

Abstract

National Workshop – Personal Assistance Services for Students with Severe Physical Disabilities in STEM and Other Post-Secondary Education

Midwest Alliance in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

June 5-6, 2008

The goal of the NSF Research in Disabilities Education (RDE) program is to “increase the participation and achievement of people with disabilities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and careers.” Consistent with this objective, and the experience and capability of the three institutions working in partnership in the NSF-sponsored Midwest Alliance in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (<http://www.stemmidwest.org>), a specific goal for the activities of the Midwest Alliance has been increasing the numbers of students with severe disabilities in STEM education and careers.

Two realities have emerged from the discourse that has occurred in the Midwest Alliance: 1) It is critical that there be additional exchange and study of the components of post-secondary disability service programs that are essential for Students with Severe Physical Disabilities (SSPD) to succeed and 2) Increasing access to those programmatic components will require significant planning and commitment.

To address these two issues, the Midwest Alliance will be hosting a National Workshop June 5-6, 2008 in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, focused on Personal Assistance Services (PAS) in post-secondary education.

Attendees will include members of the NSF Regional Alliances, post-secondary disability service providers and researchers, representatives from NSF, ED, and NIH, Vocational Rehab, the Veteran’s Administration, and Independent Living Centers. The Summit will last for a day and a half, with the focus on both discussion and developing of a set of recommendations.

We have chosen to consider PAS first among the type of services provided because:

- 1. Unless PAS are adequate and reliable, access to post-secondary education is limited or not available for students with severe physical disabilities (SSPD). In fact, we hypothesize PAS represent the most important factor for students with severe physical disabilities in determining post-secondary education participation.***
- 2. Many SSPD do not possess the requisite knowledge, skills, experience and self-efficacy needed to independently recruit, interview, hire, train, schedule and evaluate the non-familial PAS personnel required to safely and effectively meet all of their PAS needs while attending a postsecondary institution, including their unanticipated or unscheduled PAS needs.***
- 3. The impact that very limited access to PAS has upon the postsecondary enrollment, academic performance and post-graduate career success of SSPD has not been substantially addressed.***

The specific objectives of the Workshop include:

- 1. Assessment of the state of the state of personal assistance services (PAS) for students with severe disabilities in STEM and other post-secondary education**
- 2. To review and assess comprehensive PAS strategies used at Midwest Alliance campuses and elsewhere.**
- 3. To identify policy, fiscal and programmatic barriers that have affected current practice in post-secondary PAS for students with severe physical disabilities**
- 4. To develop specific recommendations to increase opportunity for PAS for SSPD in post-secondary education.**

Prior to the Workshop, background papers will be provided describing research done on PAS in post-secondary education, and details on different PAS strategies. Post-Workshop, a summary document,

including the recommendations that will be developed, will be produced.

Agenda

National Workshop – Personal Assistance Services for Students with Severe Physical Disabilities in STEM and Other Post-Secondary Education

June 5-6, 2008

Agenda:

Thursday, June 5

Objectives for this day:

- 1. Assessment of the state of the state of personal assistance services (PAS) for students with severe disabilities in STEM and other post-secondary education.**
- 2. To review and critique PAS strategies used at Midwest Alliance campuses and elsewhere.**
- 3. To identify policy, fiscal and programmatic barriers that have affected current practice in post-secondary PAS for students with severe physical disabilities.**
- 4. To begin to identify strategic initiatives and actions that can address the barriers identified in 3.**

8:00 AM – Introductions

8:15 AM – Review Agenda, Objectives for the National Workshop (Jay Martin, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Midwest Alliance)

8:30 AM – Assessment of the State of the State for PA services in STEM and other post-secondary education (Norma Stumbo, Midwest Alliance)

9:00 AM – Review of Strategies for PA Services I (Brad Hedrick, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

9:30 AM – Break

9:45 AM – Review of Strategies for PA Services II (Panel)

10:15 AM - Review of Strategies for PA Services III (Panel)

10:45 AM – Small Groups – Discussion of State of the State, Contrast Strategy Models

11:45 AM - Report to Large Groups

NOON – Lunch @ Hotel - Student Panel

1:00 PM – Summary of Small Group Discussions

1:15 PM – Small Groups – Identification of Specific Barriers Affecting Current Practice in PAS services

2:00 PM – Large Group Discussion on Barriers

2:45 PM – Break

3:00 PM – Identification of Strategic Initiatives and Actions – Small Groups – Again by Policy, Fiscal Issues, and Programmatic

4:15 PM – Large Group Discussion of Initial Ideas for Initiatives and Actions

5:00 PM – Adjourn

Friday, June 6

Objectives for this day:

To finalize specific findings and recommendations at the local and/or campus level, the State level, and the National level, that would be required to significantly change current practice in PAS services in post-secondary education.

Small teams:

8:00 AM – Develop recommendations for finalizing action plans – Small teams formed from list of strategic initiatives and actions identified

10:00 AM – Small groups make recommendations to complete team

11:00 AM – Generation of Recommendations

12:30 PM - Adjourn

Registration

Please go to:

<https://webtools.uiuc.edu/survey/Secure?id=2228931>