

# How employment benefits people with disabilities.

## *WORKING HEALTHY*



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The Division of Health Care Finance shall develop and maintain a coordinated health policy agenda that combines the effective purchasing and administration of health care with promotion oriented public health strategies.

# Statistics – US Census Bureau

Individuals with disabilities were

- less likely to be employed than individuals without disabilities
- earned less than individuals without disabilities
- more reliant on public assistance than individuals without disabilities

For many people with disabilities the unfortunate reality is a life of poverty.

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# I want to work but...

Someone's ability to bend their knees or hold a pen are not the only factors that determine how likely it is that they can get a job.

The misperception many have of disabled employees is that all they can do is clean a table at McDonald's. People don't realize there are disabled individuals with undergraduate degrees and master's degrees.

# Barriers to Employment

Disabled people who can work and who want to work face many barriers.

- Many professionals (medical providers, teachers, etc.) will tell people with disabilities they are not able to work due to their disability.
- They have fewer opportunities to develop skills and experience
- They face practical obstacles, such as inaccessible transport or non-flexible work environments
- They often experience negative attitudes from employers and co-workers
- They worry that working could jeopardize their vital health and long term care coverage.

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# Work Incentives

## What is a Work Incentive?

Special rules make it possible for people with disabilities receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to work and still receive monthly payments and Medicare or Medicaid. Social Security calls these rules "work incentives."

# ***Working Healthy Program***

***Working Healthy is KanCare Coverage:***  
allows people with disabilities to return to or increase their work effort without losing critical KanCare Coverage.

***Working Healthy*** encourages people to work, increase their income and accumulate assets in order to reduce long term reliance on public supports.

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# Benefits of Working

- I am more self sufficient
- I get satisfaction from working
- My health has improved
- Working allows me to connect with others
- I feel empowered
- Working makes me a good role model

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# Benefits to Employers

- Larger talent pool
- Improved Image
- Worker productivity
- Tax Credits

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# *Working Healthy*

## Demographics and Statistics

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# Program Evaluation

## The University of Kansas has

- provided program evaluation of *Working Healthy*, since its implementation in 2002 through 2012
- monitored changes in health, earnings, quality of life, and health expenditures over time
- added a comparison group of Kansans with disabilities dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare but not enrolled in *Working Healthy*

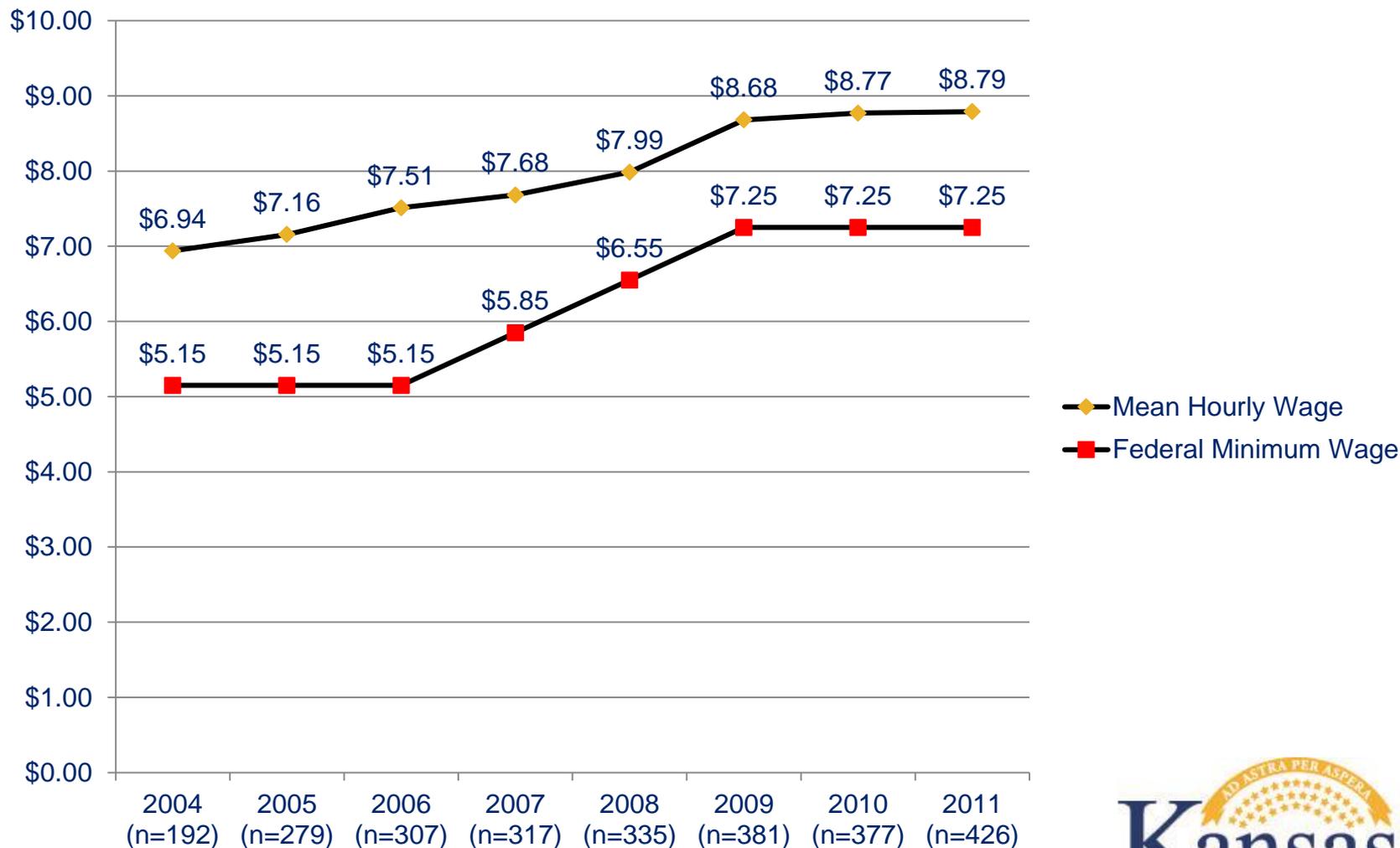
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# Success of Participant Work Efforts

