

## Monthly Meeting September 1, 2010

### Follow-up Items:

GA: (Jeff Webster) – passed first 30 days. 214 on long-term, 86 on short-term, 11 pending. That is just on open enrollment (311 total) – about 542 GA cases, SSI approval for July 21, down from earlier figures, but are working with the harder cases, in the gray area of whether or not will be approved. Had more denials than seen in the last few months. Really good results with SSI apps over last year 299 apps approved at initial level, 55 at reconsideration and 56 at ALJ. SOAR training this last month. Had a lot more response than could handle, wanted to keep it limited to 25-30, had 35 register and 33 show up. Will have another one in October. 60 on waiting list. Had national director of SOAR in town last week, very helpful in the training. Too early to tell, but hope is that community members trained in SOAR can help with some of the GA caseload. Will have a SOAR summit on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. Best ways to work with community partners – invitations haven't gone out yet. Had quite a few people from corrections at training, getting SOAR rolling before people are released to prevent homeless (can't receive an early release if going to be homeless). Tri-County, Valley Mental Health, housing, veterans, etc. Homeless Summit in October – will have a break-out group that will talk about SOAR.

TANF Emergency Funds Update: (Helen Thatcher) Unavailable to DWS after Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> – TANF EF – expended dollars and they would reimburse 80% - caseload, non-recurrent emergency benefits, subsidized employment. Should be really close to pulling in everyone under this, only problem is big increase in caseloads. Caseloads took up the biggest part of ARRA – other area focused on was rapid re-housing. Contracted with Road Home and DCC housing to get a statewide rapid re-housing activity going. Will continue for at least another year – ARRA money or no money. Contracts were for 2 years. Doing an evaluation of the success. Not meeting the entire need, but made a big dent. The other \$\$\$ on back to work program (soft launch in July) – 3 months of subsidized employment for UI customer – targeting 2,500 people in the program. And 700 youth – still 18-24 at this point. Can continue to do that through the end of our program (can continue past Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> because already in process). If can find a way to not do intensive eligibility is easier to get people on the program – reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies worked for this funding. Time may run out, will continue to serve 700 people and 2,500 people no matter when it finishes. Housing at least for the following year (didn't really get started until February). Nothing is actually going to go away when the funding ends on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>.

Youth program different than the WIA – it is an actual hiring, not paying the wages, treating it the same as the adult back to work initiative. Invoice to get stipend has a retention question.

WDD Transition and Regional Council: (Diane Lovell) Demand Driven and responsive to employer's needs. Brief overview which provides guidance to area directors. Guidance includes community/public partners, etc. State Workforce Investment Board – is the terminal authority for overseeing all of this for the state – and on the Board – federal and state law requires representation on behalf of the communities – now has CAP UT and United Way. Area directors are responsible to report to this Board. Voice for customers resides at State

level. Planned calendar of events and activities. Each economic service area are beginning to create advisory groups under guise of current regional councils. Will vary from economic service area to economic service area.

-Karen Silver - Wasatch South Council – presented with the plan last week, didn't show any CBO's or community partners on it, each service area director gets to decide who is on it. Did raise issue of "job seeker" voice being a part of the discussion – if they are not at the table that employers are going to do their own thing and employees will not have their concerns addressed. Other people did note that. We want a fair economy. Council has decided would only meet four times a year, just before or just after the State Council meets. Many members concerned about how State Council will get input.

Diane – give us an opportunity to see how it works and then give feedback to the area directors and we are sure they will comply.

Sheila – best intentions aside, there is a value to having things in statute. Statutes give protections to make sure all the voices are heard – when the re-evaluation comes, maybe it could be a consideration. Can't project who the players will be.

