

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) FIDELITY REPORT

Date: May 8, 2015

To: Nichole Walla, Director of Operations

From: T.J. Eggsware, BSW, MA, LAC
Jeni Serrano, BS
ADHS Fidelity Reviewers

Method

On April 7-10, 2015 T.J. Eggsware and Jeni Serrano completed a review of Beacon's Supported Employment (SE) program. This review is intended to provide specific feedback in the development of your agency's SE services, in an effort to improve the overall quality of behavioral health services in Maricopa County. Supported Employment refers specifically to the evidence-based practice of helping SMI members find and keep competitive jobs in the community based on their individual preferences, not those set aside for people with disabilities. Services are reviewed starting with the time an SMI participating member indicates an interest in attaining competitive employment, and the review process continues through the provision of follow along supports for people who obtain competitive employment. In order to effectively review Supported Employment services in Maricopa County, the review process includes evaluating the working collaboration between each Supported Employment provider and referring clinics with whom they work to provide services. For the purposes of this review at Beacon, the referring clinics included Southwest Network (SWN) Bethany Village and Choices Enclave.

Beacon (formerly Tetra in Phoenix, AZ) offers services to individuals with physical, behavioral, developmental or learning disabilities, and to individuals with criminal backgrounds who have barriers to employment. Services are available in Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona. Services in the Phoenix office as described by the program include: job development and placement, computer skills training, employment readiness skills training, supported employment assistance, group supported employment (GSE), work adjustment training (WAT) and General Educational Development (GED) preparation.

The individuals served through the agency are referred to as "client", but for the purpose of this report, and for consistency across fidelity reviews, the term "member" will be used.

During the site visit, reviewers participated in the following activities:

- Group interviews with two clinical coordinators (CC), and three rehabilitation specialists (RS) staff at SWN Bethany Village.
- Group interview with two case managers (CM) staff and three RS staff at Choices Enclave.
- Individual interview with the director of operations at Beacon.

- Group interview with four Beacon employment service staff; classified as career facilitator (two), job coach (one), and vocational training instructor (one).
- Observation of a meeting with the co-located career facilitator, clinic RS and clinic CM.
- Group interview with four members at Beacon.
- Observation of a monthly staff meeting at Beacon.
- Conducted 12 record reviews for members at Beacon, including co-served members at SWN Bethany Village, and Choices Enclave.
- Review of agency brochures, program descriptions, fliers, referral packet form, intake packet documentation, and the Beacon website.

The review was conducted using the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SE Fidelity Scale. This scale assesses how close in implementation a team is to the Supported Employment (SE) model using specific observational criteria. It is a 15-item scale that assesses the degree of fidelity to the SE model along 3 dimensions: Staffing, Organization and Services. The SE Fidelity Scale has 15 program-specific items. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (meaning *not implemented*) to 5 (meaning *fully implemented*).

The SE Fidelity Scale was completed following the visit. A copy of the completed scale with comments is attached as part of this report.

Summary & Key Recommendations

The agency demonstrated strengths in the following program areas:

- Members interviewed report that they are supported by staff at Beacon, and that staff are willing to help them achieve their goals.
- The members report they see the director of operations as someone they can go to if they need additional support, advocacy, or if their primary staff at Beacon is not available.
- Employment service staff at Beacon report, and members confirm, that staff can help members find jobs if they decide to end a job. There is evidence the program attempts to prevent gaps in employment when working with members to transition positions.
- Working members are provided follow-along supports; some with on-the-job support.
- Clinic staff and Beacon staff report they were provided training on the SE model.

