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UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

NTIDE – LUNCH & LEARN WEBCAST

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>> Hello, and welcome everybody to the national trends in disability employment or nTIDE lunch and learn series. A few housekeeping items before we begin. This webinar is being recorded. We will post an archive of each webinar each month on our website at www.research on disability.org/nTIDE. This site will provide copies of the presentations, the speakers' bios, full transcripts and other valuable resources.

>> As an attendee of this webinar you are a viewer.

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>> Speakers will review these questions and provide answers during the last section of the webinar.

>> Some questions may be answered directly in the Q&A box.

>> If you have any questions following this recording, please contact us at disability.statistics @unh.edu. Or toll free at 866‑538‑9 a 21 for more information.

>> Thanks for joining us.

>> Enjoy today's webinar.

>> Hi, everybody. This is Andrew Houtenville from the University of New Hampshire. Welcome. Just so you know we recently started to include ASL interpretation. If you are ‑‑ want to see the interpreter and the speakers, we recommend joining from a computer rather than a phone or a tablet. Also you can go to gallery view, if you do gallery view, you can actually adjust the size of the number of speakers you can see. So you could see the ASL interpreter and me and get all of the action.

So just some Zoom tips. Be sure you can change ‑‑ so you know you can change your audio settings. You can click on the up arrow and select from whether you have a head phone or speakers. There is also closed captioning as well as ASL. So closed captioning can access by clicking on the closed captioning button and you can choose to see subtitles or you can view a scroll of the full text.

An update before we start with the statistics for the month. We have announced in previous episodes that our annual disability statistics conference and our state of the science conference on disability statistics. We announce that would be March 10 and 11. Unfortunately due to Omicron and related concerns about hospital capacity, we will be determining a new date, likely in early October. Again, we will maintain the hybrid event. We are going to maintain the hybrid event from where we have a live web cast from the ‑‑ holiday in capitol with an in‑person audience. From March 10 and 11, we will still release the disability statistics compendium and the annual report on Americans with disabilities, but we are going to send out a new thing about ‑‑ we will do just a lunchtime presentation on the 10th and then replicate that presentation on the 11th so people can join in on either day. So that's just an update.

I noticed a couple of other conferences that people may be involved in have been shifted as well. Unfortunately, conferences scheduled for this spring are starting to be moved.

So COVID update, I'm joined by John O'Neill and also Denise Rozell from AUCD may chime in about legislative things. So about today's web casts, it's a joint effort of the United States ‑‑ the University of New Hampshire Kessler Foundation, AUCD, Association of The university center on disability. This is special episode that we talk about the special implications due to COVID. I have a sneak preview of another report we are working on so stay tuned for that.

Let's see how many people are here. So 72 of you will get a sneak preview.

So we will do introductions and we will talk about some of the numbers that we actually can't do in the first nTIDE we do the a the beginning of the month, the first Friday, because we don't have the raw data and give the raw data a couple of weeks later and we use that to generate the numbers you will see today. Then we will open it up to question and answers, good questions, okay answers, at 12:35, around there.

So let's look at the employment trends. This is what we talked about on the first Friday. We are basically looking at the great recession when we look at this trend. Slow recovery, some good news, narrowing of the employment gap. COVID lockdown hits and then recovery and good news after that. Some good news.

So you may have seen this before. This is the ‑‑ let's see ‑‑ yup. This is before December and then adding in December there is a slight rise for people without disabilities and a decline for people with disabilities. You know, after so many months of increase, we are kind of Destined to have a destined to the reversion to the mean trend. I'm not surprised to see a little bit of it down, but this could be foreshadowing a little bit of Omicron. This is before Omicron. This is basically the second week in December. So Omicron hadn't really started. There was some softening ‑‑ some indication actually in the northeast at that point.

So one thing to note is that this is a recovery. It's ‑‑ even though it went down this is now six percent higher than pre‑pandemic level. Whereas people without disabilities up above have not fully recovered from the beginning of the pandemic lockdown period.

Another thing to note is that this is now the fourth month that we spent above the past historic high. It's historic because people with disabilities, there wasn't great data on people with disabilities before September 2008. So really what this is showing is that not only are people with disabilities recovering from the lockdown, but also from its previous highs. This was great news.

We also look at the labor force participation which is not just employed but also to be in the labor force you have to be either employed, looking for work or on temporary layoff and we will talk more about temporary layoff later.

