways, and ceilings

Secure accessible housing:

EPI continues to develop new housing opportunities by establishing and cultivating relationships with external landlords who provide accessible housing. Three (3) new locations were developed this year through a combination of new service development and current service movement to find better housing opportunities. Additionally, two (2) sites closed and persons living within them were absorbed into other sites which offered better living arrangements.

Sidewalk recommendations:

FY17 sidewalk recommendations made to the Waterloo ADA Compliance Commission focused on the same locations recommended in FY16: University Avenue in Waterloo in direct response to the proposed sidewalk and recreation trail the City of Cedar Falls is developing along University Avenue, and on East Ridgeway Avenue between Ansborough Avenue and Kimball Avenue.

EPI representation at the Waterloo ADA Compliance Commission changed this year, as Dan Bigler’s term expired and Nicole Rand applied for the Commission and was approved by Waterloo Mayor Kevin Hart at the City Council Meeting held on April 17th.

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 |
|--|---|-----------|
| Set up of PDM center with cubicles allows results in reduced privacy and higher noise levels | Review and implement options to make cubicles at PDM more private | 9/30/2017 |

Progress:

Current cubicles both allow sound travel and many are open to hallways, leading to privacy issues with documents or computer screens which contain person served Protected Health Information. No change has been ordered for as of the date of this report. This issue was pended with continued agency exploration of affordable options. The current cubicle style/manufacturer is not available to order spare or new parts. New cubicles are cost-prohibitive and available used options would offer either smaller desk areas or have walls shorter than those currently in place.

White noise/sound machines have been discussed for the PDM center as another level of risk mitigation for HIPAA.

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 during Community Service meetings and at initial/recertification training for Crisis Prevention Institute. | 9/30/2017 |
| | Provide information to the community through training, speaking events, and development of community partnerships. | Continuous |

Progress:

Internal awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities:

Throughout the year, specialty trainings were made available to staff:

- ID Action Voting Rights – October 2016
- Accessibility – December 2016
- Mental Health – February 2017
- Brain Injury – March 2017
- Rights, Responsibilities and Limitations – March 2017
- Cultural Competency – March 2017
- Community Integration/Activities Planning – April 2017
- Rights, Responsibilities and Limitations – September 2017

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, and 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:

- The Courier reprinted the article '*Giving back: Employers offer opportunities for people with special needs,*' from the Courier fall Inclusion magazine. The article features EPI's support of a person served and the work she does in the community.
- Trunk or Treat (October 29, 2017) – EPI staff welcomed the community to enjoy a safe trick-or-treating experience at the Deery Center.
- EPI held a reception for Representative Kressig, Senator Dodzler and Senator Danielson (October 2016) to thank them for their work regarding quality of life and services for people with disabilities as well as discussion regarding economic development for providers to benefit staff.
- Service Outcomes & Data Director, Maghan Bowman represented EPI at UNI in October 2016, where she presented information regarding employment for persons with disabilities to the Special Education Teaching program.
- Community Services Director, Susan Seehase provided training at the Developmental Disabilities Council Conference held in October 2016. Her focus of Training, Technology and Developmental Disabilities was received by an audience including Managed Care Organizations.
- 2016 annual Giving Tree donation drive (November/December 2016) – EPI partnered with Ameriprise – Larry K. Fox & Associates, CBE Companies, Harrison Truck Centers and the

Waterloo Police Protection Association to meet the needs of those who might not otherwise have gifts during the holiday season. Though the amazing support of our community, staff, local business, and organizations, we were able to fulfill every one of the over 270 needs on the tree this year.

