

A stylized map of New York State is positioned behind the main title. The map is filled with a gradient of green, transitioning from a lighter shade at the top to a darker shade at the bottom. The background of the entire top section consists of a dark green field with a pattern of thin, white, curved lines that create a sense of depth and movement.

New York Makes Work Pay

Developing a path to employment for New Yorkers with disabilities

www.NYMakesWorkPay.org

Consortia Summary

Placement Consortia Directory Summary

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Placement Consortia Directory Summary

The following is a brief summary of the results of an information gathering effort about the placement consortia that serve in part to connect employers in New York with potential employees with disabilities. The primary purpose of this effort was to develop an easily accessible online directory to allow employers to readily identify consortia in their area that could assist them in finding employees with disabilities. This directory will be available on the NY Makes Work Pay website (www.nymakesworkpay.org).

Twenty one consortia were identified through an existing network of organizations that collaborate to meet business hiring needs on the local level. In most instances, the New York State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH), provide the leadership and structure that supports these coordinated placement efforts. Each consortium was contacted and asked a series of questions regarding complete contact information, the counties the consortia served, the scope of services and labor pool served, as well as other background information. Altogether 21 consortia were successfully contacted and responded to the questions. An additional nine entities were identified, but at this point only the contact information was collected. This report summarizes the responses for the 21 consortia for which complete information was collected.

County Coverage

Altogether 52 of the 62 New York state counties are served by one or more placement consortia. The remaining ten counties that are not served by a consortium include: Hamilton, Franklin, Clinton, Madison, St. Lawrence, Cortland, Fulton, Montgomery, Essex, and Otsego County.

There was some overlap, as a few counties were served by more than one consortium, primarily in the New York City metropolitan area. In most cases the other consortia focused on serving a specific clientele such as individuals with hearing or visual impairments. Nine of the consortia serve just a single county, seven cover between 2-4 counties, two cover 5 or 6 counties, two serve 8-9 , and the largest consortium serves a total of 13 counties.