. So let's put the whole chart together. The labor force participation went up ‑‑ yeah, went up last month. So with employment going down and labor force participation going up, that means basically one thing has happened. That more people are coming back into the labor force because it's not more people necessarily getting jobs, but more people with disabilities are coming back into the labor force. And one thing to note is that people with disabilities have recovered from the pre‑pandemic and never really left. Never really left the labor force. And are coming back at rates above the pre‑pandemic level. And to me we can chat afterwards about the potential hypothesises of what might have ‑‑ hypothesis of what might have happened. Labor force participation was relatively flat over 2019‑20 and into 21. Began to rise more recently. So this is above October 2020. We are not quite above September of 2008 but we are getting close.

Again, people without disabilities haven't really recovered. They had a bigger decline, sharper decline during the lockdown period, but also that could be due to people with relatively ‑‑ people with disabilities being in more essential jobs. There is some research in that area. Again, people without disabilities really haven't recovered fully from the pandemic with regard to labor force participation.

So let's take a closer look on unemployment. This is ‑‑ all of the previous data is data that we scrape from the web from the BLS, bureau of labor statistics reports. Now we are going to look at the number unemployed. The number unemployed. So to be unemployed you have to either be looking for work or on temporary layoff. So not working, looking for work or on temporary layoff. And we can see the trend before December. We can see the trend and we started to call this kind of a new normal. That there is a huge spike in unemployment during the lockdown period, and then that is largely due to temporary layoff. We will talk about that a little later. Then there is a big recovery as you think about May, June, July as the lockdown stops and people are getting more used to having PPE. We started having mask supplies increase, places start putting in Plexiglas, social distancing norms are in place and then we have a long stretch up until relatively recently just as bouncing around kind of this level of say 600,000, 550,000 people with disabilities unemployed versus previous trends of being around 450,000.

There is this concern there was had new normal, but let's snap in January and so January ‑‑ sorry, December. We are a little ways behind. December, again, this reflects the second week in December so this is just before the holidays. This is Omicron is taking effect at this point. There is a slight increase, but in the number unemployed. So 7,000. I can't do math. So 9,000. Just kind of statistically we are expected to bounce around a little bit. I wouldn't say this is an increase or decrease but it seems to be holding steady.

Let's snap in the percent looking for work. So the total height of this mountain chart is the number unemployed. The darker green at the bottom area is looking for work. The percentage kind of splitting the unemployed into two groups. On temporary layoff which is the top part and looking for work which is the bottom part. What you see is unemployment, if you look at the bottom part of the mountain, unemployment is increasing for the most part during the pandemic. Layoff is really increasing at the beginning of the pandemic. But kind of declining. The width of this lighter green area is declining as the pandemic goes until relatively recently. So let's put in the percentages that are being talked about here. So we are talking about 73% of unemployed people are on temporary layoff at the ‑‑ during the lockdown in April of 2020.

By say the beginning of last year, the beginning of 2020, it's at around 20%. As recent as October of this ‑‑ of 2021, it was at 4%. However in November and December it started to widen where 20% of the unemployed are ‑‑ sorry, 12% of the unemployed are on temporary layoff. Temporary layoff is better than being unemployed because you have some connection to your firm and you can think about Omicron and particularly with the firm seem to be shutting down temporarily because of capacity issues. So many people are out sick they shut down the whole operation. My son works at a store and they shut down the store for a week because too many people had COVID and that was Omicron.

So employment is kind ‑‑ unemployment ‑‑ sorry, the percent looking for work is still declining a little bit. So we are really seeing this as sort of a layoff time. If you asked me what to expect in January, would expect pretty much the same. Maybe a little bit of rise on the total number of unemployed but a greater percentage of that being from people who are on temporary layoff.

Let's talk about that new normal, that kind of ‑‑ that kind of dialogue we had before. So actually I see that there is some good news here other than Omicron if you ignore Omicron in the increase to 12% in the percentage of unemployed who are on temporary layoff, we spent the last ‑‑ you know this is not a statistical line that you see going kind of straight across the screen at a new normal level. I just snapped it in visually. We spent the last four months below kind of this perhaps new normal. And so that's a good sign, I think. We are still not at the levels of say below the levels pre‑pandemic, but there is progress there.

