

Links To Work

Rotary Club of Cambridge (Preston- Hespeler)

**“Links to Work Employment Services –
Attracting and Retaining Diverse Talent”**

Presented By: Anne Jenner and Tim Frey



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Waterloo Wellington

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Waterloo Wellington

Agenda

Introductions

Tim Frey / Anne Jenner – Links To Work

- Employment Services in the Region
- Links To Work and CMHA WW Employment Services
- Challenges individuals with barriers and disabilities face related to employment
- Benefits of hiring individuals with barriers
- Tips on hiring and retaining individuals with barriers

Questions / Discussion

Waterloo Region Employment Services

- Agilec
- Anishnabeg Outreach Employment & Training Inc.
- Bridging Employment Supports & Links To Work
- Cambridge Career Connections
- Canadian Hearing Society
- Conestoga College
- K-W Habilitation Services
- Lutherwood
- March of Dimes
- The Working Centre
- YMCA Employment Services
- Waterloo Region – Employment Services

Other Organizations That Provide Employment Services

- **Workforce Planning Board – Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin** surveys, coordination of multi employer job fairs, education, workshops, town hall employment meetings, job postings, Job Developer Network, and Making Cent\$ of Abilities Coalition
- **Employer Virtual Job Fair – Oct. 6, 2020 – Deadline Sept. 16th**
- **Making Cent\$ of Abilities Coalition** – a local initiative highlighting the economic benefits of employing persons with disabilities; information about available supports for employers
- **Boards of Education** – can provide literacy and educational upgrading, computer skills
- **Literacy Organizations** – can provide computer and language upgrading/training

Contact information will be supplied for listed services

Types of Employment Services

Services may not be the same for each organization, but may include:

- Training initiative funds (EO)
- Programs for youth, new Canadians, people with disabilities
 - Achieving Competitive Employment (ACE)
 - Youth Job Connect (YJC)
 - Ontario Bridge Training Program (OBTP)
- Federal employment stimulus
- Working with employers to find candidates
- Job Fairs
- Job Coaching for new hires
- Development of training plans

Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington (CMHA WW)

- Assists individuals and families from infant to senior citizen who identify with mental health issues
- Services include crisis and distress lines (HERE24/7 – 1-844-437-3247), support coordination, addiction treatment, peer counseling, **community development & education**, therapeutic supports, **employment services** and much more

CMHA WW Employment Services

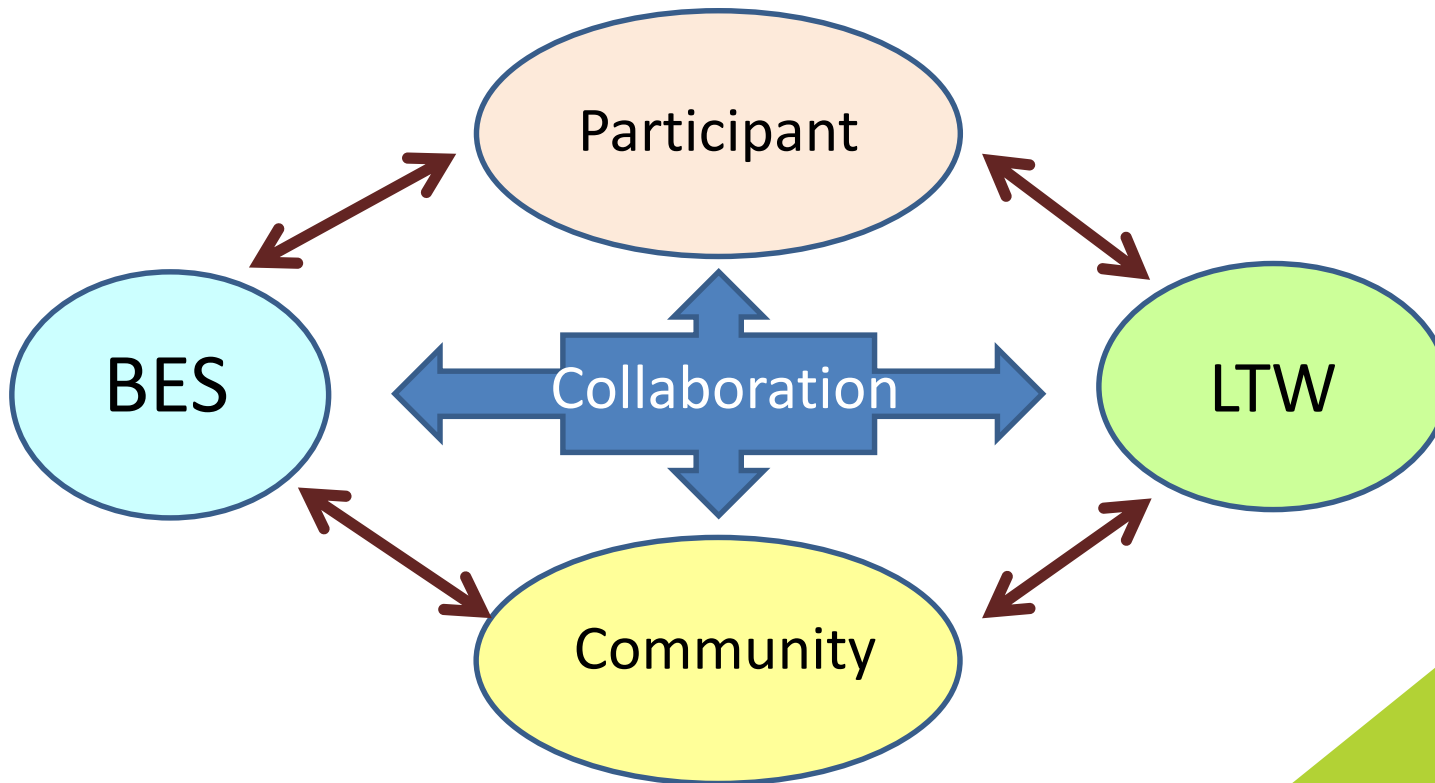
- Services assist individuals with disabilities in Waterloo Region and Wellington County to obtain competitive, paid employment, and volunteer placements, through three programs:
 - **Bridging Employment Supports (BES),**
 - **Links To Work (LTW), and**
 - **New Directions Services (NDS)**
- Assist local employers to hire and retain diverse talent through collaboration and support throughout the hiring and selection process

