Testimony
Department of Human Services
Human Services Interim Committee
Representative Hogan, Chairman
July 26, 2016

Chairman Hogan and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Stacie Dailey. I am a behavioral health administrator with the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division. I am here today to provide a report on expanded brain injury services and the use of funds appropriated under Section 1 of 2015 House Bill No. 1046.

Expanded Brain Injury Services

The 2015 legislative assembly approved an increase for state-wide pre-vocational services for individuals who have sustained a brain injury. The Department contracted with Community Options to provide a minimum of 6 hours of services to 50 individuals per month through June 30, 2017.

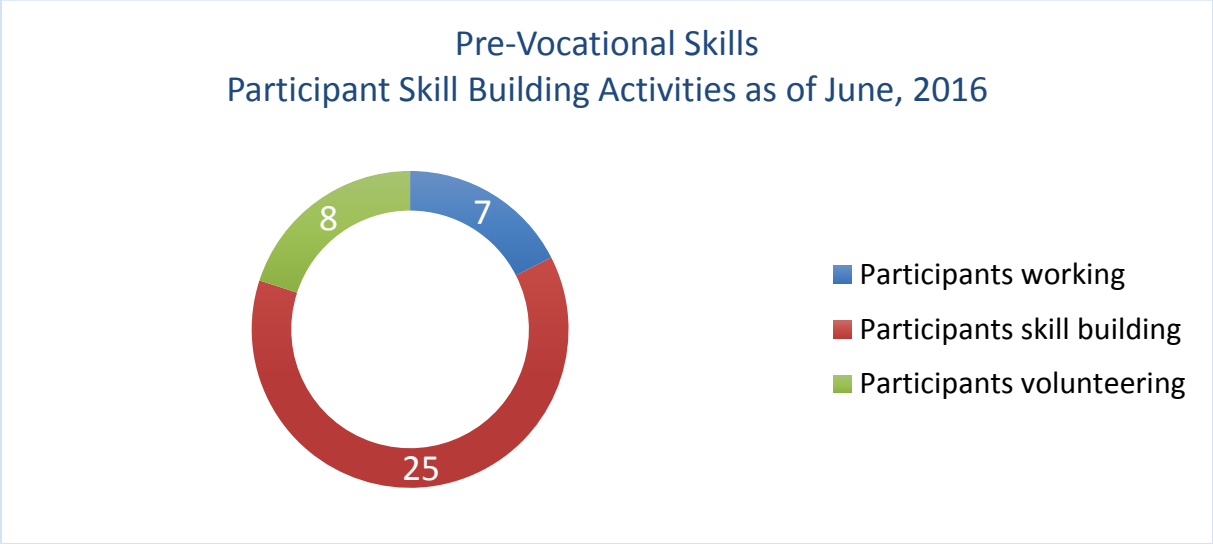
The Pre-Vocational Skills Program is designed to improve soft skills through community integration and volunteer experience to prepare individuals for employment. Examples of soft skills include: memory training, navigating public transit, communicating with others, and time management. The following chart shows the number of individuals served per month in the Pre-Vocational Skills Program.

Individuals in the Pre-Vocational Skills Program per Month

7/15	8/15	9/15	10/15	11/15	12/15	1/16	2/16	3/16	4/16	5/16	6/16
28	21	23	31	35	41	46	40	40	40	40	40

The average length of time a person is served in the Pre-Vocational Skills Program before entering the Return to Work Program is 85 days. The

Pre-Vocational Skills Program has shown positive outcomes as seen in the chart below. Seven individuals are currently working and 8 individuals are volunteering an average of 6 hours per week.



Section 1 of 2015 House Bill No. 1046

2015 House Bill No. 1046, Section 1, appropriated $375,000 for a state-wide Return to Work Program for individuals who have sustained a brain injury. A contract was awarded to Community Options in August, 2015 to provide services to 50 individuals per month through June 30, 2017. The Return to Work Program is based on the Ohio evidence-based return to work model with the goal of achieving competitive employment through placement and long-term follow through services in the person's community. The core principles include: zero exclusion, consumer preference, rapid job search, employment integration with recovery services, time-unlimited support, personalized benefits planning, and systematic job development.