- Associate Program Director for Employment and Day Habilitation, Nicole Ericson presented information to the employees at Gaeter Machining & Manufacturing, Co. regarding inclusion and diversity in the workplace in January 2017.
- Executive Director, Chris Sparks and Organizational Development Director, Katie Slade completed a radio interview regarding EPI services and upcoming More Than You See event on March 27, 2017.
- Communications and Development Specialist, Sarah Pavelec attended the Northeast Iowa Food Bank Resource Fair in April 2017, where she shared information on the resources EPI provides community members.
- Business partnerships - EPI Employment Services grew its network of businesses employing persons with disabilities by 17 this year. This puts the total number of businesses actively employing individuals with some level of EPI Employment Support this year at over 60. 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 board outside of the Break Room.
- EPI's 60th anniversary -- EPI staff and community members were invited to a free picnic and night at the ballpark on Friday, August 4th.
- Nicole Ericson presented information regarding Supported Employment Services at the Autism and Employment Conference at UNI on September 30, 2017.
- EPI welcomed Senator Joni Ernst's Legislative Assistant, Hyder Chowdhry to the Cedar Valley in August 2016, celebrating the integrated community lives of persons with disabilities.
- Unveiled to staff in Sept 2013, the History of EPI video demonstrates EPI's focus on making the world a better place for persons with disabilities. This video is shared widely via social media and as a marketing tool for stakeholders and the public.

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. | Exploration of additional resources outside of major funding streams, including fundraising 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:

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.

The Fourth Annual More Than You See Dueling Pianos/Silent Auction Fundraiser (March 2017) raised over \$40,000 this year. This entertaining fundraising event showcased and celebrated the value persons with disabilities contribute, raising funds to support EPI's mission.

EPI partnered with Zsavooz Sports Lounge & Grill for a golf tournament in April 2017. All proceeds for this event went to benefit EPI programs.

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

- Community Foundation – EPI Employment services was awarded \$17,500
- US Bank – EPI Employment services was awarded \$10,000
- Veridian – EPI General Operating Support – donor decline due to criteria alignment to our mission
- Principal Financial – EPI Employment Services
- Waterloo Housing – EPI was awarded 10,000 to provide tenant based rental assistance

EPI Day Habilitation services continue to partner with the Joint Volunteers and participate in their annual Cookie Walk. Funds raised at this event are shared between EPI and another local day

habilitation program. This income is used to cover activity costs as they arise for persons who attend day habilitation throughout the year.

A partnership between EPI Transportation and Cedar Valley Catholic Schools resulted in a revenue opportunity wherein EPI provides bussing as of the 2017/2018 school year.

Exceptional Persons Foundation Kick-Off event was September 7, 2017 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.

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 sits on the ANCOR Board of Directors and Susan Seehase, EPI Services Director is the president of the IACP Board of Directors.

This year, significant focus has been on the status of the American Health Care Act (AHCA). EPI has been sharing information regarding the ACHA via ANCOR Save Our Services (SOS) Action Alerts. These alerts are designed to inform stakeholders of the impact the ACHA will have on persons with disabilities and provide a simple means for anyone to access their Senate and House representatives. In relation to this, EPI made contact with Iowa Senators to discuss the impact of the AHCA on persons with disabilities.

- June 2017 – EPI hosted a virtual ‘fly in’ for Senator Grassley in. This event, attended by EPI stakeholders and representatives from IACP, provided an opportunity to address concerns regarding AHCA and its impact on Medicaid directly with Senator Grassley.
- August 2017 - Senator Joni Ernst’s Legislative Assistant, Hyder Chowdhry visited several EPI services in action (residential, employment, and day habilitation). This visit provided an opportunity for EPI to share the real work that occurs to recipients of services funded through Medicaid.

With the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) Medicaid Modernization and subsequent contracting with three Managed Care companies, EPI experienced change in funding and service delivery expectations for all Medicaid services in April 2016. EPI remains proactive within the changing landscape, with significant inter-departmental focus on obtaining accurate authorization for service and refining billing processes. While a 1% floor rate adjustment was made available on July 1, 2017, Exception to Policy rates in place prior to the implementation of Managed Care have been discontinued. Deb Jungling, EPI Business Director has been involved with a statewide workgroup aimed at transitioning ID Daily services to a tiered rate structure. This adjustment impacts all persons served funded on the ID Waiver who access daily/H2016 services and day habilitation/T2020 services. After some delay in roll-out, tiered rates are scheduled to be implemented in segments starting December 1, 2017, with all service providers across the state experiencing complete transition by July 2019. Initial projections for the impact of this rate transition on EPI ID Daily and Day Habilitation services are positive.

