



FY18 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 through reduction/elimination of physical barriers.	Continuous <i>(Terry)</i>
	Community Services Department will seek out and secure accessible housing for persons served to rent/lease within the community.	Continuous <i>(Melissa)</i>
Community members without access to health insurance who have medical needs are not able to remain or returning to their own homes and are faced with moving to a more expensive or restrictive setting such as a nursing home.	Obtain durable healthcare equipment by donation and provide needed equipment to families without insurance. Equipment is loaned at no cost for the timeframe a person needs (months, years, or a lifetime)	Continuous <i>(Lori)</i>
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 2018 <i>(Nicole R)</i>

Progress:

Modifications made by the Maintenance Department:

Exterior Modifications:

- Repaired/replaced concrete walkways in three locations.
- Added a platform step and grab bar railing to the rear of a home, aiding in access to the garage for a person with impaired vision
- Updated the front door of a home with a passage knob set and dead bolt to help reduce instances of tenant getting locked out
- Built a wooden stool to use when transitioning into and out of a vehicle for a person with impaired balance.
- Installed accessible ramp to allow a person using a walker to safely enter/exit their home.
- Replaced patio doors to enable access to the rear deck of a home.

Interior Modifications:

- Installed a post and button inside to the automated door system at PDM Center to allow people to exit the building independently using automated door.
- Installed high rise power flush toilets to support individuals with balance issues and those who take medications which impact digestion in five locations.
- Installed a shorter toilet for an individual experiencing difficulty independently using a high rise toilet
- Modified or replaced tub to create walk in showers in two locations.
- Installed a guard rail to reduce risk of falls for individuals with impaired balance around toilet in two locations

- Installed hand held shower to allow greater independence with hygiene for an individual.
- Installed grab bars to reduce risk of falls within the bath tub/ tub surround in 4 locations.
- Installed bed rails to improve a person's ability to independently enter/exit their bed
- Made updates to the Ansborough office location, including:
 - Building a medical equipment storage within the office area so persons using this program no longer have to travel to the maintenance garage to access loaned equipment.
 - Lowering newly-placed reception windows to an accessible height.

Secure accessible housing:

EPI continues to develop new housing opportunities by establishing and cultivating relationships with external landlords who provide accessible housing. Ten (10) 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.

Durable healthcare equipment:

Durable healthcare equipment loans continue to allow persons to remain or return to their homes. This program loaned out 126 pieces of accessibility equipment of the following type:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Wheel chair (21) | • Grab bars (10) |
| • Walker (23) | • Transfer bench (2) |
| • Seated Walker (11) | • Commode (11) |
| • Walker Basket (3) | • Elevated toilet seat (6) |
| • Cane (3) | • Bed Rail (3) |
| • Crutches (2) | • Dress Assist (1) |
| • Bath chair (19) | • Sock Aid (3) |
| • Bath transfer bench (5) | • Grabber/Reacher (3) |

Sidewalk recommendations:

FY18 sidewalk recommendations made to the Waterloo ADA Compliance Commission focused on the same locations recommended in FY17: 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. An additional recommendation was made for Progress Ave. between Greenhill Road and University Avenue.

Nicole Rand continues to represent EPI on the Waterloo ADA Compliance Commission. The most recent Commission meeting was in February 2018.

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	9/30/2018 <i>(Brittney)</i>
Current housing does not consistently provide a comfortable environment. This impacts quality of service for persons served and productivity of staff.	Maintenance and Property Department will make modifications to renovate homes of persons served as well as EPI facilities. Modifications will reduce/eliminate environmental barriers of the location.	Continuous <i>(Terry)</i>

Progress:

PDM Center privacy:

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. 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. Several updates were made this year to the PDM Center office area:

- Divider added to a cubicle within a main walkway with a large opening
- White noise/sound machine located within a central point of the building to reduce sound travel

A professional sound evaluation was performed in May to determine if modifications could be made to improve sound travel between office and conference room spaces. Results indicate that sound issues are related to structure rather than insulation; windows found on the walls of many office/conference room spaces allow sound travel throughout common spaces more so than buildings without such features. Eliminating this issue would be cost prohibitive.

