

# Supporting Families Community of Practice Evaluation

## District of Columbia State Data Brief

### Evaluation Overview

In 2012, the Administration for Community Living (ACL), through the Administration on Disabilities (AoD)<sup>1</sup>, awarded the five-year National Supporting Families Community of Practice (CoP) grant to the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), which partnered with the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute on Human Development (UMKC-IHD). In the first year of the grant, 15 states applied and five were selected to participate, including Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Washington, with Missouri serving as the mentor state. Given growing interest in the work of the CoP, NASDDDS and UMKC-IHD decided to expand and sustain the CoP outside of the initial grant. A second cohort, known as the expansion states, joined in 2016, including Alabama, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota. With interest continuing to grow around the nation, the CoP welcomed five new states—Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Virginia, and New Jersey—in 2019 and created opportunities for participating states to adjust their level of participation.

Three project outcomes guide the work of the National Supporting Families CoP:

- State and national consensus on a national framework and agenda for improving supports for families with children with I/DD
- Enhanced state policies, practices, and sustainable systems that result in improved supports to families
- Enhanced capacity of states to replicate and sustain exemplary practices to support families and systems

To examine progress toward federal project outcomes and identify which activities are leading to success, ACL funded the National Supporting Families CoP evaluation. The evaluation team gathered data that align with the three project outcomes to determine how the CoP is producing outcomes of interest to ACL, which reflect the five AoD priority areas (Exhibit 1). Findings will provide ACL with outcomes data and recommendations to improve supports to families of individuals with I/DD. They will also provide information on how the CoP and CtLC framework improve support and systems delivery of services to families and individuals with I/DD.

### Exhibit 1. AoD Priority Areas

The Five AoD Priority Areas
■ Ensure the continued protection of rights of individuals with I/DD and prevent their abuse, neglect, and exploitation
■ Improve and maintain effective and responsive management of responsibilities under Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (the DD Act)
■ Promote Employment First as a key strategy for individuals with I/DD to be contributing and productive members of society participating in the competitive integrated workforce
■ Empower individuals with I/DD and their families to access home and community based (HCBS) and supports that are self-directed and ensure opportunity for community participation
■ Support advocacy efforts of individuals with I/DD in order to ensure their participation in system and service delivery design

<sup>1</sup> The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) initiated the evaluation in 2017. The Administration on Disabilities (AoD) now oversees the evaluation.

The evaluation includes all 16 states that participated in the National Supporting Families CoP for at least two years between 2012 and 2018. For evaluation purposes, evaluators stratified states into three groups based on their stage of development, as described in Exhibit 2.

### Exhibit 2. Evaluation Participants

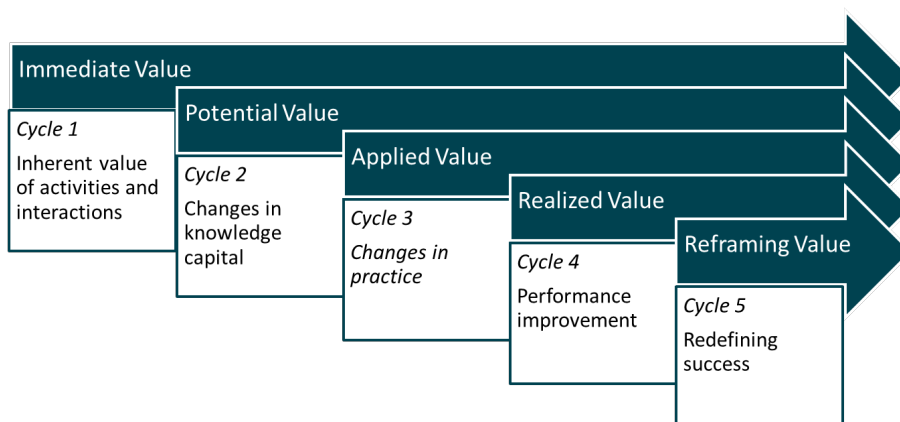
Group One	Group Two	Group Three
<p><b>The six original CoP states:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connecticut</li> <li>▪ District of Columbia</li> <li>▪ Missouri (mentor state)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oklahoma</li> <li>▪ Tennessee</li> <li>▪ Washington</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>States with previous exposure to the CoP and CtLC framework before joining the expansion state cohort:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maryland</li> <li>▪ Ohio</li> <li>▪ Pennsylvania</li> <li>▪ South Dakota</li> </ul>	<p><b>States with little or no exposure to the CoP and CtLC framework before joining the expansion state cohort:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alabama</li> <li>▪ Delaware</li> <li>▪ Hawaii</li> <li>▪ Indiana</li> <li>▪ Kansas</li> <li>▪ Oregon</li> </ul>