I'm going to show you people without disabilities now. We are looking at a chart with a blue mountain in it that's split in half. Again, similar story. You see a decline in ‑‑ you see a sharp rise in percent on temporary layoff and then a decline, a steady decline. Now their decline is more steady. I would not call it a new normal. There is just a steady decline since the start of the pandemic. The number unemployed are below. Now that could be due to the fact that there are now people out of the labor force as we saw on previous charts. That this number, this mountain gets smaller if people leave the labor force. So this is not ‑‑ unemployment is not really the percent that are not working. It's a percent who are temp ‑‑ on temporary layoff or actively looking for work. Unemployment is actually a measure of kind of the tightness of the labor work at how many people are out in the labor market potentially seeking new work or on layoff.

Let's see, what's next. Oh, the special preview. Okay. Special preview. Let's see, let's see.

So Kessler Foundation and the group are putting together a year end report. We haven't done a year end report in a couple of years because COVID has been kind of throwing everything up in the air statistically and what we need to be telling folks what the messages we are sending out. We want to do a year end review basically and end of year report. So we got to wait for all of the data to come in. We will be releasing our press release report and perhaps some charts and info graphics on this on 2022. I can never say that right. 2022. We will release a report at the next first Friday end time. The beginning of February. I want to give you a sneak preview because you are all of the die hards that come to the mid‑month.

So this is actually a screenshot of my Excel screen.

So people with disabilities, this is again the employment to population ratio to the percentage who are employed by disability status over the last three years. You can see the pandemic. So 2029 ‑‑ sorry. 2019 is at 30.9. You see a decline to 29.1 in 2020. And then an increase to 31.3. In summary, people with disabilities have recovered from the pre‑pan ‑‑ from the pandemic related slowdown and pass ‑‑ are now passed pre‑pandemic levels with regard to the percentage employed. That's not so for people without disabilities who have yet to regain levels of employment that they saw prior to the pandemic. So they were at 74.6. And delta at 70.0 and now they just reached 72.5.

So you might say this looks ‑‑ this doesn't look huge. It's almost 2 percentage point decline if I'm doing my math correctly. It's an average monthly and so the big declines during lockdown and post lockdown period, those declines are kind of measured out and they are also ‑‑ there are three months of the pre‑pandemic in 2020. The dip in this chart is a bit deceiving because it's kind of washing out a little bit.

So that's where we stand with employment for the three years. Now looking at labor force participation, we basically see the same story that we talked about before and then in fact it's amazing. It comes out to zero change from 2019 to 2020. And that's the story of resilience that people with disabilities, stay in the labor market even though unemployment went up, you saw that mountain chart, right? Even though unemployment went up, people with disabilities stayed engaged. Now this isn't following the same people over time. Some people might have left the labor market but more came back in or at least it all stayed the same on net.

So it stayed the same labor force participation rate stayed the same for people with disabilities at 33.6% for both 2020 and 2019. It's actually gone up to 35.1% which is almost at the great recession previous historic high of 35.2% in 2009.

So for people without disabilities, again, they experienced a decline unlike people with disabilities. There was a bigger decline ‑‑ there was a decline in labor force participation. And it really hasn't recovered to its 2019 level, 2020. This is a nice way of kind of describing that trend but just with ‑‑ okay, so six statistics here and 12 statistics rather than a big line chart. So we will put out a report. I may try to do some other stats before we release the year end. I always have a Hankering to do things by disability type by gender and by race ethnicity. Might be able to put some of those in the year end report, too.

I am going to turn it over to John so logistically you can ask questions in the ‑‑ on Zoom with the Zoom bar by hitting the button. Slides are going to be archived once we are done and also the video recording are archived on research on disability/home/nTIDE and fill out a feedback form to see certain statistics or have question about something you can send us feedback, too. John, go ahead. Take it away.

>> There is that question, actually, in the question and answer about can we create numbers separating folks with IDD and physical disabilities? You mentioned that you might get to that. That would be nice.

>> Yeah, the current population survey which is the underlying data sources ask six questions and those ‑‑ anybody that answers at least one of those six questions affirmatively are defined by the analysts as having a disability. Experiencing disability. IDD itself, we've done research with this, there is a question on cognition. Do you have difficulty learning, remembering or concentrating because of physical, mental or emotional condition? The IDD crowd is assumed in that population. Now that population also includes people with psychiatric disabilities potentially and people with learning disabilities. So it's really very hard to tease out IDD population from that cognitive difficulty question. Physical disability, there is a mobility or ambulatory related question about walking and climbing difficulty, climbing and walking stairs. So we can do separate statistics but IDD itself has always been a particular challenge because there is ‑‑ well, there is a whole report on data collection that I could share, I think, if I could track it down. In any event ...