In September, a Planning and Execution team, led by Program Director Megan Henning, was convened to develop a long-term plan to manage concerns within the PDM center. This team's purpose is to update the PDM Center to use space effectively and manage security and sound. The project team is comprised of supervisors who office at the PDM Center and a representative of the agency Maintenance Department. The initial phases of the plan include:

- Transitioning the PDM Center to "by appointment only," limiting public access to the building.
- Presenting a floorplan and project budget to the EPI Board.
- Scheduling construction to begin following EPI Board approval of project.

Modifications made by the Maintenance Department:

Exterior Modifications:

- Installed additional lighting in parking lots (2)
- Installed wall light packs at building entrances (2)

Interior Modifications:

- Installed digital thermostat and provided training to allow person to easily adjust temperature within their home
- Installed additional lighting in the Ansborough office lobby
- Air quality test at Southbrooke office – implemented a limited scent practice
- Installed timer to auto-shut off stove to prevent fires

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	EPI staff training to promote the value and individual needs of each person served.	9/30/2018 (Jaclyn)
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 (Nicole R & Nicole E)

Progress:

Internal awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities:

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

- Confidentiality/HIPAA – October 2017
- Accessibility – December 2017
- Code of Ethics – January 2018
- Advocacy – February 2017
- Cultural Competency – February 2017
- Brain Injury – March 2018
- Ethical Decision Making: the Basics – April 2018
- Community Integration/Activities Planning – April 2018
- Ethical Decision Making: the Basics – August 2018
- ID Action Voting Rights – September 2018

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:

- Service Outcomes & Data Director, Maghan Bowman represented EPI at UNI each semester, where she presented information regarding employment for persons with disabilities to the Special Education Teaching program.
- Trunk or Treat (October 28, 2017) – EPI staff welcomed the community to enjoy a safe trick-or-treating experience at the Deery Center.
- 2017 annual Giving Tree donation drive (November/December 2017) – 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 250 needs on the tree this year.
- Program Manager, Dee Sorel attended an event at Waterloo West High on December 7th to discuss career opportunities in human services.

- Des Moines Register article *Bill would allow Iowa's disabled to avoid managed care in Medicaid* (January 2018). The article includes an interview with Executive Director, Chris Sparks on the impact of managed care in Iowa.
- Members of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa visited EPI's Employment services at Dan Deery Toyota to discuss employment services in the community (March 20, 2018).
- Impact Magazine featured the article "We Have to Use Every Creative Idea We Have" written by Executive Director, Chris Sparks. This article focuses on the Direct Support Crisis we are facing and the need to pay a living wage to DSPs and leverage creative technology use.
- A "Virtual Tour" of EPI residential settings was made available to the public on EPI's website (April 2018)
- Courier article *Exceptional Persons, Inc. fundraiser expected to hit \$45,000* (April 10, 2018). The article describes the More Than You See event, as well as EPI's available services and supports.
- EPI held a Referral Open House (April 25, 2018) to showcase the quality services offered, build relationships and expand community knowledge of EPI service.
- EPI Associate Program Director, Nicole Ericson participated as a panelist in a Q&A session following the Bottom Dollars Documentary Screening on May 18. This award winning film calls for the phase out of sub-minimum wages and sheltered workshops and offers solutions for fair wages and inclusive employment.
- EPI partnered with the League of Women Voters of Black Hawk and Bremer Counties, holding a Voter Registration Drive at the Deery Center on July 23rd. This public event was designed to help community members register to vote or update their voter registration due to a move or change in name.
- Executive Director, Chris Sparks was invited to speak at the North Carolina Providers Council Conference 'Overcoming Challenges...Seizing Opportunities.' This event, originally set in September, was rescheduled for January 2019 due to Hurricane Florence.
- Business Developer, Tom Engelbrecht sat on an informational panel at the Central Rivers AEA, representing EPI on September 7.
- EPI welcomed Senator Rita Hart, D-Clinton, Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor in September, discussing the privatization of Medicaid and its impact on persons in long term services.
- Business partnerships - EPI Employment Services grew its network of businesses employing persons with disabilities by 12 this year. EPI staff are made aware of businesses employing persons with disabilities through listing on the main page of the Epicenter.

Financial

Financial barriers include lack of adequate county and state funding for services and the impact of limited income for persons living with disabilities.