The following are some areas that will benefit from focused quality improvement:

- The program should align job titles and job descriptions with the SE model. Rather than career facilitators, job coach and vocational training instructor; reclassify the positions as employment specialists. Rather than director of operations, consider reclassifying the program leader as supported employment supervisor. This may result in referral sources and members having a clearer understanding of the expectations of the SE program and the duties of Beacon staff.
- Beacon should work with partner clinics to market SE services through Beacon, including highlighting the benefits of the SE model versus referral to time-limited and non-competitive WAT, GSE, or other pre-job activities. Recruit competitively employed members served through Beacon to share their employment and recovery stories with clinic staff during team meetings, all-staff meetings, or site visits.
- Other services at Beacon, including WAT, GSE, computer training and GED activities, affect the full implementation and adherence to the evidence based practice of supported employment. The program should consider transitioning these activities to other agencies (e.g., member run programs for GED support and computer skill training) or community resources (e.g., local libraries for computer trainings). By consolidating the other employment programs and focusing specifically on SE following program referral, Beacon can streamline the

referral packet form, and at admission, employment staff can nimbly focus on supporting members in their job search, and gathering data using the vocational profile. This will allow the Beacon to align their program more closely with the SAMHSA SE model, so community partners can be confident a referral to Beacon means a member will receive SE services, with a clear mission to support all members to obtain and maintain competitive employment.

- Beacon employment staff do not participate as members of mental health treatment teams. Preferably, SE services are provided through an integrated team, with SE program staff assigned to specific teams and attending weekly meetings with the full treatment team, rather than relying on only one-to-one coordination with CM or RS staff. The RBHA needs to work with SE programs and clinics to discuss, identify, and resolve barriers to integrated meetings.
- The program should work with the RBHA to develop a process to allow members with an interest in employment to self-refer for SE services. This will help to address concerns that members are pre-screened or excluded from accessing SE services.
 - There is evidence clinic staff are aware there should be a zero-exclusion approach to SE services, citing training on the SE model. However, it appears ongoing and more focused training related to zero-exclusion should occur. It may be beneficial to expand the training beyond RS and CM staff to clinic team psychiatrists, nurses, and supervisors who influence agency culture. The system should engage employed individuals with a lived experience of mental illness or substance use to share their stories.
- Beacon should implement job tracking logs that are utilized as part of supervision by the supported employment supervisor.
- Beacon should consider updating the Phoenix program's web page, with clear descriptions of SE services offered by the agency. If outcome data is collected, consider incorporating the information on the website so referral sources and members have an indicator of program performance.

SE FIDELITY SCALE

Item #	Item	Rating	Rating Rationale	Recommendations
Staffing				
1	Caseload:	1 – 5 (5)	Beacon has four full-time employment service staff; two classified as career facilitators, one as a job coach, and one as vocational training instructor. The SE program serves 50 members, with the SE supervisor (i.e., director of operations) providing follow along supports to three members. The program averages one employment service staff for every 14 members.	
2	Vocational Services staff:	1 – 5 (3)	Of the four employment service staff, two provide only vocational services; if issues arise (e.g., crisis, request for food box) requiring other intervention, they encourage members to contact their case management teams for assistance. However, one employment service staff provides non-vocational services including supervising WAT and GSE, and another employment service staff is responsible for vocational training (e.g., life skills or computer skill training) 50% of the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beacon should align vocational service staff job titles and duties with the SE model; employment specialists should provide only vocational services.
3	Vocational generalists:	1 – 5 (3)	<p>As noted above, employment service staff carry different titles, with variation in responsibilities; evidence suggests Beacon staff do not conduct all phases of vocational services.</p> <p>At Beacon, all employment service staff complete intakes, determined by the requested service listed on the agency’s provider referral packet form sent from referring clinics. Beacon’s referral packet form prompts referring clinic staff to indicate requested services from the following choices: GED, computer skills, job development & placement, job coaching, work adjustment training (WAT) courtesy clerk, group supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beacon needs to explore opportunities and re-align job responsibilities, so that members work with one staff for all phases of service, including engagement, assessment, job development, job placement, job coaching (including on-the-job coaching), and follow-along supports.