>> Another comment in terms of the temporary layoff jumped up a bit and last month. And I'm in touch ‑‑ stay in touch with our friends at job path in New York City and one of the things that was happening certainly the theater district in the city is a big sector and theaters were beginning to open up again and folks who had jobs in the theaters were coming back but with the rise of Omicron there was ‑‑ or has been a rise in people being laid off again. It's also happening I think in some of the office settings, particularly the larger law firms. They were beginning to come back and now ‑‑

>> Back home.

>> They are back home, yeah.

>> Job path have been seeing positive return to work and re‑engaging in the theater district as you say. The legal industry in southern Manhattan is just massive in terms of employment. So you are saying that Omicron is really pulling a lot of that back. Yeah.

So let's see. There is a really cool question. Aaron asks, the 2020 results have problems because of difficulty sampling during the recession. Do you know if this is true for the CPS? If so, how much additional caution should be used by making inferences from using the CPS?

Yes, exactly. Great question.

So for folks who don't know the American community survey is an annual survey conducted by the census bureau. It's conducted using many of the same methods that are used for the current population survey. So the same interviewers, the same ‑‑ the CPS is sponsored by the bureau of labor statistics but conducted by the census bureau. A lot of the same interviewers and staff work on both. They both use the same sampling method, sampling frame at least. And during the recession there were a ‑‑ or during the recession. During the lockdown and during COVID in general, there was a really big issue with a couple of things. One is their staff is locked down. I'm sure with Omicron their staff is going to be affected by increased need to quarantine. Both the ACS and the CPS ‑‑ the ACS, they draw sample ‑‑ they draw a sample every month from something called the master address file of the United States. So every address that has a residence in it including small group homes are sampled every month.

The CPS is similar, but they add a new ‑‑ one‑eighth of the sample retires from being followed and a new one‑eighth come in. So it's called month‑end sample. And the CPS had a hard time like the ACS getting a sample in those months either because of staff issues, right? Staff being either locked down or quarantined or what have you, and having respondents. Having people respond. Be able to respond. Some of the samples were ‑‑ I just talked to some folks at census the other day, I talked to people and we hoped to have people at the conference to talk more.

So that's one thing.

So we are hoping to get more information. The question about how much impact these things have on the results whether the results you see and the trends you see are real versus an artifact, some of the movement in the trend lines could be artifacts of the sampling procedures, that's still to be determined both for the ACS and CPS. The CPS, it's my understanding, is less of a concern from the ACS because the ACS monthly sampling is regional. It's really systematic. Whereas the CPS is less.

So any given month end sample is not geographically different than any other month‑end sample. And that's my understanding, at least. And another reason I have more confidence in the CPS data is that I've done month‑end sample. I looked at all of these trends by month‑end sample. So people who are brand‑new versus people who are say eight months in, their eighth month, and the trends lines look for the same for month‑end sample. I would think that anywhere ‑‑ the census bureau, ACS bureau are looking at CPS. Everybody is looking to kind of compare the two and particularly the month‑end sample variable and some other administrative variables within the data survey to see if they have an effect.

From what I could garner from the models I ran, there is no major impact based on month end sample. That doesn't mean I still don't have caution. It just lends a little bit of comfort in reviewing these. So that's one thing. And I continue to try to be in touch with the folks at census who are looking at this stuff. To the degree of caution, we should label to all of these, particularly when I start breaking things down by disability type. There is a concern both with the ACS and by implication the CPS that it really depends on who was affected. So if I was including 65 and older, I would be much more concerned because people over age 65, at least the beginning of the pandemic, were much more likely to be influenced. So I've given this a lot of thought. I think a certain degree of caution should be used.

Doing trend lines is easier because some of this stuff ‑‑ well, not really. I hope that answers your question. I hope that didn't bore everybody. I find it really fascinating.

TBI, yeah, so TBI, TBI may also fall into the cognitive difficulty group. I don't think I ever asked TBI questions. Sometimes when I have a survey out, I ask the six questions but I also ask more detailed and any other condition. I haven't seen TBI population come up. Again, the TBI and IDD populations relative to the size of psychiatric disability and/or learning disability are really quite slow. And sometimes hard to detect in random or representative surveys.

Industry and occupation, the industry and occupation variables are available in the monthly CPS. I haven't used them in a long time but there is the possibility to do ‑‑ I wouldn't say monthly trends, but the annual average trends, I would look to the annual average statistics that the BLS puts out and kind of see what industry and occupations they group together.