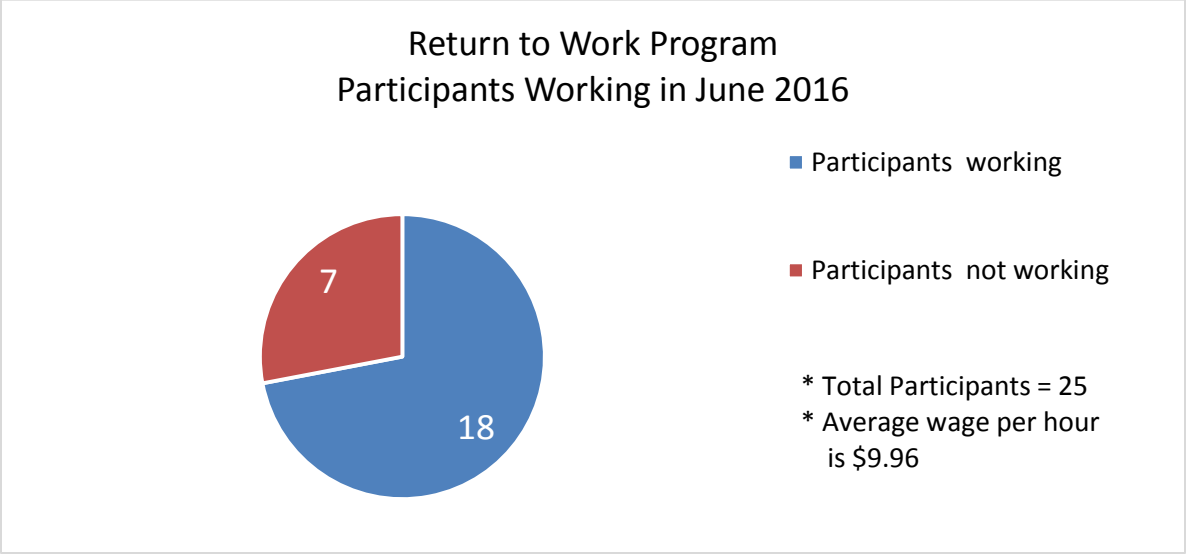
Individuals who enter the Return to Work Program have developed employment readiness skills through the Pre-Vocational Skills Program

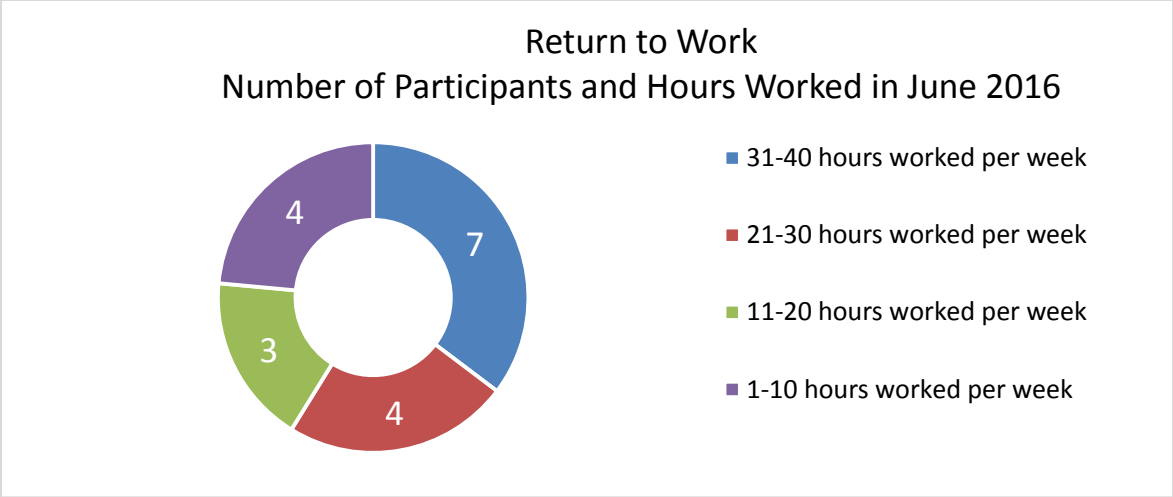
(program of Community Options). The following chart shows the number of individuals served per month in the Return to Work Program.

Individuals in the Return to Work Program per Month

8/15	9/15	10/15	11/15	12/15	1/16	2/16	3/16	4/16	5/16	6/16
6	6	9	14	16	18	25	25	25	25	25

The Return to Work Program has shown positive outcomes as seen in the charts below. Eighteen individuals are currently working earning an average hourly wage of $9.96 and 11 of the 18 are working twenty or more hours per week. The hours for employment are determined based on individual ability, needs, and impact of the brain injury. In addition, 300 employer partnerships have been developed to assist in employment placement.





The increased funding for the Pre-Vocational Skills Program and the new funding from 2015 HB 1046 for the Return to Work Program was adjusted as part of the Department's allotment savings plan. The result was a decrease from 50 to 40 individuals who could be served per month in the Pre-Vocational Skills Program and a decrease from 50 to 25 individuals who could be served per month in the Return to Work Program. Currently there are 12 people on the waiting list for these programs.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.