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 <i>(Stacey)</i>
	Remain active at both the local and state levels in advocating for increased funding to cover the cost of services and provide regular wage increase for DSPs	Continuous <i>(Nicole R)</i>
Granting organizations typically have a very specific criteria for funding requests and often view EPI as a large, successful organization that has adequate resources.	Be aware of granting preferences and likelihood through research and contact with the funder, invest (right size) staff time and resources accordingly. Continue to identify and research for additional grant opportunities that are a good fit.	Continuous <i>(Stacey)</i>
Limited incomes 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 <i>(Stacey)</i>
	Develop and maintain “move in packages” for persons served entering the community with little or no resources to start a household.	Continuous <i>(Stacey)</i>

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 Fifth Annual More Than You See Dueling Pianos/Silent Auction Fundraiser (April 2018) raised over \$42,000 this year. This entertaining fundraising event showcased and celebrated the value persons with disabilities contribute, raising funds to support EPI's mission.

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

- Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa – EPI Employment services was awarded \$13,750
- Waterloo Housing – EPI was awarded \$10,500 to provide tenant based rental assistance
- Otto Schoitz Foundation – EPI Employment Services was awarded \$10,000
- US Bank – EPI Employment Services \$3000
- CV United Way – EPI Employment Services

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 continues wherein EPI provides bussing since of the 2017/2018 school year.

Exceptional Persons Foundation Kickoff was August 27, 2018 at the Deery Center. All EPI staff were invited to come for lunch and some fun. This year, a short video played at the event to help attendees recognize how their donations benefit EPI and persons served.

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.

This year, there was significant focus on the status of a bill to delay the Electronic Visit Verification legislation found within the 21st Century Cures Act. EPI shared information regarding EVV and its impact via the ANCOR Electronic Visit Verification Resources and Action Center. Action alerts were designed to inform stakeholders of the impact of EVV implementation on January 1, 2019 and provide a simple means to access Senate and House representatives. A one year delay was requested to allow CMS and states to answer questions surrounding EVV privacy, cost and compliance. It is unclear of cost of the software or products needed to implement an EVV system will fall to the state or to provider agencies. Delay legislature passed, with the EVV implementation now occurring January 1, 2020.

Deb Jungling, EPI Business Director was 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/or day habilitation/T2020 services. Tiered rates were implemented in segments starting December 1, 2017, with all service providers across the state experiencing compete transition by July 2019. While this rate transition provided an opportunity to access rates in better line with service needs for ID Daily and Day Habilitation services, the transition also resulted in a significant change to ID Waiver transportation service funding. Transportation is no longer paid by the waiver directly, but is paid by the ID Waiver provider agency directly to the transportation entity out of the ID Daily rate. This change has had a substantial impact on EPI transportation services.

Grant Preferences:

EPI continues to evaluate options. Many options have proved difficult to secure, as funders are not always likely to fund if the organization is financially secure.

Essential Needs Funds assistance:

Challenges to meet financial obligations continue to impact persons served. The Essential Needs Fund provided over \$12,000.00 of support this year. Funds were used in the following capacity:

Category	# Funded
Personal Needs/ Milestones	15
Rent Assistance	20
Temporary Child Care Emergency	5
Home Furnishings	2
Child Care Start Up/ Expansion	2
TOTAL	44

Numbers for Rent Assistance continue to rise, as alternate rent assistance programs become less available. We anticipate this area to continue to grow as our community experiences a higher prevalence of homeless individuals and finding affordable housing is more of a struggle than ever before.

Use of “move in packages” for persons served:

At this spring’s More Than You See dueling pianos benefit, attendees joined forces to raise over \$2,000.00 in funds to provide move in packages for individuals served by EPI. This fund was created to support persons entering services with few belongings and no resources to establish their home. Move in packages provide everyday essentials such as bed sheets, towels, kitchen items, and hygiene items to individuals in need. Between Oct 2017 and September 2018, EPI offered move in packages to 18 individuals.

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 <i>(Brittney)</i>
	Provide front line supervisory staff with training regarding retention and positive onboarding of staff.	Continuous <i>(Jessica)</i>
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 <i>(Shannon & Nicole E)</i>

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:

October 2017

- First \$100 social share winners announced. This is available to any staff who share a post from an EPI social media account about a job opening.

November 2017

- Annual Soup day potluck was available for all staff! Staff voted on their favorite soups, with Panera gift cards for the top three winners.
- EPI began providing lunch for each new hire and their supervisor during orientation. This allows supervisors to answer questions the new hire will have, exchange necessary information and build rapport with new employees.
- Staff were able to send in a photo or tag EPI on social media on Giving Tuesday by taking an UNselfie. Those involved were entered in a drawing for a free t-shirt.

