

MINUTES

April 17, 2009

Program Connections Subcommittee of the Income Maintenance Advisory Committee

Attendees:

Milda Aksamitauskas, DHS/DHCAA/BEM
Molly Bandt, Disability Rights Wisconsin
Jim Bates, DCF/Child Care
Rebecca Brueggeman, DCF/BW-2
Vicki Jessup, DHS/DHCAA/BEM
Shirley Kitchen, Dodge County
Doreen Lang, Wood County
Erin Mader, Covering Kids and Families
Connie Mageland, Rock County
Liz Maloch, Sheboygan County

Wendy Metcalf, Columbia County
Michelle Pauser, DHS/DHCAA/BEM
Jon Peacock, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
Amy Piotter, Outagamie County
Marilyn Putz, Walworth W-2/Kaiser Group
Amy Roland, Outagamie County
Margaret Rosenthal, DHS/DHCAA/BEM
Claire Smith, DHS/DHCAA
Mike Wineke, Dane County
John Rathman, Outagamie County

1. Administrative Items

- Approval of the March 2009 minutes was postponed until the May 2009 meeting.
- Several new members have joined the committee.

2. Local Agency Workload Reduction Strategies

A statewide summit for eligibility workers was held in March and generated a list of workload reduction strategies. The committee discussed some of those ideas in detail:

Income Budgeting

- It would be ideal if all of the programs used 2 and 4 as multipliers instead of 2.15 and 4.3. Changing Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus to 2.15 and 4.3 is not an option. FNS told DHS staff that we could change the income policy for FS to 2 and 4 if TANF income policy changed as well.
- Self-employment – Determining countable income has become more challenging with BC+ because individuals with higher income are now applying for their children. Simplified policy would help decrease workload for these cases. DHS is exploring the possibility of using a standard deduction instead of actual expenses. However, actual expenses could be used if they are verified and exceed the standard deduction amount.
- Child Support income- counted for all programs except for W-2. The budgeting is challenging because of policy complexities (arrear, need to budget income individually for the child(ren) for BC+, etc.) The data exchange isn't real-time and could be significantly improved.

ACCESS

- Require individuals to establish an account and emphasize that an SSN will be required (these are already scheduled for the May CARES enhancements)
- Add a video that people can watch with information about program requirements and the "next steps" after an application is submitted.
- Add Child Care to the ACCESS tools (AIE, AFB, CMB and RMC)

3. Community Partners

From the local agency perspective, it would be helpful if community partners...

- Notified applicants that they will need to supply verification after an application is submitted.
- Made sure people understand that a telephone interview is required for FoodShare. This is an important appointment. Local agencies stated applicants aren't always available at the

scheduled interview time. Or, they are doing the interview while at work, or while walking their dog or going through a fast food drive thru, etc.

- Didn't inform people about potential eligibility.

Claire announced that DHS is partnering with Second Harvest Foodbank on a FoodShare outreach project. They received \$125,000 grant from the Madison Community Foundation, and those funds will be matched with federal funds. They will target Dane County and the Southwest part of the state. They will be establishing a 1-800 number to help people get signed up for FoodShare and provide them with information about emergency food assistance that is available.

Next meeting: Friday May 22, 2009