Evaluators collected data from states using four tools:

- *Reporting tools* (one for each state grouping) gathered descriptive data about CoP structure, activities, and impact.
- *Telephone interviews* (informed by the reporting tools) collected contextual data about CoP activities and accomplishments specific to each state.
- *Site visits* (to select states) with CoP leadership and other stakeholders provided data on the relationship between CoP activities, outputs, and outcomes.
- *Materials review* (on an ad-hoc basis) collected needed data on areas of interest.

Evaluators analyzed the collected data using a conceptual framework developed by Wenger, Trayner, and de Laat<sup>2</sup> (Exhibit 3), which assesses value creation in communities. Adapted for evaluation purposes, the framework considers five different cycles of value creation to capture the richness of value created by communities of practice. The following page describes the value generated from CoP activities and the CtLC framework within the District of Columbia CoP.

### Exhibit 3. Value Cycle Framework

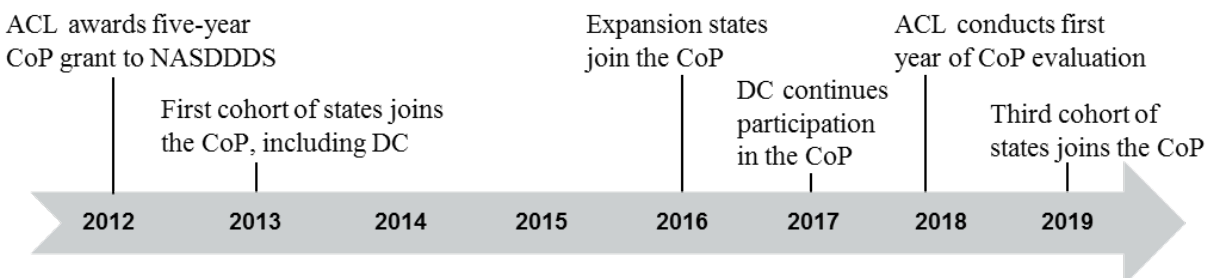


<sup>2</sup> Wenger, E., Trayner, B., and de Laat, M. (2011). Promoting and Assessing Value Creation in Communities and Networks: A Conceptual Framework. Rapport 18, Ruud de Moor Centrum, Open University of the Netherlands.

## A Look into District of Columbia's Community of Practice

The District of Columbia (DC) is one of the six original states to join the National Supporting Families CoP in 2013. The DC CoP is a collaboration between the DC Developmental Disabilities Council and the DC Department on Disabilities Services. The timeline below (Exhibit 4) provides detailed information about DC's participation in the CoP over time.