- A survey of stakeholders (parents, family members, case managers, etc.) was completed. Staff specifically mentioned by name were acknowledged for providing great service on with a personal email and a collective shout out on the Epicenter.

December 2017

- Celebration of the role of DSP occurred during our annual holiday meal held at the Sunnyside Country Club. Gift cards for an alternate meal option were made available to staff in residential and intermittent services working at the time of the event so all could be involved.
- Office staff were invited to wear holiday attire on Fridays in December, participate in a Secret Santa activity and were eligible for a \$25 prize for the best holiday themed door or office space.

January 2018

- For Day Habilitation and Supported Employment staff, who have positions which are consistently scheduled during the holiday meal, a holiday breakfast was catered to celebrate their contribution to EPI and persons served.
- EPI staff were offered a 50% discount on tickets to the More Than You See (MTYS) event.
- 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.
- The Communications Department offered a \$50 cash prize for sharing More Than You See posts on social media.

February 2018

- Persons served and the staff attending with them were offered free tickets to the More Than You See event
- EPI became a Corporate Advantage Partnership program member, allowing full time EPI staff, spouses and dependent children the opportunity to receive tuition grants for courses taken at any of Upper Iowa University's 25 U.S. education centers or throughout UIU distance education programs. Application fees are also waived for all participants.

March 2018

- Staff volunteering at MTYS were offered free event shirts.
- All EPI staff were invited to participate in an Employee Wellness Survey to help determine interest in participating in worksite wellness programs.

April 2018

- Ergonomic assessments were made available for office workspace. Assessments were completed by Bree Schwaller from UH.
- Shannon Henson, EPI Job Coach, was recognized by the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) out of hundreds of nominees as Iowa's as DSP of year.
- Two DSP of the month candidates sent to the ANCOR Conference in New Orleans, LA.
- Administrative Professionals Day celebration at Zsavooz Sports Lounge & Grill for staff who provide administrative support at EPI.

June 2018

- Staff were made aware of a variety of colors/sizes of EPI branded clothing items available to them for \$10 each.
- 401K meetings were offered to all staff to explain the benefit and offer a Q&A opportunity with Laurel Thompson.

July 2018

- Due to improved stability and agency financial performance, EPI staff were offered a one-time additional compensation within paychecks received in July. All staff, with the exception of agency leadership, received either a \$250 or \$500 bonus.

August 2018

- A survey was made available to supervisors regarding topics they would most like to see presented at the monthly supervisor meeting.

- The EPI Foundation Kickoff was held at the Deery Center. All EPI staff were invited to come for lunch and some fun. This year, a short video played at the event to help attendees recognize how their donations benefit EPI and persons served.
- Five members of EPI's Supported Employment services were able to attend the Iowa APSE Employment Conference in Des Moines.
- Staff were made aware of possible student loan forgiveness opportunities with the Federal Student Aid program. A fact sheet and website information was provided to staff as encouragement to look into the program. Website information was also posted to the EPIcenter.

September 2018

- Celebration of Direct Support Professionals Week (September 9-15), where EPI DSPs were invited for a lunch in their honor on at the Central Rivers AEA. At this event, 12 DSPs were recognized for their exceptional services in the community. Staff were also provided an appreciation gift of voucher for a free EPI t-shirt.
- 401K meetings were offered to all staff to explain the benefit and offer a Q&A opportunity with Laurel Thompson.

Continuous benefits for all employees:

- 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
- Free car seat fittings
- Employee Assistance Program – a 24 hour national call center provides confidential telephone consultation, convenient in-person counseling, legal, financial and eldercare consultation at no cost to employees.
- Nationwide pet insurance
- Corporate discounts for local athletic clubs
 - River Plaza Athletic Club
 - Cedar Falls Recreation Center
 - Cedar Valley SportsPlex
 - Anytime Fitness

Continuous benefits for all Full Time employees:

- Wellmark BCBS Health Insurance
- Delta dental and vision insurance
- Life Insurance
- Voluntary Supplemental Life and AD&D insurance
- Assurity accident, hospital, and critical illness plans
- Freshbenies - Teledoc
- Annual wellness screening
- Access to the My25 online nutrition portal
- Retirement 401k Plan
- Flexible Spending Plans
- Supplemental Plans – accident, Critical illness, Hospital Plans
- College tuition discount for EPI employees and family members with Upper Iowa University

Frontline Supervisor Training:

Supervisor meetings this year were often focused on supervisor/staff relationships and building a positive culture. Topics included The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team and focus on agency values (October 2017), everyday leadership (December 2018), training on the full scope of our agency Employee Assistance Program (March 2018), and the decision making process (July 2018). In June, a lunch and

learn opportunity was also available with the training topic “Critical Conversations and Professional Relationships.”

