An Evidence-Based Path to Disability Insurance Reform

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Early Intervention

• A Work-First Intervention within SSA’s Existing Determination Process
  – Screening tool to identify candidates likely to be awarded benefits.
  – Test a variety of work activation packages including wage supplements and services.
  – Voluntary participation conditional on suspension of DI/SSI claim.

• State-Initiated Early-Intervention Experiments
  – Waiver authority to innovate across programs and target groups at risk of DI/SSI receipt.
  – Incentive funding to reward success relative to a baseline.
  – Success measured in terms of improved participant outcomes, not tighter benefit eligibility review at DDS.
Employer-Based Incentives

• **Voluntary participation**
  – Firms would realize most of the savings achieved after the threshold is reached.
  – Private disability insurers could partner with employers and share the realized credit.

• **Outcomes measured relative to a prior baseline and/or a comparison group**
  – Welcome other evaluation design approaches.

• **Options to reduce or eliminate the risk of hiring discrimination**
Improve the Disability Determination System

• Convert SSA’s budget for State DDSs to mandatory funding and provide SSA greater authority to manage DDS performance, so that SSA could:
  – Develop an enhanced appeals resolution process.
  – Establish performance goals for timelines of initial determinations and improve consistency across states.
  – Implement a multi-year plan to eliminate the continuing disability review (CDR) backlog.
  – Improve and standardize the collection of evidence and test protocols for assessing claims.
  – Establish a national standard for certification of med/voc experts and expand the national cadre of such experts.