Learning Objectives

- SSA’s partnership plus model
- How to partner with other employment networks
  - Workforce Entities
  - Community Rehab Providers
  - Non-traditional Partners
- Putting Together the Whole System
- The Challenges of System Implementation
“Partnership Plus” Model

New TTW regulations revise the partnership between VR and ENs to create a win-win-win.

- **WIN** – Beneficiary receives the supports that they need to be self-sufficient
- **WIN** – VR and EN are both on the same page of supporting the Ticket Holder to work and earn above SGA resulting in cost reimbursement to VR and Ticket payments to the EN
- **WIN** – Everyone wins through the Social Security, State and Federal taxes paid by the worker
Highlights of Partnership Plus

- VR Cost Reimbursement payments and EN Milestone and Outcome payments both possible for same beneficiary
  - Based on provision of sequential, not concurrent, services
  - After VR closes the case, the beneficiary may assign his/her Ticket to an EN to receive long-term supports and services necessary to maintain employment
Highlights of Partnership Plus

- Although the Ticket is technically not assigned to VR, new “in-use SVR” status extends Continuing Disability Review (CDR) protection to beneficiary while receiving VR services under Cost Reimbursement
- Ticket is not available during this period to be assigned to another EN
Highlights of Partnership Plus

- VR also has the option of assigning the Ticket with the Ticket Holders mutual consent
  - must choose to assign the Ticket or to pursue traditional cost-reimbursement
  - Ticket Holder maintains the right to take their Ticket out of assignment at any time

**Please note:** When VR functions as an EN, the opportunity to get both cost reimbursement and milestone and outcome payments for that Ticket is no longer available.
The Workforce Investment Act mandates that all workers receive support in returning to work (including workers with disabilities).

The Workforce Investment Act mandates that Vocational Rehabilitation is included as a mandatory partner represented on the Workforce Board.

The value placed upon this partnership varies from State to State.
Working with Workforce Entities

- The New Ticket to Work Regulations encourage One Stops and Workforce Boards to become Employment Networks by stating that they are automatically eligible.

- 40 new ENs represented State or Regional Workforce Boards providing 119 new locations for Ticket holders to receive return to work services.
Working with Workforce Entities

- Workforce brings resources to the table:
  - Computer Classes
  - Resume Building
  - Individual Training Accounts
  - Post-Employment Services
  - Youth Programs
  - A large network of Employers
Courting Community Rehab Providers

Funding through the Ticket to Work program offers Community Rehab Providers an opportunity to:

- Provide ongoing services and supports
- Carry out their mission
- Supplement funding cuts
- Flexible dollars
Non-Traditional EN Partners

Establishing Tradition with Non-traditional Partners can lead to increased success in achieving the level of work necessary to capture cost reimbursement

- Non-traditional EN partners may include:
  - Employers
  - Colleges/Universities
  - Faith Based Groups
  - Centers for Independent Living
  - State Agencies
  - Cities, Counties, etc.
Putting Together the Whole System

- Connecticut - Pure Partnership Plus
- Indiana - Pure Partnership Plus
- Maryland - Using Partnership Plus for Supported Employment Consumers
- Utah - Support Work Independence Pilot
- Virginia - Bonus Payments to ENs
- Wisconsin - TTW Pilot Project
- Florida – Partnership Plus Models

All of the models are evolving and may change.

(SSA Publication, “Partnership Plus”)
Connecticut - Pure Partnership Plus

- The Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) took the lead in convening a work group of service providers and other agency partners to explore how to utilize the Ticket Program to both encourage successful employment and expand resources for SSI and SSDI consumers.

- BRS supported ongoing dialogues and provided technical assistance to ensure a complete understanding of the opportunities under the new TTW Program. In an effort to take full advantage of the Partnership Plus option, BRS will serve all beneficiaries under the CR program.

- When VR closes a case, the beneficiary will be encouraged to assign his/her Ticket to an EN and receive ongoing support services, job retention services, and other types of support.
Connecticut - Pure Partnership Plus (cont.)

BRS expects to benefit as more beneficiaries attain the nine months of net SGA earnings that trigger CR payments.

- ENs expect to benefit as more resources are brought into the provider network through Phase 2 Milestone and Outcome payments.

- The goal is to increase the overall resources to the employment system in Connecticut by increasing both CR payments to BRS and EN payments to community agencies.
Indiana - Pure Partnership Plus

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) in Indiana operates under a “payment for results” model with its vendors.

- Aspects of this model are being carried over to Indiana’s approach to Partnership Plus where VRS will serve all beneficiaries under the Cost Reimbursement program.

- VR Counselors will encourage all beneficiaries to assign their Tickets to ENs after VR closes their cases.
Indiana - Pure Partnership Plus (cont.)

- VRS will be asking ENs to share documentation of earnings with VRS to facilitate reimbursement.

- VRS is planning to offer a payment of $1000 to ENs that are successful in stabilizing beneficiaries in employment and getting them to 8 months of net SGA earnings.

- VRS can include this $1000 payment to the EN as payment for job retention services as part of their request for reimbursement for post-employment services after case closure.
Maryland - Using Partnership Plus for Supported Employment Consumers

- Many service providers in Maryland implement evidence-based practices (EBP) in supported employment.

