

November Monthly Meeting Minutes

11/03/10

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

DWS/Work Supports:

2:30 Welcome and Introductions

2:35 Follow Up Items:

General Assistance (Jeff Webster/Helen Thatcher) - Update, reminder about Open Enrollment.

Less than 500 enrolled from last open enrollment, got 1500 applicants. Have capacity for more. Open same time as PCN – GA customers do have a \$15 co-pay. Can't articulate what happens to those that are not able to get on GA. Can't track this. Quantification on this – frame it in a public policy frame – “limited resources, etc.” What does it cost if miss this safety net.

Helen: didn't enroll many less than 500 of 1500 apps. Online open for apps at 6:01 pm 11-4-10. App won't be considered before that time. GA will have \$15 co-pay for PCN.

Request for interim study, this legislative session (Nov) would like to have people at the legislature and talking about GA. Would like people with stories. DWS will talk about how well program is working, do not have experience or info on people who do not get accepted. Please frame in Public Policy frame: max resources, what does it cost in other goods and services, where they are going.

Ally: already have data and will be presented. Let her know if you have more info. Agenda not finalized yet. Limited comments from partners are included in presentation. Sen Lillenquist and rep Dunnigan, educating them is the main concern. Planting seeds that will be followed up on. Legislature would like more context on what is available. Don't be alarmed if inauthentic charity comes up. Don Uchida would like to add the word disabled to documents, fine if makes it parallel with other documents. Sen Jones, would like this to be sanctioned and clean on the floor. Formal mechanisms for engagement.

WDD transition and Regional Councils (Ally Isom) - Update on what is going on with this. --- SKIP

Don Uchida – asking to add word disability to statute, Sen. Jones wants to bring back bill to amend this.

Will use administrative rules to include community partners to regional councils.

CAP Utah is working on conference with community partners, DWS will use this as an opportunity. skip next issue.

Tech Issues and Case Closings (Casey Erickson) - I also would like to know the number of auto or batch close cases, by program area at DWS. Sometimes in the past the computer generated auto closes in error. What does DWS do if this happens now, as opposed to what it did pre-eREP? Thanks.

Not aware of technical issues with closing cases. Are more caught up on workload, wait times should be down. Debbie Herr – have had issues with notices, are in process of fixing them right now.

Used to have advocates on the “Forms Committee” – Debbie willing to gather feedback on this.

Debbie: Erep: not aware of cases closing on accident. Need additional info.

Karen: was aware that under pacmis, there was a mass mailing case closure. Can this be fixed or this still a problem. Heard rumor that it is not as easy to fix this problem, notices would have to be manually sent.

Debbie (DWS): in process of fixing notices, language poor. It ss harder to make changes. If you have info send it to Debbie. (include email address). Does not have info on which areas are affected.

Melissa: if community people see things that aren't good in notices let Debbie know.

Karen: there should be a notices committee to review forms.

Debbie: need to stabilize the system, have had to build in work-arounds. The next couple of bills and notices should be cleaned up so benefits are getting out to customers.

2:50 FEP Redesign (Helen Thatcher) What is going on with FEP Redesign? Is there a timeline? What changes are being considered? How will community partners be included in the redesign process? Can we get more information about the latest proposed rulemaking change regarding the problem solving process? How will sanctions be dealt with under the redesign? Is there any discussion about the full family sanction for non-participation? Full family sanctions are pretty harsh and not mandated.

Issues around child support – never been able to engage unemployed non-custodial parent. Trying to not freak out as much about participation, but that people need good jobs. Half of all custodial parents coming on FEP lost their own job.

Assessment piece – trying to define “tracks” where people might fit the best – e.g., work ready, diversions – coming back with a vengeance, those who need preparation. Assessments aren’t clearly defined yet, but doing a leveled assessment based on clients needs, less hopes for people.

Work Success – Job Club Model – to provide intervention around job searching that is necessary. Will not have to pay a dime, is worth about \$1,800 per person.

LCTs spending all their time at backend after failure, want them to be up front. Work Success is another form of assessment. LCTs will be running groups, etc., child care, stress management.

Transitional Cash Assistance – expanded to more people.

Not light touch anymore – this is about retention. Focus on finding work, not turning in papers. Digital document filings.

Problem Solving – “Activity Review” – Took LCT out of it, will not require it for everyone anymore, but client can request it. If you truly are not participating and there is no reasonable cause, and headed for a sanction, will be sanctioned for one month. Can come back next month. Still full family sanction. Probably not able to change this. Not sanctioned more than one month ever if client doesn’t want. TCA, diversion, sanction – not against lifetime limit.

