

MEDICAID EMPLOYMENT PROJECT GETS OFF THE GROUND

Grant Planning in Progress

Our efforts to develop a strategic plan for the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant have moved up to full speed. Work on the plan will be our primary focus for the remainder of the grant and calendar year. A draft plan must be completed and submitted to the Center for Medicaid Services by the end of November, and a final plan by the end of December.

We need your input and advice in order to develop a meaningful and realistic plan. Details on our planning process and activities, and information about how you and others can participate in these events can be found below.

The Planning Process

Our Strategic Plan Design Team has been meeting regularly since mid-July. The team includes representatives of various Department of Human Services programs, including Lynnae Rutledge (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services), Molly Holsapple (Seniors and People with Disabilities), Michael Moore (Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services) and Brenda Sheppard (Employed Persons with Disabilities/Seniors and People with Disabilities). In addition, S. Travis Wall, our Project Manager, and Project staffers Damon Terzaghi and Paula Fitch, have actively participated in the planning effort.

COMMUNITY FORUMS ON EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO BE HELD

We need your input – your thoughts, suggestions, insight and wisdom – to make this project succeed. Through the community forums (and other processes identified above), we hope to identify what is working when it comes to employment and employment supports for people with disabilities and should be continued; what could work better if it were improved; and, what is missing and needs to be developed. We need to know what needs to be done so that no one with a disability is denied the opportunity to work.

We hope that you will attend one of the community forums that we will be holding around the state between September 27 and October 13. A schedule of the forums and their locations can be found, in the form of a reproducible flyer, on the last page of this newsletter.

Please share this information with other people. In the event you cannot attend a forum but you have information to share, you may submit comments by electronic or regular mail. Please also feel free to call us directly if you have questions or concerns. We can be reached at:

Medicaid Infrastructure Grant/Project
Vocational Rehabilitation Services/DHS
500 Summer Street NE, E-87
Salem, Oregon 97301-1120
503-947-5469 (phone) 947-5894 (TTY)
503-947-5025 (fax)
mig2@dhs.state.or.us

Recently, the design team agreed on a planning process. It will entail:

- Identifying and assessing key employment opportunities and challenges through the development of issue papers.
- Convening of public community forums in order to learn what employment opportunities, challenges and issues need to be addressed in order to make continuing employment a reality for Oregonians with disabilities. Beginning later this month, community forums will be held in Bend, Eugene, Medford, Newport, Ontario, Pendleton, Portland and Salem.
- Assembling and utilizing a Leadership Council to provide project staff with direction and guidance in developing the strategic plan and implementing it over the next three years. The council will consist of consumers and survivors, advocates, employer and business leaders, and representatives of governmental agencies and programs that serve and support persons with disabilities.

Planning Timeline

A number of planning activities are underway. Others will be initiated shortly. Our current timeline is:

August 22-October 14

- Interviews of key individuals
- Assess “strategic” opportunities and challenges

September 21

- Leadership Council meeting

September 27-October 13

- Hold Community Forums throughout the state

October 19

- Leadership Council meeting

October 24-November 10

- Follow-up discussions with key decision makers, community leaders and regional/national contacts

- Develop draft Strategic Plan

November 16

- Leadership Council meeting – review draft Plan

November 14-29

- Disseminate draft Plan for public review and comment
- Refine draft Plan

November 30

- Submit draft Plan to Center for Medicaid Services

December

- Leadership Council meeting (if needed) – respond to any concerns of Center for Medicaid Services
- Revise and finalize Plan

December 31

- Submit final Plan to Center for Medicaid Services

Progress to Date

Over the past month we have initiated and/or completed a number of important activities:

- S. Travis Wall, Project Manager, assumed his position on a full-time basis on September 6.