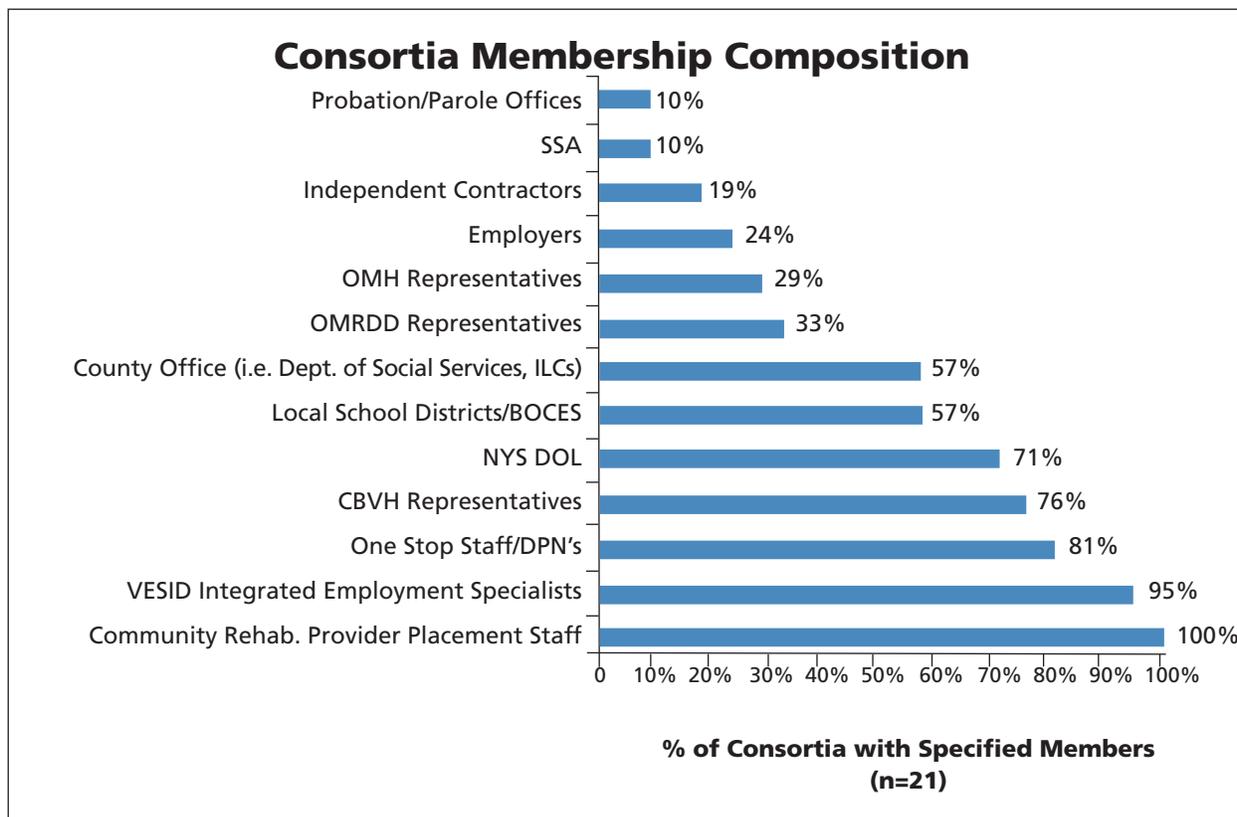
Organizational History And Structure

Nine of the twenty one of the consortia have been in existence for over 15 years, with nine other reported having existed between 6 to ten years. The three remaining consortia were younger, with two existing between 1-5 years and one less than one year. Nine out of ten of the consortia were informal networks of state agencies and service providers. Two of the 21 were formally established organizations and one of the informal consortia was in

the process of applying to become a registered 501c(3) non-profit organization. Most consortia met monthly, with a few meeting bi-monthly and one quarterly. There was a range of the number of member organizations. Approximately half reported 11-20 members; another 40% reported 25 or more members, with the remaining 3 consortia reporting 5-10 member organizations.

