

# Supporting Families Community of Practice Evaluation

## Maryland 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 Charting the LifeCourse (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

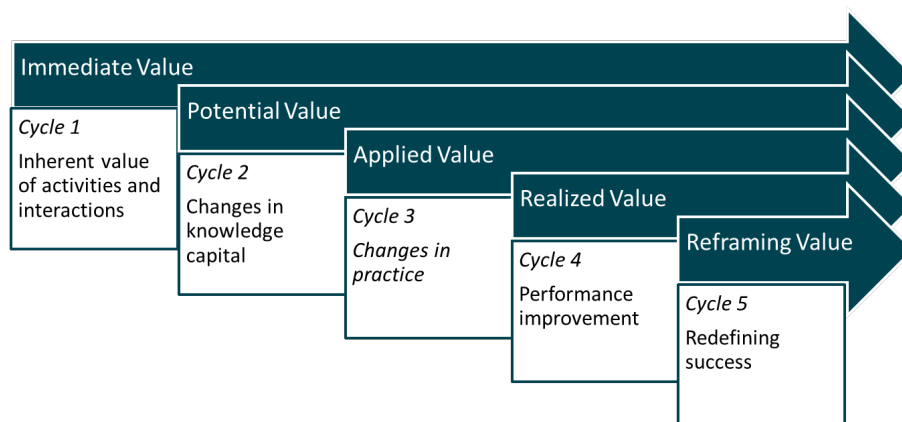
Group One	Group Two	Group Three
<p><b>The six original CoP states:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connecticut</li> <li>▪ District of Columbia</li> <li>▪ Missouri (mentor state)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oklahoma</li> <li>▪ Tennessee</li> <li>▪ Washington</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 Maryland CoP.

### Exhibit 3. Value Cycle Framework

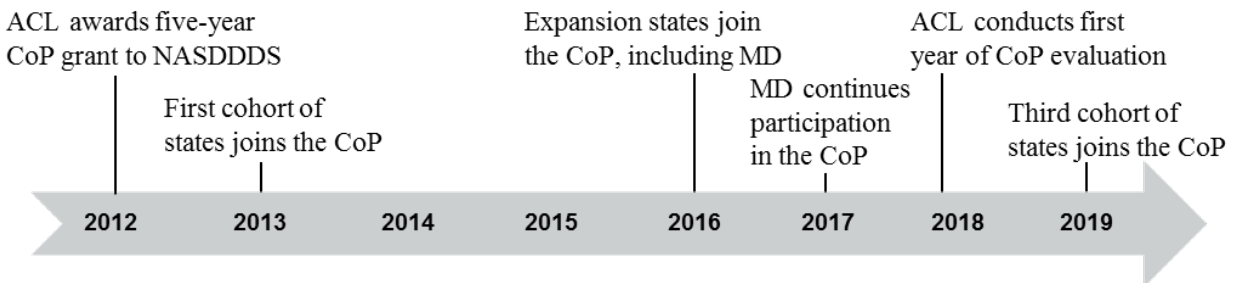


<sup>2</sup> Wenger, E., Trayner, B., and de Laat, M. (2011). Promoting and Assessing Value Creation in Communities and Networks: A Conceptual Framework. Rapport 18, Ruud de Moor Centrum, Open University of the Netherlands.

## A Look into Maryland's Community of Practice

Maryland (MD) is one of the expansion states that joined the National Supporting Families CoP in 2016. The MD CoP is a collaboration between the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), the MD Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) and the Arc MD. The timeline below (Exhibit 4) provides detailed information about MD's participation in the CoP over time.

**Exhibit 4. Timeline of Maryland'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 DDA in 2016 was 22,159. Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) recipients include people with I/DD who receive Medicaid or State-funded supports and services. In 2016, 8% of 22,159 LTSS recipients in MD lived at home with a family member. The report also shows annual Medicaid Waiver expenditures for recipients with I/DD, which amounted to \$60,582 per recipient in 2016.<sup>3</sup>

Understanding the current state of I/DD services and supports in MD 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 MD 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 Connecticut's CoP during evaluation year one:

- DDA renewed its Community Pathways Waiver guided by the CtLC framework and added three new services: Family Caregiver Training and Empowerment; Family Peer Mentoring Support; and Participant Education, Training, and Advocacy Supports.
- DDA launched two new waivers—the Family Supports Waiver and the Community Supports Waiver—that include CtLC language to ensure context, purpose, and consistency. With these new waivers, DDA moved 800 people off the waiting list and into services.
- DDA established a Family Supports Steering Committee (composed of families) to inform leadership of needed family supports and services.

<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.

MD’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 MD’s achievements from evaluation year one.

**Exhibit 5. Maryland’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>▪ In 2018, MD launched six local CoPs in addition to three pre-existing groups, and has the intention of establishing 15 more. Local CoPs meet regularly and serve a variety of roles: peer-to-peer supports and information exchange, broad stakeholder exchange, and CtLC strategy application.</li> <li>▪ DDA, the DD Council, and the Arc MD collaboratively support the activities of the MD CoP through the provision of funding, staffing and other resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 2: Potential Value</b> <i>Changes in Knowledge Capital</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MD CoP created and disseminated its Information Folder titled <i>Strategies for the Good Life: Supporting Families in Maryland</i>.</li> <li>▪ The MD State Department of Education introduced CtLC to families through its Family Resource Centers and during transition planning. The Parents’ Place of MD (PPMD) also utilizes CtLC in Transition Training for Parents.</li> <li>▪ The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region (Arc NCR) pairs the CtLC tools with their employment certification training for a holistic view of each individual (e.g., their skills, preferences, things they do not like, and work readiness).</li> <li>▪ The DD Council provided funding to the Arc MD to launch and administer Partners in Policymaking.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 3: Applied Value</b> <i>Changes in Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DDA embedded the CtLC framework, language, and tools into waivers, the Employment First initiative, case manager guide, and LTSS database.</li> <li>▪ The DD Council launched its #ExpectationsMatter, #ExpectAbility” Campaign to change expectations of what individuals with I/DD can accomplish in education, employment, and community living.</li> <li>▪ The Arc MD launched MD’s Parent 2 Parent (P2P) chapter.</li> <li>▪ The Arc NCR embedded CtLC into multiple organization areas, including recruitment and hiring practices. Other providers have increased interest in the Arc’s work in person-centered planning.</li> <li>▪ In partnership with DDA and the Arc MD, the Arc NCR supports a new staffing position that provides more time dedicated to CoP activities.</li> <li>▪ The CoP is working with a variety of stakeholders—Towson University Department of Special Education, MD Center for Developmental Disabilities, the Coordinating Center, MD State Department of Education, and Parents’ Place of MD—to embed the CtLC in curricula, policies, or programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 4: Realized Value</b> <i>Performance Improvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DDA’s efforts to support families are becoming increasingly noteworthy. Families report that DDA recognizes their needs.</li> <li>▪ Families report that the Arc NCR increases access to lasting employment.</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle 5: Reframed Value</b> <i>Redefining Success</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As a result of the MD CoP and CtLC framework, involved agencies and organizations have and continue to change their approaches to families and business practices.</li> </ul>