



CHAPTER SUMMARY

Strengthening Families' Economic Wellbeing: Lessons from Connecticut's Outcomes Rate Card

/ Beth Bye

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) develops programs to help low-income families care for children from birth until grade school and improve their economic well-being. One of the OEC's key programs provides home visits to families. To align service providers' interests with the success of the families served by the program, the OEC created an outcomes rate card system, including bonus funding for helping parents achieve high-quality workforce outcomes.

Challenges

New parents want to provide high-quality care for their children and economic stability for their family, but there can be a lack of coordination between all publicly funded resources across government programs. Additionally, traditional government contracts distribute funding based on services rendered rather than results achieved. For example, OEC previously paid home visiting providers based on the number of staff hired rather than the number of families that actually received home visiting services.

Over the past six years, we have learned much about the home visiting system through the rate card. These lessons include the necessary resources and time needed to execute an initiative that ties payment to performance — from design to implementation to action.

Opportunities

The OEC's outcomes rate card initiative directs funding toward the best ways to set up families for success and evaluates whether success has been achieved. Through its rate cards, the OEC is funding outcomes, not inputs.

Workforce Realigned, Vol. II

This is a summary of the full chapter included in Workforce Realigned, Volume II available at workforcerealigned.org/chapters/reflecting-on-the-connecticut-rate-card-to-strengthen-families-economic-well-being/.



Rate cards are a set of metrics specifying desired outcomes and the amount of payment for each metric achieved. Gathering data on criteria such as obtaining a quality job, stable housing, or having a healthy birthing experience allows government entities (including the OEC) to discuss the successes and challenges of different programs and to use the rate card data to improve outcomes.

RATE CARD ACHIEVEMENT RATES FROM JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024

Metric	July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
Key Population Enrollment	58% 710 achievements out of 1,230 eligible	55% 730 out of 1,320	54% 750 out of 1,390
Prenatal Enrollment	32% 390 out of 1,240	38% 500 out of 1,330	34% 470 out of 1,400
Caregiver Education/ Training or Employment	43% 2,700 out of 6,340	43% 3,230 out of 7,460	41% 3,580 out of 8,770
Prenatal and Postpartum Care	39% 60 out of 160	51% 180 out of 340	57% 220 out of 400

Findings and Next Steps

- The rate cards provide a much better understanding of state-level performance on systemwide priorities. For example, some key metrics did not improve in this test, suggesting that home visits alone are not enough to enhance families’ economic security.
- Improvement of families’ financial security requires coordinated effort across various government agencies. To strengthen its programs, the OEC will consult community participants, accompany each metric with a performance standard, increase staff support, and align internal teams with corresponding accountability mechanisms.