Membership Composition

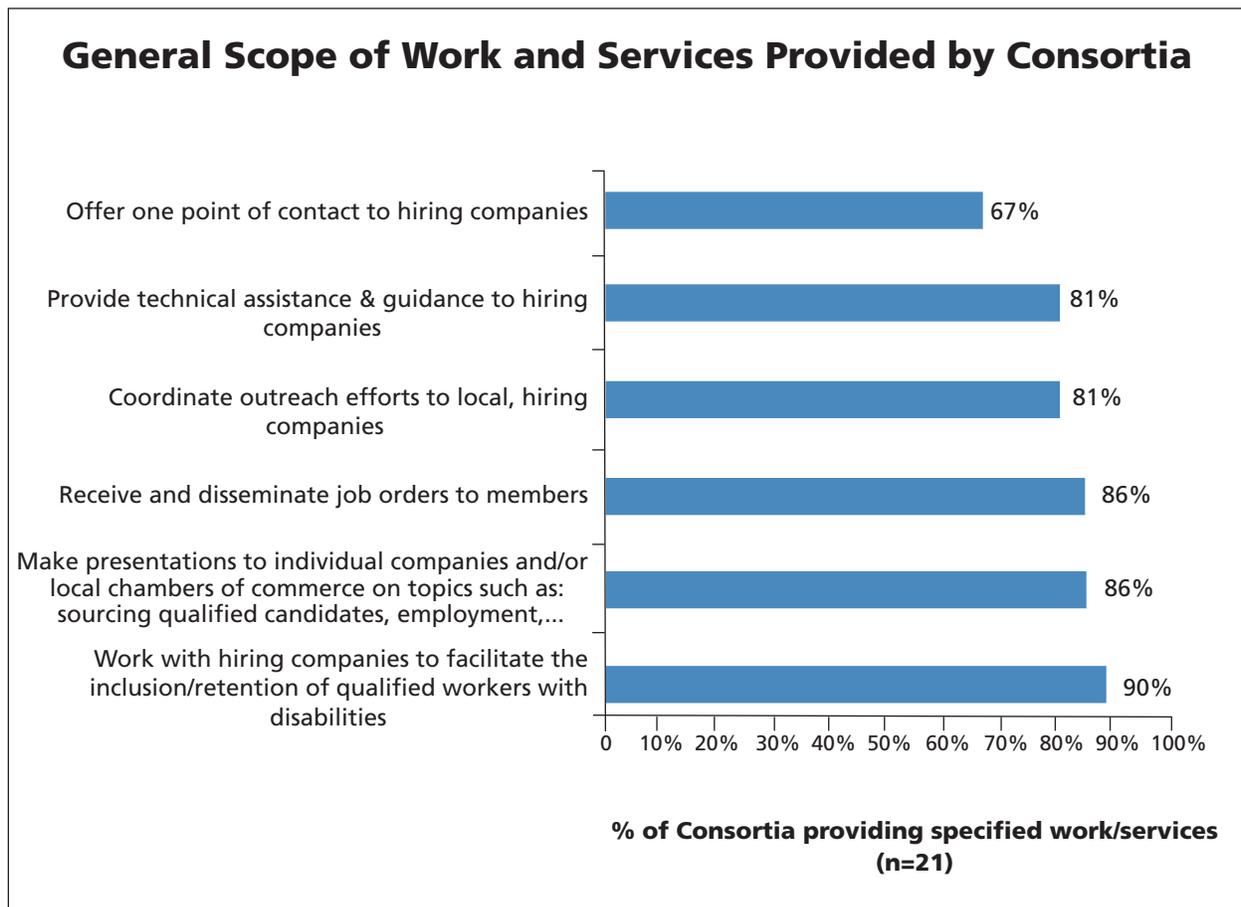
All of the 21 consortia included placement staff that represented Community Rehabilitation Provider placement staff and VESID Integrated Employment Specialists. Approximately four out of five included one-stop staff /DPNs. About three quarters included representatives from CBVH or the New York State Department of Labor, with six out of ten having members from local school districts/BOCES, and county departments of social services, mental health and/or Independent Living Centers. Approximately a third included OMRDD representatives and a quarter included OMH personnel. Only one in four included employers and one in five included independent contractors/job coaches. SSA representatives were members in one in ten consortia as were probation/parole offices.



