Stay at Work/Return to Work: Innovative Approaches for Maintaining a Strong State Workforce

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About ODEP

• Only non-regulatory Federal agency that promotes policies and coordinates with employers and all levels of government to increase workplace success for people with disabilities

• Our mission: To develop and influence policies that increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities
Disability Employment: The Numbers

- Roughly 1 in 5 American adults (53 million) have a disability.
- Among working age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Disability</th>
<th>Without Disability</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Force Participation Rate</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
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• Among working age:
Disability & Employment: The Costs to States

• Per year:
  – $6.5 million in *lost* state tax revenue ($25 billion in Federal)
  – $71 billion *spent* to support unemployed working-age people with disabilities ($350 billion in Federal)
Examining the Contributing Factors: Acquired Disabilities

- Millions of workers experience injury or illness each year
  - Hundreds of thousands later receive state or Federal disability benefits
  - SSDI Trust Fund projected to deplete in 2034
- Reduced labor force participation of those of "prime working age"
  - Association with problem of pain management/ opioid abuse
SSDI: 2016 Snapshot

• Applications: 2,321,583
  –32.06% (744,268) of those were awarded benefits
• Beneficiaries: 8,808,736
• Benefits paid: $142,703 million
Stay at Work/Return to Work: A Policy Strategy

• Targeted population:
  – Have illness, injury or medical condition that is anticipated to inhibit or prevent continued employment or labor force participation
  • Acquired on- or off-the-job
  – Are in the workforce at time of onset
  – May or may not have an existing disability
  – May or may not view themselves as having a disability
Grants

• FY 2018 budget includes funding for early intervention SAW/RTW demonstrations
  – Funds for states to improve labor force participation of people who become injured or ill while employed
  – To test key features of a collaborative care Workers Comp model and associated employment-related programs
  – Will also test applications of the model for populations outside Workers Comp
Key Lessons

• **Timing** is everything
  – Intervene at the appropriate time, ideally while worker is still attached to employer

• **Communication** is key
  – Facilitate between employers, workers, health care providers and insurers

• **Coordination** is critical
  – Navigating multiple, complicated systems increases opportunities to fall through cracks
Intervention Effectiveness

• Strong evidence that multi-domain interventions reduce time away from work
  – Health focused
  – Service coordination focused
  – Work modification/accommodation focused

• American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine Position Statement
Supporting States: SEED

• State Exchange on Employment and Disability (SEED)
  – Current partners include:
    • National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
    • Council of State Governments (CSG)
    • Women in Government (WIG)
  – National Task Force
    • Work Matters policy framework
How SEED Can Help You

• Policy and subject-matter expertise
• Knowledge sharing
• Tools, resources and sample policy options
• Access to meaningful data
• Connections to other states, as well as national agencies and organizations
Beyond the Numbers:
Faces of SAW/RTW
Thank You!

Q&A

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