In September, five new frontline supervisors were able to attend the Fred Pryor Seminar on Making the Transition from Staff to Supervisor.

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:
 - West Hill Condominiums (August 2018- current)
- Locating community employment for 36 persons served with the following employers:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applebee’s – Cedar Falls (2) ○ Brown Bottle – Cedar Falls (3) ○ Buffalo Wild Wings ○ Burger King – Independence ○ Courtyard Marriott ○ Exceptional Persons, Inc. ○ Freddy’s Frozen Custard and Steakburgers ○ Get Air ○ Greater Cedar Valley Alliance ○ Hilton Garden Inn ○ Home Depot ○ IHOP ○ Lowes (3) ○ McDonald’s – University Ave. Waterloo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Menards – Cedar Falls (3) ○ Montage (3) ○ Okoboji Grill ○ Party City ○ Pepper Jax Grill ○ Perkins – University Ave. Waterloo ○ Pizza Ranch ○ Prairie Hills – Independence (2) ○ Ross Dress for Less (2) ○ Salvation Army & Salvation Army Thrift Store ○ Texas Roadhouse ○ Walmart – Independence ○ YMCA of Black Hawk County
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Communication

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

Barrier	Solution	Due Date
Staff are widespread across the community within a variety of office and service delivery environments. Dissemination of consistent messages and ensuring all entities necessary receive the information they need presents a challenge to service consistency.	EPI communicates with employees on a regular basis through the EPIcenter. Expansion of the use of the EPIcenter as well as exploration and use of other communication avenues will continue to develop a resource of consistent information for staff.	Continuous <i>(Melanie)</i>
	In order to improve interdepartmental communication, research and explore opportunities to expand communication avenues across agency departments.	Continuous <i>(Jessica & Nicole R)</i>

Progress:

Consistent communication with employees:

EPI communicates with employees on a regular basis through the EPIcenter. This year, expansion of EPIcenter use spread across several departments and project teams. Transportation began using an online team collaboration wherein diagnosis and emergency medical information of riders is available to

drivers. The Employment and Day Habilitation team created its own page to house frequently used documents for staff and allow communication between supervisors within the team. Maintenance expanded the use of the online Maintenance Requests to include offices. Project teams and committees continue to expand use of the EPIcenter to house OneNote notebooks so all members have quick and easy access to meeting agendas, notes, project updates and progress, meeting minutes, etc.

The layout of the Employee Self-Serve was adjusted, making it easier for staff to locate information they need to do their jobs, such as: view the employee handbook, access trainings, review job openings and request transfers, submit a ticket to IT for technical issues, and report workplace injuries. Agency Policies and Procedures were reorganized on the EPIcenter, allowing easier access. The EPIcenter was also connected to Bamboo HR, a Human Resources Information System (HRIS), where staff can view and update their information and access benefits. Exempt staff are also able to make time off requests quickly and easily from the EPIcenter rather than using paper forms.

Expand communication across agency departments:

In July, EPI's Communication Department began sending weekly All Staff Communication emails to help limit the frequency of emails staff may receive to keep them informed of happenings at EPI. While important notices may go out mid-week, the majority of information is sent out within this Friday communication.

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 and technology	EPI will provide training to supervisors and staff as appropriate.	Continuous <i>(Jaclyn)</i>
	Continue to update agency technology to improve the experience of the end-user and positively impact the quality of service	Continuous <i>(Melissa)</i>

Progress:

Training to Supervisors & Staff

Trainings regarding updates to the Quantum documentation software was provided to all direct-care staff. Additionally, the Staff Development Assistant meets with new hires as soon as they begin services to review documentation and help ensure documentation and use of agency technology is a positive experience.