Data source: Kurth, Fall, Hall (2011). *Working Healthy Data Chartbook, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* and 2011 Working Healthy Satisfaction survey

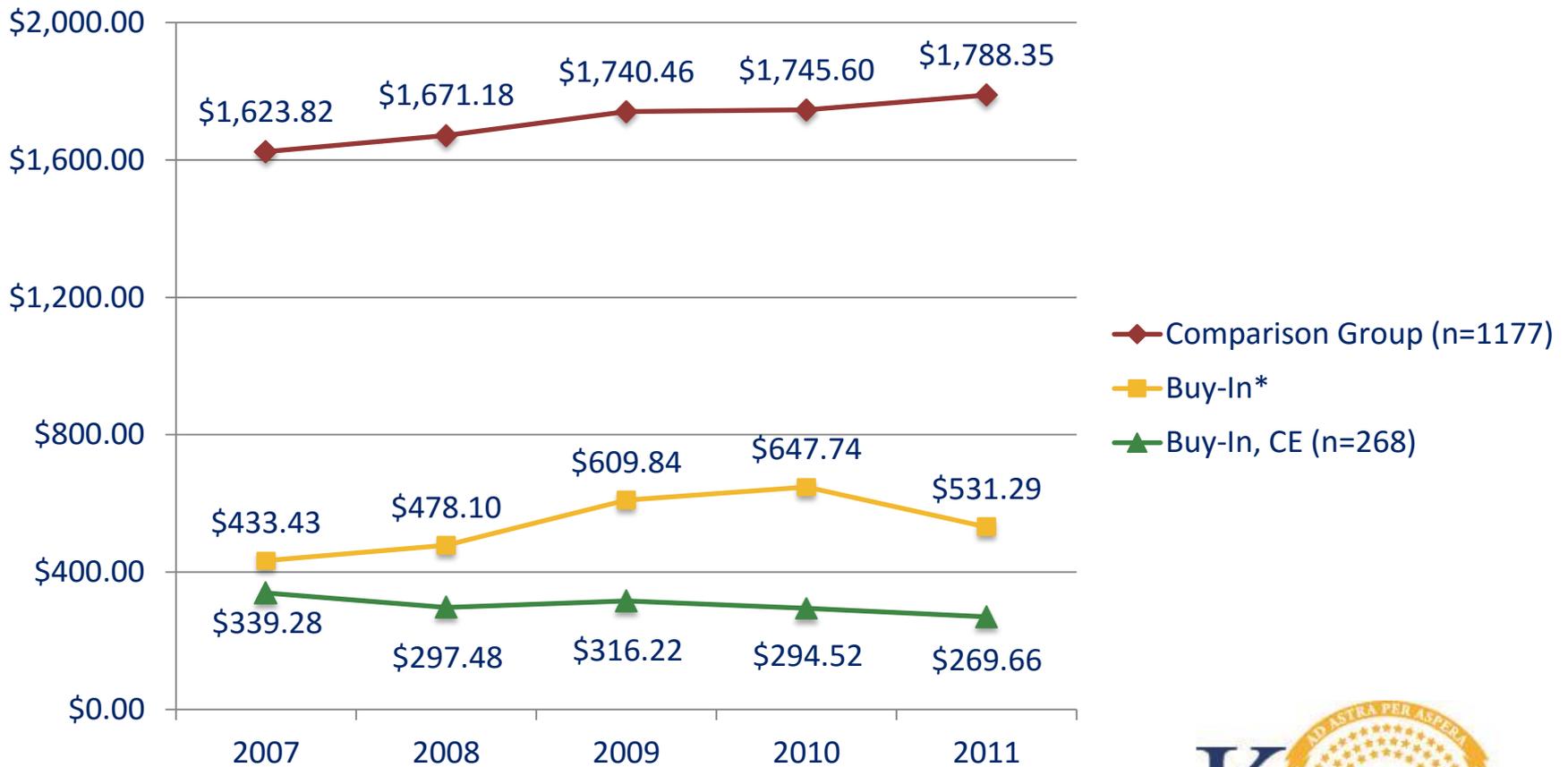


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# Medical costs stabilize

## Medicaid Outpatient Expenditures (pmpm)



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# How are *Working Healthy* enrollees faring?

A majority of enrollees report:

Improved mental health since enrolling in the Buy-In (51.7%)

Improved financial status since enrolling in the Buy-In (58.0%)

An increased level of independence since enrolling in the Buy-In (51.5%)

Data Source: 2009 Working Healthy Satisfaction Survey (n=410)

# ***Working Healthy* Longitudinal Study Findings for Continuously Enrolled Participants**

- documented increases in hourly wages and gross annual income
- billed medical expenses were reduced compared to the general Medicaid population.

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# Working Healthy Benefits Specialists

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# Web Site

To learn more about the *Working Healthy* Program, visit our web site at:

<http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf/workinghealthy/index.htm>

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[www.kdheks.gov/hcf](http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf)

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