Essential Needs Funds assistance:

Challenges to meet financial obligations continue to impact persons served. The Essential Needs Fund provided over \$11,000.00 of support this year – this is more than double the assistance provided in FY16! Funds were used in the following capacity:

| Category | # Funded |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Personal Needs/ Milestones | 10 |
| Rent Assistance | 18 |
| Temporary Child Care Emergency | 6 |
| Home Furnishings | 2 |
| Child Care Start Up/ Expansion | 1 |
| TOTAL | 37 |

Employment

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

| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
|---|---|------------|
| Retention of trained, effective staff. | Continued focus on staff appreciation/celebration to positively impact staff satisfaction and retention. | Continuous |
| | Provide front line supervisory staff with training regarding retention and positive onboarding of staff. | Continuous |
| Growth in the program and increased interest (waiting list) to gain employment have impacted the SES's ability to develop and access a network of interested employers. | Increase opportunity for community employment within Enclave and Job Development services through connection between SES and community employers. | Continuous |

Progress:

Staff retention and appreciation:

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 retention practices, with mindful focus on celebration of current staff. Ongoing efforts include:

November 2016

- Annual Soup day potluck included an invitation for DSPs to participate this year! Staff voted on their favorite soups, with prizes: 1st place Village Inn Pumpkin Pie, 2nd place Caribou gift card, 3rd place Scratch Cupcakes gift card.
- A Staff Development Assistant was hired for CS Department to provide initial and ongoing support to new hire DSPs.

December 2016:

- Celebration of the role of DSP occurred during our annual holiday meal. Meals were boxed and taken to staff working at the time of the event so all could be involved.
- 401K meetings were offered to all staff to explain the benefit and offer a Q&A opportunity with Laurel Thompson.

- All agency staff were given an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed mission, vision and values via survey.
- A holiday pot luck with an ugly sweater theme was made available to office staff.
- EPI staff were offered a 50% discount on tickets to the More Than You See event using the code IAMEPI.
- Announcement of a \$125 bonus for every staff working for EPI.

January 2017

- Continuation of the 5 Star DSP of the month program within the Community Services department: three of the monthly winners were submitted to ANCOR for DSP of the year.
- Free wellness screenings were offered to all employees regularly scheduled 30 or more hours per week who are enrolled or eligible to enroll with EPI's health insurance.

February 2017

- Persons served and the staff attending with them were offered free tickets to the More Than You See event
- All staff were asked to take part in the EPI staff satisfaction survey
- All staff who made early bird reservations to MTYS were entered into a drawing for \$20 auction bucks!

March 2017

- Staff volunteering at MTYS were offered free event shirts.
- Transition from CDS online training to Relias, a more user friendly option which offers email reminders for upcoming trainings as well as 'brain spark' emails for many trainings, which help keep content fresh in the minds of trainees.

April 2017

- Community Service in-person meetings were changed from monthly to quarterly.

May 2017

- Filming of the History of EPI video occurred, with DSP and person served involvement.
- Construction updates of the Deery Center training areas - space was made available for agency meetings, staff switchover, and a training center for new hires.

June 2017

- 60th Anniversary Celebration at the Deery Center. Lunch, games and prizes were available.
- In response to the EPI staff survey, three project teams were developed to address the top concerns identified within the survey: 1) Operating with Strong Values and Ethics, 2) Supporting Service Managers and DSPs, 3) Interdepartmental Communication. All groups are scheduled to complete initial work (gather ideas, recommend changes and identify processes improvement to make a difference in the short run) within 6 meetings.

August 2017

- Staff and community members were invited to help EPI celebrate 60 years at a picnic followed by a night at the ballpark watching the Waterloo Bucks play.

September 2017

- Four DSPs were sent to the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) Conference in Omaha, NE. These DSPs shared their experience during our DSP week celebration.
- Celebration of Direct Support Professionals Week (September 10-16), where EPI DSPs were invited for a lunch in their honor on at the Deery Center. At this event, 12 DSPs were recognized for their exceptional services in the community. Each DSP of the month with was recognized by a supervisor at this event. Staff were also provided an appreciation gift of an EPI notebook and voucher for a free EPI t-shirt.
- EPI staff were offered an opportunity to be entered in monthly \$100 drawing for sharing EPI job related opening posts and sending a picture of their shared post to sharing@episervice.org
- The use of points staff obtained for 'old' values was extended and can be used toward gift card redemption indefinitely.