Supervisors were provided ongoing training within the Quantum documentation software, as well as training focused on workplace injury training process and forms on the EPIcenter, Microsoft OneNote, Skype for Business, a newly implemented HRIS - Bamboo HR and updates to electronic access of information on the EPIcenter to help ensure quality services and increased efficiency. Many of these trainings were offered via lunch and learn opportunities hosted by the QI/QO and IT departments.

Update Technology

The EPIcenter scheduling for daily residential staff was expanded to help improve training completion. Managers are now able to assign training to schedules and the system automatically checks for service plan trainings each time a staff works at any site.

Several significant updates within the CS Quantum documentation software system included service documentation, streamline for review of documentation, service plan update and electronic ISP verification, and relocation of the Social History.

In January, an update of the Wi-Fi at our main offices was completed. Staff are now able to go to Ansborough, Deery, Southbrooke and PDM offices and seamlessly connect.

Stakeholder surveys were completed this year using new technology to complete the survey and analyze the results to improve experience.

The Bamboo HR HRIS system was implemented which allows increased access to view and edit personal information, the ability for exempt employees to request time off and calculate time off balances into the future, and an integrated applicant tracking system aimed at speeding up the hiring process.

The EPI Maintenance department purchased a heat treat trailer to improve timely treatment of bed bugs with first treatment. This technology supports a faster treatment outcome, reducing the cost of multiple treatments required of other methods.

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 explore options, both internal and external, acting as advocates for persons with disabilities to encourage the continued expansion of accessible systems outside of traditional transportation hours/services.	Continuous (Tammy & Rick)

Progress:

EPI continues to collaborate with local transportation services to act as advocates and encourage continued expansion of accessible public transportation systems. However, changes to ID Waiver transportation funding, effective 12/1/2017, had a significant impact on EPI's internal transportation company. With service provider agencies having to pay for transportation directly, several agencies opted to have their staff provide transportation rather than make an arrangement with the transportation entities in place prior to the transition. As a result, EPI's focus related to transportation has been on options to increase revenues in expand ridership for internal routes.

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 (Melanie)

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 new opportunities this year at such entities as the House of Hope, Cedar Falls Downtown District and Hartman Reserve. Partnerships continue to grow and EPI has been recognized for our support to our community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2017 – Persons served again volunteered with the Cedar Falls Community School Foundation to assemble 6,000 envelopes for their annual Tradition of Excellence mail campaign. This is the second year of this partnership. Our support in 2016 resulted in over 40 grants to different projects in the school systems to enhance education. To kick off the summer, persons served adopted the 300 block of Main Street in Cedar Falls. An afternoon was spent dedicated to gardening, with ongoing weeding and watering activities throughout the summer. April 2018 – The Northeast Iowa Food Bank offered recognition and thanks for the work EPI has done in the past year. They reported persons served donated 4089 volunteer hours in the past year, which according to independentantspector.org is the equivalent of donating \$94,047. August 2018 - Angels Park Memorial Island of Evansdale gave a shout out to EPI for volunteering to keep Angels Park looking its best.

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
<p>From FY17 Plan - 9/1/2017</p> <p>Communication Barrier in community (Target) – Lack of accessible device/support for individuals with hearing impairment:</p> <p>A person's check was denied due to company policy. Hearing impaired person served was provided a number to call, but no device or</p>	<p>Brittney Montross made contact with Target. Supervisory staff there said to go to customer service and let them know of hearing impairment. They will help with 1:1 service or will open a new checkout lane to help with communication so person served doesn't feel rushed. They can also help make phone calls, etc.</p> <p>This information was shared with the staff who made the report via email on 12/26/2017.</p>	12/26/2017

support for her to call independently. Staff called on her behalf and was made aware of the policy. Person served would not have been able to access this information on own due to lack of accessible format.		
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Barrier	Solution	Completed
<p>From FY17 Plan - 9/29/2017</p> <p>Physical Barrier in community (New Century Buffet) – Lack of accessible entry:</p> <p>A small step in the doorway limits access for persons using a wheelchair.</p>	<p>Review of building codes for Cedar Falls does not include specifics for accessibility outside of State and Federal regulations. The 1991 ADA and subsequent 2010 ASAD do require businesses which provide goods and services to the public to remove barriers to access if doing so is readily achievable.</p> <p>The New Century Buffet has made attempts at modification to remove this barrier. Contact with the owner was made, who indicates they also have staff available to provide support with entry for anyone who has difficulty.</p>	12/26/2017