3:00 Child Care for Children with Disabilities (Lynette Rasmussen) What are the possibilities of changing the guidelines for child care for children with disabilities? Currently, the higher income guidelines only apply if a child with a disability needs child care. No consideration is given for a family in which parents have other children with disabilities, although the children needing care may not have disabilities. Making a change to allow consideration for this would put child care eligibility in sync with the HEAT and SNAP programs, which both consider disabling conditions of all members of the household.

Current policy – families with a child with a disability, family qualifies at 85% of AMI, income applies to all family. eRep only can put in one income for the family, so entire family qualifies, all children fall under that income level. Child with the disability is the only one who qualifies for the higher rate – so the whole family qualifies at the higher income level.

HEAT and SNAP can take into account the additional medical costs of disabled people, etc. – additional disallows.

3:10 Those Who Can Work Do Work - Program Concept (Lyle Ward) The Utah Department of Workforce Services and the Utah Department of Health are engaged in a collaborative effort to develop an employment-focused pilot program for select Medicaid and Food Stamp recipients. The specifications for the pilot project will be developed around principles of work and self-sufficiency.

Not focusing on pregnant women, youth, aged, etc. Not mandatory. States cannot make Medicaid more restrictive through Jan. 2014 because of affordable health care act. On Medicaid side – focus on the PCN. Provide them with resources to find work. With PCN can give an incentive – if complete activities, will waive open enrollment requirement and can get access earlier. Can operate within the budget, not need extra funds.

Model – system automation and self-directed. Ask they are registered for work, encourage to do additional job training. Submit weekly log of job search activities. What is completion requirement? Tied to hours of activity. Big issue is access to computers. Working with UTA to get discount.

Rep. Menlove requiring people to do volunteer work to be on Medicaid. (124 -150% of poverty line). Individual that applies to PCN and is denied because no open enrollment period, but if would do this program, will waive open enrollment.

Self select most capable people on to PCN – not want to have normal pattern of open enrollment disrupted.

Rewrite of Food Stamp training and education act.

3:20 Unemployment Rate, Claims, End of Federal Benefits and Back-to-Work Program (Bill Starks) Update on the solvency of the trust fund, the changes in unemployment claims, and any plans to make changes that would address the solvency issue.

Unemployment rate continuing to go up. 2,600 new claims a week right now, about 150 more per week than had last quarter. Rode same for about 6 months, but starting to rise, some of the seasonal stuff kicking in. Paying out \$5.5 million a week. With EUC and FAC \$12.2 million.

EUC – 20, 14, 13 per tier – extended but ends at end of November 30, 2010. About 700 per week exhausting regular UI benefits – 54% are exhausting, after Nov. 27th, there will not be any additional tier of unemployment. About 425 exhausting their EUC a week.

Goes into effect Dec. 12th – SSA offset – only for those filing claims after Dec. 11th. Will be a \$5 a week reduction in all weekly benefit amounts after Dec. 11th. FAC ended, not extended with EUC. No more \$25 a week.

Trust Fund update - \$330 million – will stay solvent longer than initially thought – social cost rate is calculated by solvency of the trust fund – will be 4/10th of a percent for social cost (from 2/10th – doubled). These rates were in place in 2005 and 2006. Solvency based on OMB and GOPB early 2013. No recommendations for changes. Some ideas will go forward with if looks like going insolvent in 18-24 months. Tax rate, weekly benefit amount.

Back to work – expanded eligibility. Mirrored Texas model, not enrolled as much as thought. Removed thresholds, mailed out to 18,000 potential claimants. 740 UI claimants enrolled, 207 employers. Youth has been a huge success. Will have to close enrollment.

Call wait times are up – hired 7 more people.

3:35 Chat Feature of MyCase Access (Debbie Herr) Update on how this is working. How many people are using the chat feature? Has there been any effect on call times, etc?

How are non-English speakers notified of options if they attempt to use the MyCase Chat feature?

Just added on a second team – two teams of 15. Will be working on a lot of stuff with MyCase.

Put on agenda for the next monthly meeting.

3:40 New Single Sign On and myCase for Customers Demonstration

Deployed evening Nov. 9th. Changing way people sign-in.

UI – CUBS

Job Seeker – UWorks

Eligibility – MyCase

Each require a separate sign-in. Can continue using current info, but will have deadline of Jan. 15th to get to single sign-on environment.

Like OpenID. Can use google/yahoo/facebook username and password to sign-in.

Still clunky to navigate from on application to the other – know this and are going to change it.