



Human Services Administration

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Family Stabilization Intensive Case Management Collaboration

Overview: Family Stabilization is a collaborative effort to address needs of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families customers experiencing barriers to participating in Welfare-to-Work activities.

Challenge: California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Welfare-to-Work (WTW) customers experience a range of situations that may present barriers to participation in the WTW program and prevent successful progress towards self-sufficiency. These situations often involve family challenges as well as individual issues, and may involve crises that destabilize the family and interfere with participation. Traditional supportive services provided to CalWORKs WTW customers are focused on the participating parent or adult and are not comprehensive enough to address issues of other family members, or of families with multiple barriers to participation. This gap in services may prevent the customer from achieving unsubsidized employment within the WTW participation timeframe. Customers must maximize their training and employment opportunities during their WTW participation, which makes barrier identification and removal (through an array of services) critical to a customer's success.

Failure to address service needs of family members holistically may result in nonparticipation and sanction, which leads to a decrease in the customers' CalWORKs benefit amount and chances of achieving self-sufficiency. Customers who experience multiple barriers require linkage (referrals, links, etc.) to multiple agencies and County operated programs, and more intensive case management. Because of this need, collaboration between County agencies and community-based organizations (CBOs) is essential.

Innovative Solution: Utilizing a collaborative approach, the San Bernardino County TAD, DBH, ARMC, and community-based organizations are working together to address needs of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) customers experiencing multiple barriers to participating in WTW activities. FS is a voluntary program offered to eligible WTW customers that provides unique services, including treatment of all family members, rapid rehousing, car repairs, tattoo removal, and other services not available to customers who do not volunteer for the program.

The goal of FS is to provide services to increase customer success in the WTW program and remove barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. FS enhances the level of customer participation in employment and training programs by providing education, referrals to available treatment options, linkages to resources, and intensive case management to minimize barriers to success. The customer's WTW time clock is stopped during participation in the FS Program, allowing the customer time to address his/her barriers to self-sufficiency without the additional requirement of meeting Federal participation requirements; this allows the customer to focus on resolving barriers to provide more opportunity for future success. San Bernardino County uniquely designed its FS program and menu of services to meet the specific needs of its WTW population, including services to address needs including: 1) Homeless Assistance; 2) Mental Health (MH); 3) Domestic Violence (DV); 4) Substance Abuse (SA); and 5) Vehicle Repair. Standard practices include: 1) Open and consistent communication between operational

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staff and management staff; 2) Leveraging of DBH resources; 3) Co-location of TAD and DBH staff; and 4) Customized services based on each family's needs.

San Bernardino County provides an innovative approach to issues of homelessness by offering multiple housing assistance services that are tailored to the family. Having a home is a basic need and assisting FS customer families holistically with housing addresses that need and allows a progression to focusing on other barriers to success and employment, such as mental illness, substance use disorders and domestic violence. Customers are referred for services and meet with DBH Case Managers at least once per week as long as participation is warranted. DBH Case Managers develop a plan for the customer and meet with WTW staff regularly to review progress.

Once a customer no longer wishes to participate or progresses successfully through the FS program, he/she is transitioned to regular WTW activities and participation and his/her WTW participation time clock is reactivated.

Originality: The collaborative partnership between San Bernardino County Transitional Assistance Department (TAD), Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC), and community-based organizations has enabled the County to assist in breaking customer self-sufficiency barriers by offering family-centered case management. This effort contributes to building a sustainable future for our CalWORKs families and the collaborative approach can be replicated by any State or County.

Cost Effectiveness: The FS Program allocation from the TANF and General Fund were made available upon approval of the Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget Act. This allocation was used to develop contracts with DBH, ARMC and CBOs to provide direct services to referred customers and family members. TAD and DBH were able to leverage existing: 1) County staff; 2) Contracts between agencies; 3) Technology; and 4) TAD support division program and training experts to develop material and deliver training regarding the program and intensive case management as a routine function, at no additional cost to TAD. No additional County funds were used to implement and maintain the FS Program.

Results: The collaborative efforts of TAD, DBH, ARMC to provide a holistic approach to addressing needs has enabled the FS Program to be very successful in reducing barriers experienced by CalWORKs families, providing 2,415 instances of direct services to individuals from July 2014 through December 2015. During that timeframe, the collaborative: 1) Permanently housed 145 families; 2) Identified that 70 (84%) remained in stable housing (per a six-month follow-up conducted on 83 families housed from March 2015 through August 2015); 3) Effectively identified and provided services for domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues to 2,174 individuals; 4) Provided intensive case management services to individuals/families for six months or more; 5) Provided vehicle diagnosis and repairs, totaling \$5,331, to families; 6) Offered tattoo removal for customers with restrictions to becoming employed due to tattoo location; 7) Streamlined and coordinated operations to utilize existing staff and maximize resources; and 8) Promoted teamwork and collaboration within the county with co-location of agency staff.

Public and private collaboration is key to achieving a healthy and stable community. Working together and leveraging available resources is enabling San Bernardino County to assist in breaking customer self-sufficiency barriers. Offering family-centered intensive case management and financial assistance, and addressing housing and family needs allows customers to move past basic needs and better focus on successful WTW participation, necessary to achieving self-sufficiency.

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