BPA&O Collaboration with One-Stop Centers, Part I

A car through her PASS Plan, and secured employment. This happened because the BPA&O Benefits Specialist and the One-Stop staff worked as a team to get her what she needed to go to work, and it all happened in one convenient, totally accessible location.

“This kind of program should be available in every One-Stop in the country, to assist a population that has been ignored for too long,” states Rexene Picard, Executive Director of FutureWorks, a One-Stop Career Center in Springfield, Massachusetts.

“Having a BPA&O on CareerPoint’s premises has increased resource possibilities,” remarks David Gadaire, Executive Director of CareerPoint. “Since the origin of this relationship, CareerPoint has been awarded a Workforce Incentive Grant, became the first Career Center in the country to become an Employment Network under the Ticket to Work program, partnered in a State Allocation Grant, received Navigator funding, and has been asked to trial a DOL Workforce Action Grant.”

As one BPA&O/One-Stop customer stated: “I was very pleased to work with the Benefits Specialist at CareerPoint,”. “I liked the fact that I was not singled out as a person with a psychiatric disability and that I had all the services of the Career Center at my disposal. I was given prompt, accurate service and the counseling helped me clarify some misinformation I had received elsewhere. I run a consumer support center for people with psychiatric disabilities and have referred many of them for benefits counseling at the Career Centers in their areas. Thank you for your much needed work.”

Co-location of services provides exceptional opportunities as highlighted in this promising practice. Part II of this brief further explores possible collaboration strategies between One-Stop and BPA&O staffing with the goal of promoting employment outcomes for people with disabilities served by these two systems.

This is one of a series of articles that have been reviewed for accuracy by the Social Security Administration (SSA), Office of Employment Support Programs. However, the thoughts and opinions expressed in these materials are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or official policy positions of the SSA.

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Endnotes:
ServiceProviders/bpaofactsheet.html
2 P.L. 105-220
3 64 FR 9403-9404 (February 25, 1999).
4 64 FR 9403-9404 (February 25, 1999).
5 20 CFR 662.100(a)
6 Section 134(c) of WIA (29 U.S.C.2864(c)); 20 CFR 662.100(c)
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The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has also undertaken major reform with the passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The WIA requires states to streamline services for eligible individuals by integrating multiple employment and training programs at the “street level” through the creation of One-Stop Career Centers. According to DOL, eligible individuals include individuals with disabilities and other persons with multiple barriers to employment. In order to make services available to all customers, the One-Stop system must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

The One-Stop delivery system is envisioned as a system under which One-Stop “partners” are responsible for administering separate workforce investments for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and other human resource programs and funding streams. This collaborative approach will create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance access to the programs, individualized employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. The system must include at least one comprehensive physical center, that must provide core services in one location and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by One-Stop partners.

The One-Stop system has been identified by the Social Security Administration (SSA) as an important element in the development and implementation of the initiatives set forth in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. The SSA has encouraged BPA&Os to collaborate in order to make local area and other aggregate demographic information available to all customers, the One-Stops included sharing customer information without violating confidentiality. The BPA&O staff made special efforts when they worked with One-Stop Specialists to make their services available to customers with disabilities. As a result of these efforts, the One-Stops included sharing customer information with both the BPA&O and One-Stop staff.

The Challenge: Providing Benefits Counseling as Part of a Comprehensive Employment System

One of the primary challenges faced when the BPA&O first started providing services within the One-Stops included sharing customer information on benefits services available to all customers, the One-Stops included sharing customer information with both the BPA&O and One-Stop staff. The BPA&O staff made special efforts when they worked with One-Stop Specialists to make their services available to customers with disabilities. As a result of these efforts, the One-Stops included sharing customer information with both the BPA&O and One-Stop staff.

The collaboration between the BPA&O and the One-Stops has been beneficial for all parties involved, particularly the customers. The One-Stop Career Centers provide customer referrals to the BPA&Os when customers need information about benefits counseling. The BPA&Os then provide the benefits counseling services to customers. The benefits specialists are able to work with customers to help them make informed decisions about their benefits.

Collaboration increases the customer base

The collaboration between the Resource Partnership and the BPA&O has been beneficial for all parties involved, particularly the customers. The One-Stop Career Centers provide customer referrals to the BPA&Os when customers need information about benefits counseling. The BPA&Os then provide the benefits counseling services to customers. The benefits specialists are able to work with customers to help them make informed decisions about their benefits.

The benefits specialists and the One-Stops are able to work together to provide comprehensive benefits counseling to customers. The benefits specialists are able to work with customers to help them make informed decisions about their benefits. The One-Stops are able to provide the benefits counseling services to customers. The benefits specialists are able to work with customers to help them make informed decisions about their benefits.

Collaboration improves the quality of services

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