

## **Alaska Training Cooperative (AKTC)/Senior and Disabilities (SDS) Direct Support Professional (DSP) Training/Certification Pilot General Information, Frequently Asked Questions, and Additional Resources**

### **Project Background and General Information:**

- Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS), State of Alaska received funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act Section 9817 enhanced federal medical assistance percentage opportunity in early March 2022.
  - SDS approached UAA/CHD/AKTC in mid-March, 2022 to develop an education/training and certification program/pilot for the DSP workforce.
    - After meeting with stakeholder groups regarding a Pilot design, these identified priorities centered on:
      - Tuition free education/training for agencies and DSPs;
      - Incentive payments to DSP and Agencies;
      - Reimbursement/recognition of the 'cost' to agencies when DSPs are not providing Medicaid reimbursable services.
  - The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) was selected as the accrediting entity for this Pilot:
    - NADSP has 15 Competency Areas, which coincide with CMS Core Competencies.
    - NADSP has 64 Skill Standards, which coincide with CMS Core Competencies.
    - NADSP has an E-Badge Academy, with accredited education requirements.
    - NADSP has a three-tiered national DSP Certification based on accredited education requirements and demonstration of core competency skills.
  - AKTC has received provisional accreditation with the NADSP, effective April 25, 2022
    - AKTC has identified 100+ hours of current education/training (approximately 30 courses) to submit for full accreditation and based on the Jan., 2020 DSP Career Training Pathway Matrix developed from the former statewide DSP Workforce Workgroup (2017-2020).
      - See Section II, NADSP Accreditation Application.
      - This will meet the 100 hour education/training requirement for DSPs in the Pilot to move to DSP I, II, III certification with the NASDP.
      - The AK Core Competencies are also being “cross walked” with the NADSP 15 Competency areas.

AKTC/SDS will continue to support the Agency and DSPs involved in the Pilot. Timelines are determined based on project fiscal year. AKTC/SDS will work to the best of their abilities to accommodate difficult timelines.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **How does this program intersect with the Alaska Primary Care Association (APCA), Department of Labor (DOL) DSP Apprenticeship?**

The APCA/DOL DSP Apprenticeship is a federally designated apprenticeship program through the Department of Labor and requires an agency to provide regularly scheduled hourly salary/wage increases to DSP's participating in a DOL apprenticeship.

The AKTC/SDS DSP Training/Certification Pilot is funded through the one-time federal American Rescue Plan Act Section 9817 enhanced federal medical assistance percentage opportunity funds. The goal of both programs is to provide a well-trained/educated and professional DSP workforce. Selected agencies participating in the DSP Certification Pilot program are not required to increase wages/salaries of the DSP's earning NADSP certification levels over the next two years.

### **How will this training be offered?**

AKTC will be offering education/training as 'On Demand' or anytime training and 'Distance Delivered' through a ZOOM platform. AKTC/SDS recognized that DSPs work different shifts and courses will be scheduled with this in mind. The focus is to provide a minimum of 10 hours of training per month between September 2022 – June 2023 for a total of 100 hours.

AKTC will sponsor, at no cost to the selected DSP or their Agency, a NADSP E-Badge Academy seat. As DSPs complete their accredited education/training, DSPs will upload their transcripts to the NADSP and receive credit in the completion of their E-Badges.

### **How will training access funds/incentives be paid and what are the expectations of the Pilot?**

Training access funds/incentives will be paid to the Agency and DSP on a quarterly basis as the DSP successfully completes the NADSP E-Badge Academy badges or on achievement of NADSP Certification. Agencies are responsible for the disbursement of these funds to the DSP which meet federal payroll requirements.

### **What is the payback expectation for the agency or staff if they do not complete the program?**

When a DSP earns their training access fund/incentive and have completed the specific training requirements for NADSP E-Academy Badges, the agency will then invoice (quarterly) for the earned incentives and will receive these funds and their Agency's payment via check from UAA. A contract between the DSP pilot approved agency and UAA will outline the invoicing process.

AKTC/SDS recognize that life and opportunities occur. Our goal is for DSPs to complete as much training/certification as possible through their employment at their agency to improve the level of services provide and to professionalize our workforce.

Training access funds/incentives are assigned to the Agency and not the DSP. If a DSP leaves employment those funds remain designated to the Agency.

### **Are Agencies or interested DSPs able to look at the curriculum/competency areas that would be taught during the first year?**

AKTC is in the process of identifying 100+ hours of training for accreditation through the NADSP. Additionally, as mentioned above under page 1 General Information, the AKTC is using the Jan., 2020 DSP Career Training Pathway Matrix developed from the former statewide DSP Workforce Workgroup (2017-2020) to identify the content to be used in the 100+ hours of education/training.