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			<p>employment. The Beacon staff who completes the intake paperwork generally provides ongoing services to members, but it is not always the case. There are examples in records of members who met with one Beacon staff at intake and initial engagement, but transitioned to another Beacon staff after program entry.</p> <p>One of the career facilitators is co-located at the Partners in Recovery West Valley clinic and reportedly will provide on-the-job coaching. The other career facilitator provides some job coaching, but transitions members to the job coach if on-the-job coaching is needed. The vocational training instructor primarily serves members in computer classes at the program, provides some job development and placement activities, but transitions members to the job coach for ongoing services when employed.</p> <p>Some members are co-served by Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, and other members are reportedly served by an agency that provides re-integration employment services for members with legal issues. The program provides services that appear to overlap with SE services, such as career exploration, job placement assistance and job retention support.</p>	
Organization				
1	Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment:	1 – 5 (1)	Beacon employment service staff are part of a vocational program, separate from the clinical treatment team. There is no evidence of integrated meetings with full treatment teams. In many records, monthly summaries are the primary evidence of SE program coordination with clinics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employment service staff should make contact with clinics to provide an overview of SE services through Beacon. It may be beneficial to have the various employment service staff provide these educational sessions rather than relying on one staff.

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			<p>Although one career facilitator is co-located at a clinic, and is assigned to one team, most coordination appears to occur one-to-one with RS or CM staff on the team, who relay information to the full clinical team. A staff meeting between Beacon staff, a clinic RS, and CM was observed as part of the review, but it was reported the employment service staff does not normally attend integrated team meetings.</p> <p>It does not appear coordination between Beacon and clinic staff consistently occurs. Clinic staff report they do not receive communication from Beacon staff, though note an increase in contact prior to the review. Although monthly summaries are generally located in co-served member records reviewed at clinics, other evidence of direct contact outside of an occasional email is not present. Some clinic staff were unaware members received services through Beacon until preparing for the review. One recent staffing (Beacon staff and RS without member present) was referenced multiple times during the review, but other examples of ongoing integrated meetings were not identified.</p> <p>Clinic staff and the SE program do not appear to obtain input consistently when developing plans, with some discrepancies of information on plans for co-served members (e.g., clinic plan references employment goal, but at Beacon the member attends computer training).</p>	<p>This will allow clinic staff to become familiar with staff who work with co-served members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an integrated medical record is not feasible, the RBHA should review whether written communication between providers can be improved through a Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) which the RBHA may be equipped to assist providers in establishing. This may enable sharing of member vocational profiles, progress notes, monthly summaries, and employment plans from SE providers to clinical teams. • Employment service staff should increase direct contact with clinic staff, preferably attending weekly integrated team meetings with assigned teams. Sending monthly summaries provides an overview for clinic staff and supplements direct coordination but does not achieve true integration and should not be the primary form of communication. • The RBHA, SE provider and clinic should coordinate to address potential concerns with Beacon staff attending the full team meeting (i.e., confidentiality of other members) where there may be opportunities for SE staff to suggest work for people who have not yet been referred to SE services.
2	Vocational Unit:	1 – 5 (2)	Members maintain contact with their primary staff, with evidence in some records that members delay seeking support if their primary assigned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SE supervisor should lead the vocational unit and conduct weekly supervision during team meetings, as well

