

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FACETS OF SSI PROJECT WITHOUT FUNDING:

SSA:

*Meet with SSA district or local primary office managers to:

--discuss work of staff involved in assisting homeless adults with SSI/SSDI claims

--determine methods of collaboration to make these claims move more smoothly, e.g., (1) possible use of staff's agency's address for claimant to use if needed; (2) submission of 1696 Appointment of Representative form with each homeless person's claim; (3) setting appointments so that agency staff don't have to wait with a person to submit claim; (4) ask SSA to consider assigning particular claims representatives to serve this population. This would facilitate communication for agencies' staffs and claimants alike; (5) if DDS agrees, have cases flagged for claims examiners there to know claimant is homeless.

DDS:

*Meet with DDS medical relations officer to: (1) determine how to facilitate provision of medical evidence; (2) work to ensure that contact between claims examiners and agency staff is optimal; (3) ask DDS to consider having claims examiners contact claimant's representative for additional information before a claim is denied; (4) ask DDS to consider assigning particular claims examiners to flagged cases.

PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY:

*In meeting with SSA, ask SSA for clear guidelines re: current presumptive eligibility rules.

*Ask SSA/DDS to consider a pilot project in which they and DDS train community staff re: SSI/SSDI eligibility and authorize presumptive eligibility similar to the SSI Outreach Project process to determine if this could assist more effectively.

STAFF RESOURCES:

*Arrange collaboration with mental health providers re: consultative evaluations, psychiatric evaluations to determine if psychiatrists/psychologists would be willing to do such evaluations on a limited number of individuals.

*Form coalition of outreach/agency staff who are serving this population so as to ensure that all services provided are done so.

*Form agreements among agencies that a certain percentage of existing staff's time will be devoted to SSI/SSDI claims.

*Provide means for staff to conduct outreach, even if it means vehicle sharing.

TRAINING:

MANY WORKERS MISUNDERSTAND THE DISABILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS. CLEAR, COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING OF STAFF IS CRITICAL. USE SSA/DDS TO DO SO AND BRING IN, EVEN FOR ONE SESSION, TRAINERS WITH EXPERTISE IN PROVIDING/DEVELOPING MEDICAL EVIDENCE AND WHO HAVE FAMILIARITY WITH COMMUNITY WORKERS' CONSTRAINTS. WHILE THIS IS A COST, IT IS MINIMAL COMPARED TO THE IMPACT SUCH TRAINING CAN HAVE.

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