### **Who is the contact person at AKTC for questions regarding the Pilot?**

Betsy Chivers, Training Coordinator with the AKTC is the contact person for the Pilot. To reach Betsy quickly contact her by email to [bchivers@alaska.edu](mailto:bchivers@alaska.edu) or [betsy@alaskachd.org](mailto:betsy@alaskachd.org). Betsy's office number is 907-264-6233. Please note this work number is relayed by email to Betsy as she continues to work from home. Lisa Cauble, Training Director, UAA Center For Human Development is assisting with leading the DSP Certification Pilot project ([llcauble@alaska.edu](mailto:llcauble@alaska.edu)).

### **Are there any marketing materials/reference materials available to the agency and staff that we can share with DSPs interested in this program?**

The NADSP has a full resource of materials available on their website regarding their E-Badge Academy and Certification program. Resources are available at, <https://nadsp.org/resources/>. See the Additional Resources and Information Section of this document.

## Is the National Certificate in Employment Services (NCES) part of the accredited training offered?

NCES training is offered through the UAA Center for Human Development and is part of a national certification through the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE). As the certifying entity, ACRE would need to apply to have their training accredited through the NADSP in their E-Badge Academy.

## What training/education can be used for accreditation in this Pilot?

The AKTC has been granted provisional accreditation from NADSP. Use this link to confirm current accredited training/education curricula through the NADSP, <https://nadsp.org/services/accredited-education/>.

### Historical Look at DSP Core Competencies:

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Road Map of Core Competencies for the Direct Service Workforce, Phase I: Direct Service Worker Competency Inventory, May 31, 2011 – **included the AK Core Competencies, page 4.** CMS identified the ‘Workforce Sector’ they include as Aging, Intellectual and Development Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Behavioral Health
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Road Map of Core Competencies for the Direct Service Workforce, Phase II: Direct Service Worker Competency Inventory, December 19, 2011, **included AK Core Competencies**, Table 2: Description of Competency Sets Applied in the Content Analysis, page 12
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Road Map of Core Competencies for the Direct Service Workforce, Phase IIIA: Stakeholder Consensus, August 5, 2013
- National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) has ‘cross walked’ their Core Competencies with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- **The AK Core Competencies are also being “cross walked” with the NADSP 15 Competency areas to insure consistency.**

## **Additional Resources and Information:**

Alaska Core Competencies for Direct Care Workers in the Health and Human Services, Version 1.1, February 2016, <http://files.aktc.org/ACC%202016%20Booklet.pdf>

Alaskan Core Competencies: Phase II Report on Development Process, October 2009, [https://annapoliscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2B\\_the-alaskan-core-competencies-phase-ii-report.pdf](https://annapoliscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2B_the-alaskan-core-competencies-phase-ii-report.pdf)

CMS, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Phase I and II of the Road Map of Core Competencies for the Direct Service Workforce, May 31, 2011, <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/dsw-competency-road-map-phases-i-and-ii.pdf>

CMS, Phase IIIA: Stakeholder Consensus of the Road Map of Core Competencies for the Direct Service Workforce, August 5, 2013, <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/dsw-road-map-phase-iii.pdf>

CMS, Direct Service Workforce Core Competencies, December 2013, <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/dsw-core-competencies-final-set-2014.pdf>

CMS, Direct Service Workforce Training Resources Toolkit, December 2104, <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/dsw-core-competencies-training-toolkit-december-2014.pdf>

NADSP, National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals, <https://nadsp.org/about-us/>

NADSP, Accreditation Application Guidebook, February 2014, [https://nadsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NADSP\\_Accreditation.pdf](https://nadsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NADSP_Accreditation.pdf) Use this resource to review the NADSP Competency Areas and NADS Skill Standards that will correlate to the accredited training offered by AKTC. NOTE: Not all skill standards need to be addressed for DSP Certification. (pages 35 – 50)

NADSP, Certification, <https://nadsp.org/services/certification/>



NADSP, Code of Ethics – <https://nadsp.org/resources/the-nadsp-code-of-ethics/>

NADSP, Competency Areas – <https://nadsp.org/resources/the-nadsp-competency-areas/>

NADSP, E-Badge Academy, <https://nadsp.org/services/the-nadsp-e-badge-academy/>

NADSP, Resources, <https://nadsp.org/resources/>