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			<p>staff is unavailable. Evidence of cross-coverage is not located in records, supported through member interviews and meeting observation.</p> <p>Employment service staff at Beacon have the same supervisor, who members report is their primary contact when their assigned staff is not available. The employment service staff have ad hoc one-to-one meetings with the supervisor when issues arise, and they also meet monthly without the supervisor for a job development and placement meeting. For the purposes of the review, the meeting was moved to align with the week of the review, and the supervisor attended. Conversation focused heavily on one Beacon staff reviewing articles with other employment staff. There was minimal discussion of members; approximately 20 minutes out of an hour. During this short time period, the meeting appeared to be most productive and beneficial when Beacon staff shared information about members, discussed potential employment options, interventions (e.g., how to approach resume development with a member whose skills were not an exact match with current interests), and challenged each other on their approach to job searches.</p>	<p>as one-on-one when necessary. Discussion during weekly meetings should focus on assigned caseloads, so staff can learn about other members, brainstorm options to address barriers, plan for coverage if needed, and share job leads.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vocational unit should track meeting discussions from meeting to meeting so areas of success, ongoing barriers, and member status can be tracked and discussed.
3	Zero-exclusion criteria:	1 – 5 (2)	<p>The employment service staff at Beacon do not screen referrals, but it appears this occurs earlier in the referral process. Clinic staff report if a member says they want to work, they are not excluded. However, there is discrepancy in the definition of zero-exclusion.</p> <p>In some cases clinic staff make referrals to programs based on their assessment of what will be the best fit for a member. While clinic staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended the RBHA track referrals to WAT, and target trainings at specific CM, RS and clinics with high frequency of referrals to those types of services versus SE services. • At Beacon program intake, ensure discussion of the potential financial benefits of employment are highlighted before separating members into the

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			<p>discuss Beacon and other employment agencies with members who express an interest in employment, certain agencies may be recommended over others due to the services they offer. For example, if an agency offers a specific WAT such as piecework activity, the clinic team may encourage participation in that program.</p> <p>If a member is assessed by clinic staff as not job ready, has no work history, or is using substances some clinic staff will not refer to a job development and placement program directly, but would offer WAT. Specific types of WAT may be selected and offered to members over other programs. For example, if a member is assessed to be lower functioning, the member may be referred to a specific program for piece work activity. In some cases, if a member is determined not ready for work, teams allow the member to seek work independently for a specified period (e.g., 30 days), then re-engage for referral to WAT if the member's job search is not successful.</p> <p>As part of Beacon's efforts to transition to the SE model, agency staff attempted to determine those members in the program actively seeking employment. The members were separated into two tracks, SE and informed choice. Members who elect to not actively seek employment (e.g., focusing only on computer skill training, WAT, building skills, or to obtain GED first) are classified under the category informed choice. At admission to Beacon, members are offered to choose from all services, which then directs Beacon's services regardless of the employment goal on the clinic</p>	<p>informed choice track. Engage all program members in discussions about competitive employment; utilize tools such as Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) to facilitate discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended the agency track member referral reason, employment goal on the service plan developed at the clinic, and selected program through Beacon at admission. Ensure members are not directed to other programs (e.g., GED, WAT, GSE, computer training) as pre-employment steps.

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			<p>plan.</p> <p>Those members who elect to participate in WAT, GSE, GED or only computer skill training at program entry are not included in the review; the program does not view them as members of their SE program. It is not clear if any of those members entered the program with a vocational goal.</p>	
Services				
1	Ongoing, work – based vocational assessment:	1 – 5 (5)	<p>Staff at Beacon report assessments are not required prior to job search. Evidence of testing is referenced in member records for those involved in computer training but do not appear to be required to take part in job searches or placement activities.</p> <p>Vocational profiles are present in records for more recently referred members but are not present in all member records. Updates to the vocational profile are not present. During discussion in the vocational team meeting it was reported that the vocational profile was recently added to the intake packet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon should complete the vocational profile for current members as well as new admissions to the program. It is not necessary to complete a new vocational profile at each contact, but ensure the profile is revised regularly based on member status (e.g., obtaining a job, ending a job, change in health condition, acquiring a new skill); including revisiting the potential benefits of disclosure to employers on a recurring basis. • Beacon should ensure the vocational profile is included in the intake packet for the employment service staff who is co-located at a clinic. • Beacon should engage members to discuss allowing coordination with their supports; work with support systems to gather information that can be useful in guiding the job search, and add their input into the vocational profile where applicable.
2	Rapid search for competitive jobs:	1 – 5 (3)	There is great variability in the first face-to-face contact with employers (ranging from under one month to nine months) from when a member reports to clinic staff their interest in employment to the first face to face contact with employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon should consider adding a disclaimer on the referral packet document that clearly indicates lack of updated assessment or service plans should not delay the clinic referral for SE services.