Continuous employee benefits:

- Sign on bonus (\$750-\$1,000 for DSP positions, paid incrementally over 6 months) and referral bonus programs (up to \$750 if the referred employee stays in his/her position for over 6 months)
- Vehicle repair for all EPI employees and family members. With approval, repairs over \$100 may be paid over a 3-month period with no interest through payroll deduction.
- Wells Fargo Membership Program, which qualifies EPI employees for a valuable bundle of Wells Fargo accounts and services.
- Cell phone discounts with US Cellular and Verizon Wireless
- Free Child Care Referrals through Child Care Resource and Referral
- Access to the My25 online nutrition portal
- Employee Assistance Program
- Corporate discounts for local athletic clubs
 - River Plaza Athletic Club
 - Cedar Falls Recreation Center
 - Cedar Valley SportsPlex
 - Anytime Fitness

Frontline Supervisor Training:

In May, supervisors were offered a training via webinar on remote leadership (managing a team in a different or remote location). Considering many EPI supervisors support teams across the Cedar Valley, this training addressed productivity and leadership challenges that come with remote supervision. Supervisors were offered tips on how to build a successful team, develop staff and get desired results.

Increase opportunities for integrated employment:

Within Employment services, the Business Developer and Employment Specialist positions have focused on increasing opportunities for community employment for persons with disabilities within individual community jobs. Less focus this year was placed on capacity for small group employment services through enclave. However, the work done by these positions have allowed EPI to continue to build partnerships with businesses throughout the Cedar Valley and resulted in:

- Enclave opportunities at:
 - Mills Race (January 2017- current)
 - YWCA – temporary support (July 2017 – August 2017 and September 2017)
 - D LaPorte (September 2017 - current)
- Locating community employment for 26 persons served with the following employers:
 - Brown Bottle – Cedar Falls
 - Carlos O’Kelly’s
 - Earl May Nursery & Garden Center
 - Exceptional Persons, Inc. (2)
 - First Christian Church Disciples
 - Hardee’s
 - Hilton Garden Inn (4)
 - Hy-Vee – Iowa City
 - Jesup Food Center
 - LJs Neighborhood Grill & Bar
 - Nelson Properties & Midtown Development (2)
 - Perkins – University Ave. (2)
 - Pizza Ranch
 - Ross Dress for Less (2)
 - Texas Roadhouse (2)
 - The Other Place III (2)
 - Waterloo Community Schools

Communication

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

| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
|--|---|-------------------|
| <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>Continuous</p> |
| <p>Progress:</p> | | |
| <p>EPI communicates with employees on a regular basis through the EPIcenter. This year, Site Communication Logs became available on the EPIcenter, replacing paper documents at site. This allows more fluid interaction between supervisors and their staff, and has made it possible for employment and day habilitation to add information directly to site staff, positively benefitting persons served who participate in multiple programs.</p> <p>Following the implementation of online Site Communication Logs, an online scheduling system was developed and implemented via EPIcenter and Outlook for daily sites. This provides a means for supervisors to easily schedule staff and for staff to approve their schedules and shifts they pick up after schedules are already set. Work continues for a similar system to use in hourly services.</p> <p>Updates to online financials were implemented to make the process more streamlined for DSPs entering persons served financials.</p> <p>Agency Updates continued this year, where EPI Senior Leadership offered information about strategic planning, update of vision, mission and values, current projects, the impact of Managed Care, status of facilities, and the results of the EPI Employee Engagement Survey.</p> | | |

Technology

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

| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
|--|---|------------|
| Increase accessibility of agency internal communication mechanisms | EPI will provide training to supervisors and staff as appropriate to ensure understanding of how to access information within agency intranet and other technology use. | Continuous |
| | Continue to update agency technology to improve the experience of the end-user and positively impact the quality of service | Continuous |

Progress:

Training to Supervisors & Staff

Trainings for use of online training and site communication/scheduling systems occurred this year as EPI improved technology available to all staff. Supervisors were provided ongoing training within the Quantum documentation software, HRST, and agency policy to help ensure quality services and increased efficiency. Many of these trainings were offered via lunch and learn opportunities hosted by the QI and QO departments.