- Travis has begun to meet with consumer and advocacy groups, employer organizations, and state and local human service programs in order to brief people about our progress and activities, and learn about their hopes and concerns for the project.
- Arrangements have been made with a number of Centers for Independent Living to sponsor the community forums; and Howard Klink, a disability consultant, has been hired to facilitate the forums.
- Most of the interviews of key individuals have been completed and the papers on key issues are being researched and written.
- The Leadership Council is in the process of being selected and will have its first meeting on September 21.

MORE ON THE MEDICAID INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT AND PROJECT

Earlier this year, Oregon was awarded a “Medicaid Infrastructure Grant” by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services. The Department of Human Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is responsible for administering the grant.

The mission of the four-year grant and project is to enhance the quality of life in Oregon by achieving, maintaining, and advancing the competitive and inclusive employment of persons with disabilities.

In partnership with consumers, survivors and advocates, private and public

employers, and allied state and local governmental agencies, we will:

- Empower people with disabilities in obtaining meaningful employment.
- Educate and engage employers with a business case for employing persons with disabilities.
- Enhance the availability and effectiveness of employment supports for persons with disabilities.
- Engage Oregon’s workforce system and expand its availability to persons with disabilities.

Medicaid Infrastructure Grant/Project Staff:

S. Travis Wall, Project Manager	travis.wall@state.or.us	(503) 945-5857
Damon Terzaghi, Research Analyst	damon.terzaghi@state.or.us	(503) 947-5123
Paula Fitch, Administrative Specialist	paula.fitch@state.or.us	(503) 947-5469

This document can be obtained in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities upon request by contacting Paula Fitch at (503) 947-5469, (503) 947-5025 (fax), (503) 945-5894 (TTY) or mig2@dhs.state.or.us. Available formats are: large print, Braille, audio tape recording, electronic format and oral presentation.

MEDICAID EMPLOYMENT PROJECT TO HOLD COMMUNITY FORUMS
Come tell us about how to make employment a reality for people with disabilities

Earlier this year, Oregon was awarded a “Medicaid Infrastructure Grant” by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services. The purpose of this grant is to make real and meaningful work possible for all Oregonians with disabilities. The Medicaid Infrastructure Project, which is responsible for the grant, is holding a series of community forums in order to learn what is working, what could work better, and what is missing when it comes to employment of persons with disabilities and related services and supports. This information will be used to develop and implement a plan for carrying out this “systems-change” project. Please come and share your thoughts and suggestions.

Date	City	Time	Location
September 27, 2005	Portland	9:00 – 11:30 am	Independent Living Resources, 2410 SE 11 th Ave, Portland
September 28, 2005	Salem	1:30 – 4:00 pm	Disability Services Office 3420 Cherry Ave NE, Suite 110, Salem
September 29, 2005	Gresham	1:30 – 4:00 pm	Dept of Human Services, Sharon Kelly A Room 600 NE 8 th St, Gresham
October 4, 2005	Medford	2:15 – 5:00 pm	Jackson County Public Library, 205 S. Central Ave, Medford
October 5, 2005	Eugene	9:00 – 11:30 am	Atrium Building, Saul Meeting Room (3rd Floor) 99 W 10 th St, Eugene
October 6, 2005	Newport	9:00 – 11:30 am	Newport Recreation Center 225 SE Avery St, Newport
October 11, 2005	Bend	9:00 – 11:30 am	Bend Senior Center, Craft Room 1600 SE Reed Market Road, Bend
October 12, 2005	Pendleton	9:00 – 11:30 am	City Hall, Community Conference Room, 501 SW Emigrant Ave, Pendleton
October 13, 2005	Ontario	9:00 – 11:30 am	Dept of Human Services, Snake River Room 186 East Lane, Ontario

Accommodations are available that allow individuals with disabilities to participate in and access this scheduled event. To request an accommodation for this event, please contact Paula Fitch at (503) 947-5469 at least 48 hours prior to the forum. Additional Notes: The above schedule was prepared on September 10, 2005. Please disregard earlier notices. For more information about the Project, contact the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, 500 Summer St. NE, E-87, Salem, OR, 97301-1120, (503) 947-5469, mig2@dhs.state.or.us.