

Secretaries' Innovation Group

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:

	With Disability	Without Disability
Unemployment Rate	7.6%	3.7%
Labor Force Participation Rate	21%	68.3%



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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