

Utah Work Incentive Coalition (UWIC) Work Group Minutes

Work Group : EXECUTIVE BOARD

Meeting Date: Oct 25, 2001

Facilitator: Cathy Chambless Minute Recorder: Tamara Keene

Attendees: Michael Deily, Phil Eimers, Blaine Petersen, Mike Richardson, Alison Lozano, Fraser Nelson, Kathy Daley, Bill Young Cathy Chambless, Hank Liese, Lynne MacLeod, Catherine Carter

Next Meeting Date and Location

Thursday, December 13, 2001, Rehabilitation Service Center, 1595 West 500 South, South Conference Room

Action Item Updates from Past Meetings

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Who</i>
Reviewed minutes from June 27, 2001 meeting	Accepted as written.	Board members

Discussions for Future Meetings

1. Continue Benefits Planning Standards discussion with mental health and DSPD representatives.
2. Review proposal from Employment Supports Work Group regarding agency coordination for employment-related personal assistance.

Topic and Summary of Discussion

Work Incentive presentation to USOR Annual Meeting, Oct 25. Approx. 300 in attendance. Cathy presented overview of Work Incentive Initiative project, and Judith Holt demonstrated website, training videos, DVD, and other training materials. Blaine commented that staff will need more details. Website should be good resource as it develops.

UWIIN staff update. Cathy announced that 3 new staff have been hired. Tamara Keene started September 4 as Project Assistant (Office Tech III), and beginning October 29 Nonie Lancaster and Mandee Buckley are sharing a fulltime position as Work Incentive Outreach Specialists (Community Health Tech II). Project staff are housed at the Rehabilitation Service Center at the Judy Buffmire Building.

Choose to Work continuation. Blaine Petersen asked Mike Richardson if Dept of Workforce Services (DWS) was likely to continue funding Choose to Work (CTW) specialists using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) money. Mike said there was some uncertainty about budgets, that they were having a meeting this afternoon. He emphasized that CTW project is important to DWS. The current contract for a not-yet-hired Benefits Planner is not in jeopardy. Mike said TANF funds should be secure. Blaine Petersen said that USOR is planning on carrying through with Choose to Work after the CTW grant ends.

PAR Update. Contracts for training and evaluation are all in place. July through Sept were spent defining roles of evaluators and facilitators, preparing materials and training PAR Facilitators (Participatory Action Research). First meeting of 3 work groups was held on October 9, following a project update. The three groups that have started are: Work Incentives (Medicaid Buy-in, Benefits Planning, and Ticket to Work), Outreach and Training (outreach and training for all work incentives), and Employment Supports (expanding employment-related personal care services).

Work Group Report: Outreach and Training (Alison Lozano). Met on October 9 at Capitol. Reviewed website and made recommendations for language translation. Want to add representation from Mental Health & ethnic communities.

Work Group Report: Employment Supports (Catherine Carter).

Work group needs more representation from mental health. Made contact with Legislator. Focus of group is to expand personal assistance under the Medicaid plan. Plan to meet every two weeks through December.

Topic and Summary of Discussion

Work Group Report: Work Incentives (Bill Young, Kathy Daley) Focus of group covers Medicaid Buy-in, Ticket to Work, Benefits Planning. Group will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Blaine reported that Ticket regulations have gone to OMB, will be out mid-Nov. Next tier of states to be announced soon. Fraser reported that Disability Law Center is printing new brochures on work incentives.

Evaluation process. Lynne reported on meeting with HCF and George Julnes re: data sharing agreement. Challenges include: different databases and multiple agencies, new HIPPA rules, need for IRB approval for individual data, aggregate data still need paper procedures. Evaluation staff need training in Data Warehouse queries (George and Lynne). Hank stated that role of evaluators is to help work groups identify what information they need. Fraser said that DLC needs more clarity from SSA about what data DLC can collect on consumers on the front-end. Many people are not willing to give their name to get general information for benefits planning, so it is not possible to track when people are calling repeatedly.

Standards for Benefits Planning.

Bill Young explained the standards issue. Benefits Planning is being developed as a profession on a nationwide basis through SSA. Utah received \$80,000 to staff a program. Two additional Benefits Planners are available through TANF and Governor's Council funding. Approx. 30,000 recipients in Utah could take advantage of Ticket and use benefits planning. Current staffing is not sufficient. How do we build a quality service statewide? Many agencies are thinking about hiring benefits specialist so there needs to be standards so a system can be formed. Consumers will make decisions based on the information they receive, and it must be accurate. What about areas of private service (i.e., PASS planning)? This project needs to build credibility, esp. among consumers during the first year so there cannot be inaccurate information passed out. Question was raised: who approves benefits plans? Should have a board to review and approve (Kathy Daley). Need a triage system, refer consumers to higher level when their needs dictate.

Issues in developing employment-related personal care services.

Cathy went through state plan amendment submitted to CMS (handout). Need to differentiate between what is a reasonable accommodation under ADA and personal assistance that an employer need not provide. What about minimum wage? Provider manual will address wage issues under FLSA. MDS-HC assessment tool will be used to determine eligibility and amount and type of services. Assessor training is an issue. Transportation can be paid for under this service if person cannot get it due to disability. Michael stated that a small increase was included in the current year's personal care budget to expand the service (approx \$134,000).

Action Steps

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Target Date</i>
1. Present issue of benefits planning standards to mental health providers (UBHN). Contact Jack Tanner, executive director of UBHN. Invite UBHN to send a representative to Executive Board.	Kathy Daley	November 15, 2001
2. Employment Supports Work Group will develop proposal for how employment-related personal assistance will be coordinated among consumers and agencies.	ES Work Group	Next meeting (Dec 13)

Recommendations for GOE Group