Barrier	Solution	Completed
<p>11/1/2017</p> <p>Physical Barrier in community (Cost Cutters) – Lack of accessible entry:</p> <p>Stairs leading up the front door at Cost Cutters makes this location not accessible for all.</p>	<p>This issue was raised initially in January 2014. At that time, the Committee reached out to the building owner without success. The concern was passed along to and accepted by the Waterloo ADA in August 2014. The Committee will continue to allow Waterloo ADA to monitor this barrier.</p>	12/21/2017

Barrier	Solution	Completed
<p>11/1/2017</p> <p>Physical Barrier in community (Dental Office) – Lack of accessible entry:</p> <p>Chair lift available but a step up is required to use the lift.</p>	<p>No action necessary. Sam Dodoo visited the location and reported no issues. Upon committee request, he provided photos at the 6/21/18 committee meeting. Photos show a ramp in place to access the rear of the building and no step necessary to access the chair lifts going either up or down from the rear entry.</p> <p>*Update: Dr. Spragg and Squires Office notified patients via mail in July/August of a plan to consolidate their current offices with others in the building. Part of this merger will include building renovation with an elevator.</p>	6/21/2018

Barrier	Solution	Completed
12/15/2017	Melanie Sullivan reached out to Barnes and Noble regarding the doorbell. They reported internal company expectation to have a staff at	4/19/2018

Physical Barrier in community (Barnes & Noble) – Lack of accessible entry: A button is available to ring an employee to come to the door but no independent access is possible. In poor weather, people may have to wait to gain access.	the front desk and/or kiosk at all times – both locations are within direct line of sight of the door and staff are expected to provide support to any customer having difficulty. In addition to the doorbell, this is a means of making their business accessible. They reported not having customer concerns or complaint regarding the features of their entrance and will remain diligent regarding community access to the store.	
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Barrier	Solution	Completed
12/17/2017 Physical Barrier in community (Walmart) – Lack of accessible entry to restroom: Bathroom doors were not accessible for person with impaired gait.	Store Manager, Ryan Rand indicated the building meets ADA expectations for accessibility. He recommended someone who had trouble opening the push/pull doors to the multi-person restrooms use the family restroom in the rear of the building. The door to this single-room restroom has a lever handle (rather than a standard knob) to allow easy access. This information was shared with the staff who made the report via email on 12/26/2017.	12/26/2017

Barrier	Solution	Completed
1/15/2018 Financial barrier (Exceptional Persons, Inc.) – required expense for all persons daily services: Small group homes and Residential Care Facilities operated by EPI require a home phone/land line. Cell phones used within these locations would be more cost-efficient.	Melissa Arnold spoke with Bonnie Kipper regarding this concern. Bonnie explained the requirement for a land line in all homes is to ensure 24/7 access to emergency personnel. While cellular phones may be a slightly lower cost, they are less reliable. The Committee determined the need to have consistent access to emergency medical personnel was a pillar in ensuring health and safety needs of persons served are met and will not pursue change regarding this reported barrier.	6/21/2018

Barrier	Solution	Completed
4/3/2018 Physical Barrier in community (359 Southbrooke Dr.) – Lack of accessible entry: The sidewalk extending from the building from W. 9 th Street has a cracked and broken curb. The curb is a trip hazard to those with unsteady gait.	The committee held off addressing this with the property owner due to construction already occurring on W 9 th Street, which would likely take care of this issue. On 9/4/2018 this section of W 9 th Street was blocked off as part of the road work project. The City of Waterloo will update the curb as a part of the construction process. The curb was replaced as part of the roadwork on W 9 th Street on 9/26/18.	9/26/18

Barrier	Solution	Completed
6/7/2018	A representative from EPI Day Habilitation reached out to Morgan Hawk, Sales and	9/13/18

<p>Environmental Barrier in community (Waterloo Bucks Stadium.) – characteristics of the stairs impede safe navigation:</p> <p>Stairs cause a barrier for visually impaired persons. Steps are painted a solid color with no definition for the edge of steps.</p>	<p>Broadcast Manager with the Waterloo Bucks. Morgan agreed to look into the issue through work the stadium is doing with the City of Waterloo for the 2019 season.</p>	
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