Update Technology

Expansion of the EPICenter use within the past year includes increased use of SharePoint to house documents readily available to multiple users. Project teams have made OneNote files available to all users in this manner, as well as CS use of the EPICenter to for site communication and scheduling. These adjustments have made information more readily available for those involved in multiple teams.

Several significant updates within the CS Quantum documentation software system included seizure tracking, electronic ISP verification, and electronic disclosure logs.

Construction at the Deery Center has not only provided EPI staff with space to gather, but the technology in this space affords many options for training format and content.

Use of the "Steps Recorder" application was identified as a means for easy creation of staff user guides. This software tracks what a user is doing on their computer, recording screenshots and a brief description of the user's actions.

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:

EPI continues to collaborate with local transportation services to act as advocates and encourage continued expansion of accessible public transportation systems. While statewide transportation needs were recognized in a meeting with provider agencies and Regional transit entities across the state, no movement has occurred on better meeting the needs of persons living in small metropolitan or rural areas.

Logisticare, the transportation entity partnering with MCO Amerigroup, clarified the option for non-medical transportation to assist their members with accessing non-medical appointments and locations in the community.

Further expansion of transportation options within the Cedar Valley occurred this year when Uber became available locally.

While transportation timeframes have not changed for our internal transportation company, increased accessibility has become available following the purchase of three new busses:

1. An 84 passenger bus, which will accommodate the newly acquired CVCS routes.
2. Two busses, purchased to replace current fleet. One includes a lift and both contain air-conditioning.

Community Integration

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

| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
|---|---|------------|
| Persons served live within community but do not reach full potential of belonging to community | Encourage and assist persons served with accessing volunteering opportunities to build social capital within the community. | Continuous |
| Progress: | | |
| <p>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.</p> <p>EPI's Day Habilitation program continues to access services within the community. Persons served experience activities focused on giving back to the community, increasing or maintaining stamina, and increasing community integration. Volunteer opportunities continue to grow and EPI has established strong relationships with such entities as the Salvation Army, Kids Kingdom and the Cedar Valley Botanical Gardens. Partnerships continue to grow and EPI has been recognized for our support to our community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2016 – Persons served volunteered with the Cedar Falls Community School Foundation to assemble 5,000 pieces for their annual Tradition of Excellence mail campaign. • March 2017 – The North East Iowa Foodbank internally recognized EPI Day Habilitation for their ongoing relationship and the supports which occur between both organizations. • April 2017 – The Habitat for Humanity ReStore recognized persons served for consistent volunteer efforts by making those involved with EPI Day Habilitation volunteers of the month. <p>In April 2017, EPI experienced an HCBS Non-Residential Setting review of employment and day habilitation services. No concerns were noted with employment settings. EPI Day Habilitation was challenged to expanding opportunities for persons within the program to choose daily activities. Roll-out of changes will occur in October 2017. These changes will persons within the program to choose what they do each day and become involved with many more community opportunities!</p> | | |

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 |
|--|---|-----------|
| 1/26/2017 Attitudinal Barrier in community (Cedar Valley Foot and Ankle Center) -- Person served unable to access assistance at doctor appointment. Receptionist indicated EPI should send staff with 'these people.' | Staff was able to speak with the receptionist at the time of the appointment and have paperwork sent home, filled out with staff support and returned. Person served was able to attend the appointment as scheduled. The committee will continue to monitor for further reports from this entity. | 4/30/17 |

| Barrier | Solution | Completed |
|---|---|--|
| 9/1/2017 Communication Barrier in community (Target) – Lack of accessible device/support for individuals with hearing impairment | Will be presented to Committee during October 2017 meeting. | Move to FY18 barrier list & continue to track progress |

| Barrier | Solution | Completed |
|---|---|--|
| 9/29/2017 Physical Barrier in community (New Century Buffet) – Lack of accessible entry. | Will be presented to Committee during October 2017 meeting. | Move to FY18 barrier list & continue to track progress |