How Links To Work Differs From Other EO Services

- Uses a collaborative method to provide support
- Works with participants individually
- Provides specific tools in a one-to-one approach
- Able to have disclosure & accommodation conversations
- Partner with community supports and employers
- Educate employers on how to integrate people we support into the workplace

Integrative Employment Model

Person-Centred – support follows recovery model
Individualized support / flexible timelines
Connection with community supports
Meaningful & sustainable work
Enhanced quality of life



Typical Barriers to Employment

- Applications – technological ability and access
- Interview process – accessibility, format, difficulty explaining gaps in work history
- Required job training and accessibility or disability aware trainers
- Perceived lack of employers willing to accommodate
- Transportation / Proximity to Labour Market
- Language / Cultural / Communication
- Lack of Formal Education
- Physical, mental health, learning barriers

Common Myths Related to Accommodation

Cost

- Most employers spend between \$0 to \$500 on accommodations

Time Off

- 90% of employees with a disability have average to above average rates of attendance

*Source: Making Cent\$ of Abilities Workbook
Employers' Resource to Hiring and Retaining
Persons with Disabilities*

Common Accommodations for People with Barriers Include:

- Flexible Scheduling
- Changes in Supervision
- Changes in Training
- Modifying job duties
- Using Technology
- Modifying Workspace or Changing Location
- Job Coach Assistance in Hiring and Working

Why Employees Don't Disclose Issues

- Believe there is public stigma around disabilities especially mental health issues
- Not wanting to be treated differently
- Not wanting to be judged
- Fear of negative consequences... losing job

*Source: Making Cent\$ of Abilities Workbook
Employers' Resource to Hiring and Retaining Persons with
Disabilities*

Benefits of Hiring People With Disabilities

- Tend to have longer tenures which leads to savings in recruitment costs and less lost productivity
- Hiring / accommodating employees with disabilities can boost morale for all employees
- Often bring fresh creative thinking to teams
- Many persons with disabilities are very qualified and can increase skilled labour pool
- Assistive technologies can lead to improved efficiency and productivity for all employees
- People with disabilities want to work

What Employers Can Do

- Be open to people who do not fit your idea of a typical candidate or employee
- Look at your recruitment and selection processes and see if it might eliminate certain individuals – Can you change this?
- Evaluate your job requirements:
 - education vs work experience vs. on the job training
 - can technology be used to help people with challenges
- Consider having modified/flexible work schedules
- Check to see if your procedures and training materials are useable by a person with a disability
- Make facilities accessible
- Train staff on how to interact with persons with disabilities

Retention Strategies & Accommodation Conversations

- Build Trust
- Listen
- Avoid Judgement
- Be Aware of Staff Needs/ Behaviours
- Learn How To Address Issues
- Encourage Conversation and Collaboration

- Visit and review

<http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca/mental-health-workplace-accommodation-guide-managers-staff/>

How Links To Work Can Help

- Connect you with no cost advertising
- Provide recruitment recommendations
- Connect you with job ready people to fit hiring needs
- Attend interviews and help with communications and facilitation of possible training initiatives
- Assist in developing training plans for our participants to facilitate a successful transition to work
- Provide information on available Employment Services or methods to assist with hiring

Final Thoughts

- ✓ Try to look at someone's ability, not his or her disability
- ✓ Be open-minded – there is a huge untapped workforce out there that you might not even have thought of
- ✓ Be proactive in linking with local employment services – they might be able to contribute to your inclusion strategy

Questions



Thank You for Attending our Workshop

**We hope you found this
presentation informative.**

Anne Jenner

ajenner@linkstowork.ca

Tim Frey

tfrey@linkstowork.ca