Scope Of Work And Services Provided

Nearly all consortia (80% or more) reported providing services to support business efforts to recruit, hire, accommodate and retain employees with disabilities. These services included: receiving and disseminating job orders to consortium members to identify appropriate job candidates; facilitating the inclusion/retention of qualified workers with disabilities through a range of informational and on the job supports; coordinating outreach efforts to the business community through presentations, to increase their understanding of the talent pool represented by job seekers with disabilities; and, customized technical assistance to businesses. About two thirds of all consortia surveyed offered one point of contact to hiring companies.

In addition to the data and information summarized above, several consortia reported unique activities designed to better meet employer and job seeker expectations. These included:

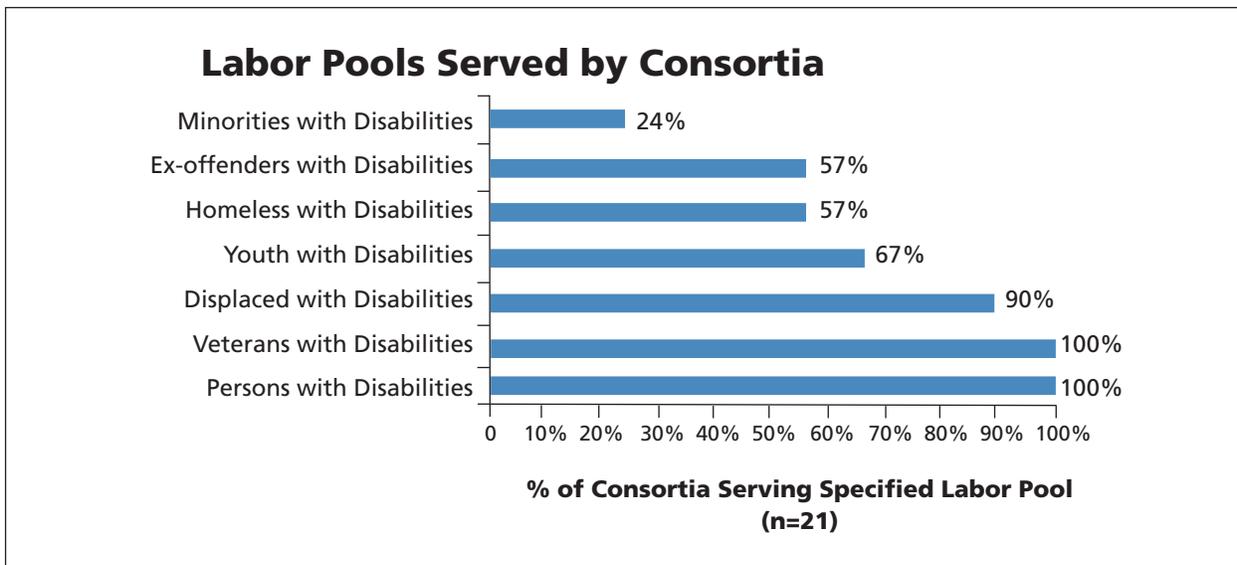


Company tours/business roundtables: As the economy and technology have impacted the workplace, consortia members understand that it is their responsibility to have the most current information regarding employer expectations, skill requirements and work environments. Several consortia reported that they obtain this information by conducting their monthly meetings at company locations during which time they receive briefings from company representatives on their respective business/industry standards, skill requirements, career paths, etc. These briefings include tours of the company’s facilities where consortia members observe the work environment, production standards and gather important information needed to ensure that opportunities for the development of these skills are available to people with disabilities through local training resources.

Placement staff training: There is a higher rate of staff turnover among community rehabilitation providers than among state agencies. As a result, several consortia have responded to the need to maintain performance standards by offering training to new hires on a variety of topics that include: placement strategies and techniques; and, skill development that will lead to higher rates of employment among special groups of persons with disabilities, i.e. ex-offenders, persons with mental illness. In addition, the consortia also conduct seminars and other training events to ensure that their members have the most current information regarding state and federal programs, procedures, and practices.

Labor Pool Served

As can be seen in the next chart, nearly all consortia served persons with disabilities. The vast majority also specifically served veterans and displaced workers with disabilities. Over half also mentioned serving homeless persons with disabilities, transition aged youth, and ex-offenders. Several specifically focused on serving individuals with hearing impairments or persons with visual impairments or ex-offenders with disabilities. About a quarter of the consortia also specified ethnic minorities with disabilities.



Job orders

About a third of the consortia processed over thirty job orders a month, with one consortium reporting 50-60 and another 75-100 on a monthly basis. Approximately a quarter received between 10-30 and four in ten received 10 or fewer a month. The majority, eight out of ten consortia, utilized e-mail/FAX blasts to all their member organizations to share job orders, the remaining consortia used this same distribution method, but selectively directed the job orders to specific member organizations.

Consortia were also asked how many candidates were referred through their consortium for job openings per month. Nearly all (95%) reported 10 or fewer per month. This low number may be attributable to the fact that members do not necessarily report job candidate referrals back to the consortia. One consortium said they referred over thirty candidates. Note that the vast majority of respondents also stated that they had no mechanism in place that would allow them to track the number placed, so most are general estimates.

Relationship With Other Consortia

Nearly two thirds of the consortia noted that there were similar consortia in their coverage area although none described them as direct competitors. Of those with other consortia, most noted good relationships and many (70%) shared membership with over half sharing job leads.

Conclusion

The vast majority of respondents were concerned about their inability to track individuals placed via consortia collaborations and efforts. Each expressed a strong desire for some type of employment verification system that would provide important feedback to consortia members and to state agencies. Another important take away from this effort is the situation regarding the ten counties, primarily located in central and northern New York state, whose local business communities are not served by a placement consortium. These counties include: Hamilton, Franklin, Clinton, Madison, St. Lawrence, Cortland, Fulton, Montgomery, Essex, and Otsego County (the gray counties on accompanying map).¹

¹ Note that despite the absence of a coordinated effort, contact information is provided on the New York Makes Work Pay website (www.nymakesworkpay.org) that will link employers to employment resources in these counties.

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www.NYMakesWorkPay.org

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Partnering Organizations

New York State Office Of Mental Health
Employment and Disability Institute (Cornell University)
Burton Blatt Institute (Syracuse University)

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