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			<p>after SE program entry. The variability appears to be due in part to some clinic staff assessing whether members are job ready and determining providers to recommend to members based on the assessment.</p> <p>At Beacon, there is variation in the reported first face-to-face contact with employers. For example, data for one staff member generally supported their report of first face-to-face contact with employers in about 30 days after program admission. However, for another staff first face-to-face contact is a year or more in some cases. In other cases reported face-to-face employer contacts were not located in records, and it is possible some reported face-to-face contacts could be online application dates. Beacon has served some members for many years (e.g., some prior to 2010) and for the longstanding members, date of first face-to-face contact with employers is not available or exceeds a year.</p> <p>Although lack of up to date paperwork is reportedly not a reason to delay admission to the SE program per Beacon staff report, the agency referral form cites specific documents that are mandatory, including an assessment and service plan. There is evidence in clinic records of Beacon staff requesting these documents prior to scheduling intakes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SE supervisor should review employment search logs in supervision with SE staff. The tracking should include when members first express an interest in employment (obtained through coordination with the referring clinic staff) and the first face-to-face contact with employers. • Beacon staff may be reliant on job fairs. Although a useful component of job searches, allowing staff to work with members in the community and make contacts with employers, individualized job development with employers should also occur.
3	Individualized job search:	1 – 5 (3)	<p>Job search activities, including frequency, individualization, and diversity of the jobs explored is not consistent across employment service staff. For example, one established employment staff did reference multiple positions with members at each contact, and those positions align with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SE supervisor should meet with employment service staff periodically, review staff tracking logs (e.g., job development activities for members as well as job logs with employer contact activity). This may allow the supervisor to identify

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			<p>individualized member goals. On the other end of the spectrum, one employment service staff does not reference job search activities, and when they are noted, they do not always align with the goals members listed at referral, or on the individual support plan at the program. During meetings and interviews similar jobs were referenced (e.g., retail, including the same retailers, a specific janitorial agency).</p>	<p>staff who might struggle with supporting members in their job search and allow for targeted support to assist the staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon should require employment service staff to track job development activities using tracking logs, to include employer contacts made on behalf of members. All direct employment service staff should conduct job development activities in the community and not rely on one staff to primarily make contact with employers. This may result in a more diverse pool of potential employers, and allow staff to outline the services they provide to members as well as supports they can provide to employers. • Beacon should determine if the Individual Employment Plan from the SAMHSA SE model can be utilized in place of the existing agency plan, which appears to include information that is redundant if a vocational profile is completed.
4	Diversity of jobs developed:	1 – 5 (3)	<p>The diversity of jobs explored with members varies by the employment service staff assigned. One Beacon staff tends to engage members in a diverse job search, aligned with member preferences. However, for other members, job searches include a few types of jobs such as janitorial, warehouse, retail, and food service. As a result, jobs obtained by members were in a few main areas (e.g., retail, grocery, and warehouse) Across the program it appears employment service staff provide options for the same types of jobs about 50% of the time as evidenced by members employed in similar settings. Some Beacon staff also reference similar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SE supervisor should review job search tracking logs during supervision with staff. Potential trends of same employers or types of positions searched can be identified and the SE supervisor can support the staff to expand their searches. • The vocational unit should meet more frequently as a group to discuss jobs explored, discuss alternative options, share job leads, and challenge each other to expand their searches. See also recommendation in O2.