**Exhibit 4. Timeline of DC's CoP Participation**



Using data from the most recent Residential Information Systems Project Report developed by the University of Minnesota, the number of people with I/DD known to or served by the DC Department on Disability Services (DDS) in 2016 was 2,275. Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) recipients include people with I/DD who receive Medicaid or State-funded supports and services. In 2016, 38% of 2,248 LTSS recipients in DC lived at home with a family member. The report also shows annual Medicaid Waiver expenditures for recipients with I/DD, which amounted to \$118,910 per recipient in 2016.<sup>3</sup>

Understanding the current state of I/DD services and supports in DC is important in better understanding how CoP activities and the CtLC framework impact families and individuals with I/DD. The evaluation team gathered valuable data from DC through administration of the reporting tool, telephone interview, and materials review. After careful analysis of the data using the value cycle framework, the evaluation team noted the following key achievements by DC's CoP during evaluation year one:

- In partnership with the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council, DDS conducted a pilot program to embed CtLC tools into segregated school districts to help students plan for employment. They hope to expand this effort to other school systems.
- DDS revised their “front door” to Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) services, which uses a strength-based, integrated supports approach to help people with I/DD and their families plan for a “good life” and connects them with community-based supports.
- DDS has applied for a number of grants and applications:
  - A grant from the Department of Justice (DOJ) around preventing violence against people with disabilities;

<sup>3</sup> Larson, S.A., Eschenbacher, H.J., Anderson, L.L., Taylor, B., Pettingell, S., Hewitt, A., Sowers, M., & Bourne, M.L. (in press, 2018). In-home and residential long-term supports and services for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities: Status and trends through 2016. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Research and Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration.

- A grant from ACL around integrating person-centered thinking and CtLC into the quality management system; and
- A new waiver application supporting individuals who live at home with their families.

DC’s continued participation in the National Supporting Families CoP shows their commitment to the CtLC framework and advancing supports for families of individuals with I/DD. The following tables includes a more comprehensive list of DC’s achievements from evaluation year one.

**Exhibit 5. DC’s Achievements in Evaluation Year One, 2018-2019**

Value Cycle	CoP Activities and Achievements
<b>Cycle 1: Immediate Value</b> <i>Value of Activities and Interactions Themselves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individuals with I/DD review, discuss, and provide feedback on new policies, procedures, and the alignment of processes in DC.</li> <li>▪ Every CoP meeting includes a presentation from a community representative providing resources related to a CtLC life domain. Additionally, an executive team member is always present at CoP meetings.</li> <li>▪ CoP leadership participates in DC’s Cultural and Linguistic Competency CoP.</li> <li>▪ DDS has opened the Quality Improvement Committee to family members and self-advocates. The Department supports their participation through a pre-meeting, stipends, an assigned staff liaison, and other support as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 2: Potential Value</b> <i>Changes in Knowledge Capital</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DDS is utilizing the CtLC framework as a planning tool for state activities. They are reframing resource materials to incorporate the CtLC principles, as well as braiding them into staff and community trainings to encourage conversations surrounding the social determinants of health.</li> <li>▪ In coordination with DC’s Partners in Employment project, DDS is developing an orientation on using CtLC tools so that individuals planning for employment are informed even before they start services with DDS. The training is directed towards those entering DDA or individuals with developmental disabilities entering Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 3: Applied Value</b> <i>Changes in Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DC published final regulations for the renewed HCBS I/DD waiver in March 2018 which included a flexible assistive technology service; peer supports for families; parenting support for individuals with intellectual disabilities; and a new home support service that offers care coordination and healthcare training for individuals with complex behavioral and/or medical needs who live with their families.</li> <li>▪ DDS revised their individualized support plan (ISP) process and 6-month review tool to focus on outcomes through an integrated supports strategy.</li> <li>▪ DDS held a summit on use of every-day technology, including assistive technology, to share information with service coordinators, people with I/DD, and their families.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 4: Realized Value</b> <i>Performance Improvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of the CtLC framework enhanced training opportunities and cut down processing times. Specific outcomes include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased waiver utilization in supported employment assessment through VR services; and</li> <li>• Decreased utilization of individual speech and language services through community-based providers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 5: Reframed Value</b> <i>Redefining Success</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As a result of the CoP, DDS now uses the CtLC framework as a planning tool for their five-year plans.</li> </ul>