Chat Feature of MyCase Access: (Casey Erickson) Greg manages "chat" team. Are in the 4<sup>th</sup> week (19<sup>th</sup> day) – had federal partners here last week to observe – are only state in the nation to have a chat feature available for customers – are connecting in to other states to have them do it. Had 6,000 chats as of Wednesday night! Approaching around 80,000 users on MyCase out of customer base. Have seen a reduction in calls – saw about a 20% reduction in calls and wait times. Trying to resolve customer issue – are waiting up to 20 minutes to get a chat person – but are going for resolution. Don't have a waiver to do interviews yet online, but can do it for hearing impaired persons. 6,000 chats probably cut out 3-4 times that many calls.

Laura (Voices) – if issue can't be resolved on Chat – is it sent on to a supervisor, or what happens to the case?

Casey – we take it as far as we can. Higher expectation for resolution on chat employees – because want to use this to help with phone lines, trying to get customers online as much as possible. Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> will have new MyCase launch – had 184 surveys completed to gather information about what they need on the online system to make it better. They want to know what additional information they need and when their case will be processed. This is what the new MyCase launch will have – seen a preliminary build. Can do a demo. Went up and met with Safe Harbor in Davis County – they were having problems accessing services and interested in other issues – did not know about MyCase and chat features – gave it to women in shelter who have limited cell phone minutes. Had 5 emails the next day saying how great this worked.

Kris Fawson – any idea how many people with disabilities are using the Chat?

Casey – know of one where helped a hearing impaired person, no other data at this point. Carolyn – not available for the eligibility interview, DWS wanted that waiver for customers that are disabled, but FNS said will be quite sometime down the road. Strange because do it for UI, hope to get that waiver. Any questions about eligibility cases, everything but UI. Not in Spanish yet, do have one Spanish speaker at this point, information that comes across on the system is not yet in Spanish, in pilot with one team, when expand it want to enhance the language features. Sent out a grant and want to hear back about using a more sophisticated chat client.

Sheila – could not get in to the system, because did not have the right birthdate of their kids. Is there a standard caseload on whose birthdate is being used.

Casey – Still are subject to FOIA requirements on Chat, have to know user ID and password.

Alan – how does it work for authorized representatives?

Casey – haven't done it yet, but looking at opening up for providers.

Greg (DWS managers) – first two weeks was a soft launch and was great, it exploded after that, still trying to figure out maximum capacity to give great service and get to everyone. Understand is the only model around, understand are trying to self-service model. People usually more straightforward/concise on Chat.

DWS and Fathers: (Helen) – in terms of TANF – which promotes fatherhood quite a bit. Made attempts in the past, but hard to engage non-custodial parents, haven't done a lot in terms of specific fatherhood programs. That is not to say that some ESAs don't have a target for this.

Sheila – other states?

Helen – Oklahoma is good, get on AFDC website and there is a whole section on fatherhood resources/research, etc. Colorado is starting an initiative.

FEP Redesign: (Helen) have been approaching it from several workgroups – summary recommendations. A couple of things driving the redesign – wanted to make sure FEP customer was not left behind with the focus in recession on newly unemployed. Participation phenomena narrowed approach for the program. That was never the intent of this program, FEP was full engagement, proactive, plan for future, etc. This is DWS attempt to get back to the basics of helping people get work. SRI research is a jumping off point. Did a four-year cohort wave study – before the recession and followed throughout, may do a fifth year. Majority of people who enter into FEP actually mirror UI customers more – are leaving their own jobs. Stereotype is that women get on it because they lost their partner and that is not true, the vast majority of them have lost their job and don't qualify for UI. Only get 6 weeks of participation for work and we save it up – going to get back to philosophical basics – people want to work, research shows this. Also want to refocus on non-custodial parents better. Handout has some of the principals and a summary. Are going to be developing details

between now and January. Should be some rules to watch for, no time to go into the nitty gritty – can do another meeting specifically on this with Helen. Fully engaged people in relevant activities will take care of participation – this is the hope/theory. Have learned the federal government wants you to improve, not to take your money in a penalty. This administration is very interested in the things that make sense. Helen’s dream – if didn’t make participation, would love to show them the data of people who got work, and have them prove that participation rate is relevant. Intensive case management – daily activity matters, participation slowed down daily activity and didn’t make the activities relevant.