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			types of employers, or the same employer, during staff meetings and in documentation.	
5	Permanence of jobs developed:	1 – 5 (5)	At Beacon, 14 of 19 members obtained employment after entering the SE program. One member is in a position set aside for people with disabilities. Based on this, it appears the agency assists members find competitive jobs 93% of the time. However, this figure does not take into account members involved in other employment activities such as WAT or GSE, which could skew the overall assessment of the approach to SE services. It is not clear if any of those members entered Beacon with a goal of competitive employment.	
6	Jobs as transitions:	1 – 5 (5)	Due to the limited pool of members who held jobs and then transitioned to new jobs this area is assessed primarily on member and staff interviews. Beacon staff can help members end jobs when appropriate and offer to help them find another job. There is evidence the program attempts to prevent gaps in employment when working with members to transition positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions during vocational unit meetings should include review of members who voice a desire to change positions, information gathered through the update of vocational profile, and collaboration regarding job search opportunities to pursue with members.
7	Follow-along supports:	1 – 5 (5)	Working members are provided follow-along supports that are not time-limited. However, as noted above, some members transition to different Beacon staff if they want to receive on-the-job support. Three of four employment service staff at Beacon report they provide follow along supports rather than transition members who are working, and the majority of competitively employed members work with these three staff. Records reviewed for working members assigned to the employment service staff reflect follow-along support is provided. The vocational profile prompts whether members elected to disclose,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beacon should empower and support all employment staff to provide job coaching to members, whether at their jobs or at other locations based on member preference. Beacon staff should engage members regularly to review the pros and cons of disclosure, which may result in opportunities to provide on-the-job coaching support to members, as well as follow along support to employers. The vocational unit can conduct role plays to practice talking about disclosure with

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			and Beacon staff report the topic is revisited with members, but evidence of those discussions are not located in records.	members. The SE supervisor should shadow staff when they talk with some members about disclosure. Beacon staff with more members who chose to disclose should provide guidance to other staff.
8	Community-based services:	1 – 5 (3)	The amount of time spent in the community varies by employment service staff. The four employment service staff estimate their time in community at 92%, 90%, 45% and 40%, with an average of 67% of time in the community. Based on documentation in ten records, there is great variability of time spent providing community-based services to members; with an average of 53% across the four employment service staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SE supervisor should review staff activities and work with staff to ensure services are primarily community-based. This includes review of activities that require Beacon staff be present on-site, possibly eliminating those activities (e.g., computer training) as well as empowering all staff to provide on-the-job coaching with members. • Employment support staff should expand where they meet with members in the community. For example, make contact with members at local libraries or one-stop locations where they can access career information, or use computers for job searches. • As noted above, all employment support staff should conduct job development activities through contact with potential employers. The agency should include this activity on tracking logs to prevent duplication of employer contacts across staff.
9	Assertive engagement and outreach:	1 – 5 (3)	It appears Beacon staff make one or two contacts as part of initial engagement or within one month when members stop attending the vocational service. There is discrepancy on how soon closure occurs after members are not in contact with the program. When contact with member lapses, staff attempt to make contact with members by phone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency should implement a policy that outlines expectations for outreach and engagement. Preferably, multiple outreach efforts occur initially, with at least monthly engagement efforts on a time-unlimited basis.

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			<p>However, if members are not in contact within 30 days some staff send notification letters informing members of intent to end services, but other staff report this action occurs at 90 days after last contact. There is no agency policy. In the 12 months prior to review, 17 members ended services, four of whom were employed.</p>	
Total Score:		51		

SE FIDELITY SCALE SCORE SHEET		
Staffing	Rating Range	Score
1. Caseload	1 - 5	5
2. Vocational services staff	1 - 5	3
3. Vocational generalists	1 - 5	3
Organizational	Rating Range	Score
1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment	1 - 5	1
2. Vocational unit	1 - 5	2
3. Zero-exclusion criteria	1 - 5	2
Services	Rating Range	Score
1. Ongoing work-based assessment	1 - 5	5
2. Rapid search for competitive jobs	1 - 5	3
3. Individual job search	1 - 5	3
4. Diversity of jobs developed	1 - 5	3
5. Permanence of jobs developed	1 - 5	5
6. Jobs as transitions	1 - 5	5
7. Follow-along supports	1 - 5	5
8. Community-based services	1 - 5	3
9. Assertive engagement and outreach	1 - 5	3
Total Score		51
Total Possible Score		75