Let's see, any other questions? John, do you see any ACS ‑‑

>> The one thing I do see is across the questions there seems to be a real appetite for breaking down the statistics and one question from Joanne was to break down the statistics by disability type, age groups, race, ethnicity, gender, all very important, but difficult to do.

>> Sample size is an issue even with the annual averages. You know, we used to run these annual average estimates for CDC for ‑‑ what is it called? The ‑‑ healthy people 2020. We used to do all of these break downs for employment to population ratio and the unemployment rate. Someone else is running them for them now. I have a dream of ‑‑ I love doing these estimates. We will be doing industry and occupation as part of a NIASH project. Karl our mentee who is on the calls she and I and Lou Yang, a new person here, an epidemiologist we just hired. We will look at industry and occupation and disability status in recognition of people with disabilities and workers with disabilities being a potentially vulnerable group of workers when it comes to occupational safety and health. You know, this is part of a new effort by NIASH to look at people with disabilities.

Karla just put in a thing. Excited to be part of this new work. Yes, Karla, I'm excited to work with you and NIASH and Lou as well.

Karla works at UNH so that's kind of a plug. If you hear her say anything good, you know to take it with a grain of salt.

Before I say other stuff, John, Denise, do you have any other thoughts?

>> I don't at this point.

>> Okay.

>> I don't on that particular topic. I would ‑‑ you know me, I'm the policy person and since ‑‑

>> The policy.

>> Since I got an audience in the middle of the month I will say two things if I can. The first one is if you have been reading the news you know that voting bills have gone down at least for now. But what that means is they may pick up build back better again ‑‑

>> Again?

>> Right. And so ‑‑ and some pieces of it or a smaller version of it or something. So for those of you who are following build back better, continuing to talk about the importance of home and community based services is still important. So keep educating people about why those are important so we can try and have that money should build back better go anywhere we can have that money in the bill.

And then the other one, I'm looking for ‑‑ I pulled it up. The other one, I have been flagging for you guys as we hear things in states about 14c, the sub minimum wage certificates. Piece of good news, North Carolina just reached a settlement to do away with their 14 ‑‑ to phase out their 14c programs paying sub minimum wage to people with disabilities within five years. And as of ‑‑ there will be no new certificates issued in North Carolina after July 1 this year. So that's another big deal for folks with disabilities who are following the employment world and it's a phaseout which also I think for some people is really important. And additionally, another reason to talk about build back better because remember there is money in there to also have with phaseouts of 14c. Not distinction, but some money to go to states to help providers move to phase out 14c.

When you add that to the news we had this year on certainly on Delaware, California and Illinois, that's a nice move forward. I just wanted to share that because I'm pretty excited about it. There we go!

>> Thank you.

>> Denise, isn't that result of the work on the Federal Government's side, Department of Justice?

>> Yeah, it's a settlement, yeah, exactly. It's a big deal. And the folks from North Carolina APSI have been involved and NDRN, the disability rights network. The North Carolina disability rights are involved. A number of the disability groups in North Carolina have really been working on this one. So a settlement, a negotiated settlement is a really good answer ‑‑ settlement is a really good answer by means the State agree. Kudos the folks.

>> I was involved in the Oregon settlement, and the American community statistics played a huge role in looking at counties that bordered both Washington and northern California to show there was a big difference for people with cognitive difficulty between just on the border counties. It played a really big role. I don't know how big a role it played but it helped dispute an economist that they had hired to show there wasn't a problem.

>> It will be interesting to see because it also part of what it provides is the legislature it kind of ‑‑ the legislature still needs to appropriate some funds to ‑‑ they will still stop and it will be over time but the legislature has to get funding. So there will be some conversation and in the North Carolina general assembly for a‑‑ so again if anybody from North Carolina both it's a big deal, congratulations. And there is more work to be done.

>> You betcha. You betcha.

All right, if there aren't any more questions, we will bring this to a close. Again, look for our year end report and I will ‑‑ when I get a chance over the weekend I will start opening up my SASS programs and see if I can get the disability type. I do want to wrap standard errors, wrap error bars around those which can be difficult with this kind of sampling and survey design.

Well, thank you, everybody. Have a great ‑‑ almost going to say new year. Have a great Valentine's Day if I don't see you at the first Friday nTIDE web cast. Good‑bye, everybody.

>> Bye‑bye.