

Two Problems, One Solution: Early Intervention and Eligibility Determination

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*Early Intervention Disability Demonstration Projects—
Concepts for Action*

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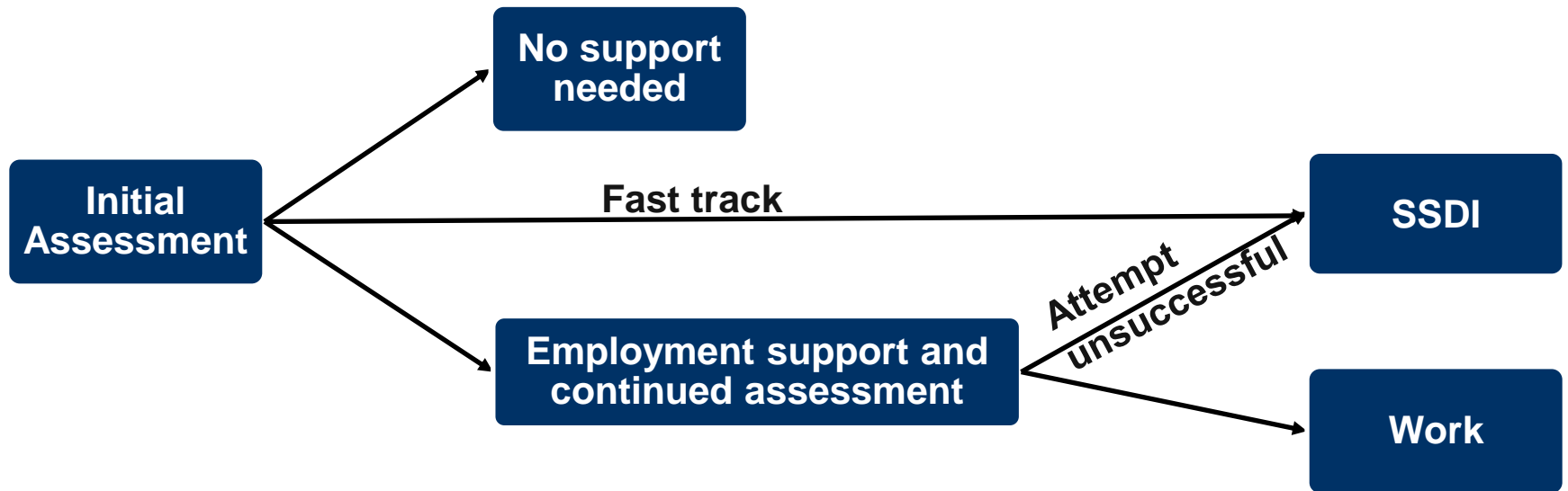
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Two Problems

- 1. Workforce exit and SSDI entry for lack of access to timely employment support**
- 2. SSDI eligibility determinations**
 - **The connection:**
 - **A social insurance program based on an outdated concept of work disability—inability to work because of a medically determinable condition**
 - **Modern concept: other worker characteristics and the environment matter**

One Solution

- **Integrated early intervention and eligibility determination (IEE)**
 - Preferably starts while attached to employer



Why it solves both problems

- **Consistent with the concept that non-medical characteristics and the environment matter**
- **Workers who can continue to work with assistance do so because medical, non-medical and environmental issues are addressed timely**
- **Failed good-faith efforts, with assistance, demonstrate to SSDI gatekeepers it is not feasible to address all issues**

Reframes existing ideas

- **Previous proposals include IEE systems**
 - Social Security Advisory Board (2006)
 - *Being American*, McDonald & O’Neill (2006)
- **IEE Systems already exist in other contexts**
 - Private disability insurers
 - Workers’ compensation
 - Other countries
- **Reframed: A common solution for two problems that both stem from an outdated concept**

Pieces of pilot IEE systems for SSDI already exist

- **State agencies**

- Workforce development (American Job Centers)
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Disability determination system
- Mental health
- Medicaid/long-term services

- **Private sector**

- Health, disability and employment service providers
- Disability and workers' compensation insurers and their vendors
- Private health insurers

Rapid development and testing required

- **High risks to development without tests**
- **Key test characteristics**
 - **Adapt what we know to the SSDI context**
 - **Well-designed, targeted outreach**
 - **Before application to SSDI**
 - **No new burden on employers**
 - **Invite, support and learn quickly from ground-up pilots**
 - **Start small, build on success, abandon failure**

References

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