- The focus on EBP is achieved through a close working relationship between the MD Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and the MD Mental Health Administration (MHA) which administered services through county authorities (CSAs) that are provided by community non-profit providers.

- A regional CSA has agreed to function as the “EN of record” and provide administrative Ticket support for a statewide system of supported employment providers that will work together under the EN umbrella to develop and execute individualized work plans and report information and data to the CSA EN.
Under the plan, DORS and MHA continue to serve Ticket Holders jointly under CR until the client exits DORS through employment. At this point, the CSA accepts the beneficiary’s Ticket assignment.

- The CSA EN then receives Phase 2 Milestone and Outcome payments as the beneficiary achieves the required levels of work and earnings.

- The CSA “EN of record” keeps a small portion of each EN payment to cover the cost of providing administrative support and the remainder of each EN payment goes to the service provider that served the beneficiary.
Utah - Support Work Independence Pilot

In Utah, a partnership between the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), the UT State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR), private providers and local businesses is looking at the Ticket Program and state “HB 45” funding as an opportunity to ensure ongoing support services for Social Security beneficiaries engaged in supported employment.

- Individuals who are wait-listed for supported employment services at DSPD and are eligible for “HB 45” funding are referred to USOR where they receive vocational rehabilitation services and are placed in supported employment.
Utah - Support Work Independence Pilot (cont.)

- When these individuals are stabilized in employment for 90 days, USOR closes the case.

- A beneficiary with a Ticket has the option of taking his/her Ticket to an EN that provides ongoing supports.

- The “HB 45” funding would sustain the EN for a period of time until Ticket payments were initiated.

- Access to work incentives planning is an integral part of this service delivery model.
Virginia - Bonus Payments to ENs

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) is using Partnership Plus to further its goal of expanding the total pool of resources available in the state to get beneficiaries with disabilities into the workforce, maintain their employment, and increase their earnings.

- DRS will serve most beneficiaries under the CR program and encourage them to assign their Tickets to ENs when VR closes these cases.
Virginia - Bonus Payments to ENs

- To make up for the loss of Phase 1 Milestone payments, DRS offers bonus payments to ENs that successfully assist these beneficiaries. One bonus payment is available when an EN gets a beneficiary’s earnings up to SGA and another when the beneficiary attains nine months of net SGA earnings which will triggers a CR payment to DRS. VA is also operating a small pilot program where DRS will function as an EN and work with a small group of mental health supported employment providers funded by DRS and a state-funded extended employment program.
Virginia - Bonus Payments to ENs

- Following completion of VR services, participating beneficiaries will be encouraged to go to a partnering supported employment provider to receive ongoing support services.

- DRS will maintain the beneficiary’s Ticket assignment and share a majority of the Milestone and Outcome payments with the provider with the expectation that this funding will be used to expand their services.
Wisconsin - TTW Pilot Project

- The Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is interested in promoting increased flexibility to be better equipped to provide individualized services to VR consumers.

- DVR is implementing a pilot project where VR Counselors will determine at the time of plan development whether to serve a beneficiary under CR or as an EN.
Wisconsin - TTW Pilot Project

- The beneficiary’s stated wage goal relative to SGA earnings and, as appropriate, vocational assessment information, including a plan for long-term employment supports, will be used to forecast capacity for weekly hours of work and earnings.

- Beneficiaries who are likely to achieve nine months of net SGA earnings will be served under the Partnership Plus option.

- Those who are not expect to attain such levels of work and earnings will be served under a pilot project where DVR will function as an EN and share Milestone and Outcome payments with entities that provide ongoing support services after closure of the VR case.
In addition, DVR counselors will provide beneficiaries who are wait-listed based on the State’s order of selection (OOS) with a list of ENs in the local area and information on the services these ENs provide.

DVR counselors will work with all beneficiaries to help them understand the cash value and potential use of their Tickets, and the advantages of coordinating post-VR services available through ENs.

Beneficiaries will be informed of WI’s efforts to develop a statewide network of ENs and be told that ENs will likely be marketing their services to jointly served consumers and to OOS wait-listed referrals.
Florida - EN Referral and Partnership Agreement

- Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FDVR) has drafted an Agreement that incorporates the ‘Partnership Plus’ model.

- Two referral opportunities are available for FDVR to refer Ticket-eligible consumers to an EN; 1) SSA Consumers whose services are on hold due to the Order of Selection and 2) SSA Consumers who are successfully employed and can benefit from ongoing support services to achieve a goal of self-sufficiency.
Florida - EN Referral and Partnership Agreement (cont.)

- ENs accepting referrals off the OOS waiting list have an opportunity to work with the consumer and receive payment under the TTTW Program once outcomes are achieved.

- ENs accepting referrals of consumers who are successfully closed but need ongoing support will be paid a fee of $1,000 when the consumer achieves SGA level of employment and earnings. Services provided under this scenario are considered to be post employment job-related services.
The Challenges of System Implementation

1. Fear of Loss of Benefits
2. Capacity of WIPA programs
3. Need for Medicaid Buy-In
4. Challenges incurred due to the current Economic Climate
5. New Ticket needs Partnership
6. Special issues imposed by Order of Selection and Waiting Lists
Additional Resources

SSA - www.ssa.gov/work

CESSI - www.cessi.net/ttw

Maximus - www.yourtickettowork.com
Questions…

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THANK YOU!!!
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