Sheila – part of this came up with the reauthorization – will there be a movement to give states more flexibility?

Helen – will never get away from better accountability. But ACF is asking to get data not required because want to tell a different story to Congress – want to report the right things, no relationship of how things get reported to Congress, so data is suspect. But data is not suspect about participation rates, so that is black and white so easier for Congress to grasp. Want to get to something more reasonable – FEP program is pencil/paper still. Not very sophisticated in data collection and may impact the budget because can’t collect data to prove what they are doing. Want to get more sophisticated, will be less of a burden for everyone.

ESD Questions (Casey Erickson) – can come into ESCs, can mail a request. There may be a cost. Faxing a request. Not a way online per se. There are laws and guidelines about what they are requesting, and there are costs. Is still the ability to do this in the ESCs.

Karen – often requesting information for a hearing, need to see the whole thing in the case record.

Casey – best way to do it is in writing and be specific about dates – may be a cost associated with it. Some fees for faxes. There is a lot of information on MyCase that they can see, they can even put the request through the Chat too.

Case Closures (Karen Silver) – proper identification of reasons for case closure. DWS has to do a yearly case production report to the feds. Not want this report to feds to reflect that all the cases were closed based on withdrawal of application. Concerned may be getting an erroneous reason for why caseload has decreased.

Casey – Feds brought to their attention a Level I denial/Level I Withdrawal – if at face value customer says “I am making \$XX” over financial amount – can withdraw at that level = Level I denial – give them an opportunity to proceed forward or not - can withdraw before all of the information if they are already over eligibility criteria. Will not show up on notices, but does show up in reports to feds – want to adjust process so that will know if it is a level I withdrawal – so it is because of income limits. Want to leave it up to the customer and leave it up to them if they want to go forward or not. Are looking at work that needs to be done with the notices. This is just the “gross test.”

DHS Advocate – 10-15% of cases were told by DWS people initially that they were over the “gross” test and they could have been eligible for other programs. People informally telling them they don’t qualify.

UI Trust Fund and Unemployment Claims – (Ally Isom) Things for the trust look much improved – exhaustion rate 55.7% = average duration = 17.2 weeks – this is up a bit from last year, but weekly benefit amounts are about the same – pretty stable there. Trust outlook has improved ~ \$370 million – revised based on OMB – may resolve solvent until January of 2013!!! New claims are averaging 2,400 a week, which is down from last year, about 29,000 continuing claims average over last quarter – this is down as well. Handout – looks at options. Trigger is when insolvency is projected within a 24-month cycle. Then would look at the various options. Here are some distinct options will have as a choice – will reassess in May 2011 and see where we are then. 42<sup>nd</sup> lowest contribution rate in country and have some of the highest benefits – EAC – it is working, let’s sit tight. Get IQ returns in May – so will get a better feel for what will happen during the year. Take this as a way to educate them about UI. Cultivate allies and keep them educated. Are doing a few things to protect the balance – overpayment recovery (\$3.5 million), Utah Back-to-Work Pilot (\$3.5 million) and DOL grant to help 10,000 UI claimants received more in-depth employment counselor. Will be having a briefing after Thursday, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> – appropriations committee will meet in morning and briefing will be from 1-3 that day. Built into the model are automatic triggers for increasing taxes. Some increases will be triggered and will take effect in January – will better understand where the trust fund will go.

Update on “The List” Discussion: Debbie Herr and her team – do have eligibility workers in these various places – include those outreach staff in those trainings – relationships established and common dialogue. Both privacy issues and eligibility issues. Confidentiality. Critical areas – regarding eligibility.

Diane – more specific – more responsive can be.

Start an email discussion about what specifically should be at the training. Add information on how customer’s with disabilities can access services, etc. LEP clients as well.