



August 2013

SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery

Illinois E-News

SOARing to Success!

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Questions?
Click Here



Contact **Beth Orchard** in DuPage & Kane counties or **Sue Augustus** if outside this area.

This newsletter is part of a project between Prairie State Legal Services and Americorps VISTA.



Cathie – Rosecrance Ware Center – Rockford

Cathie has been doing SOAR approximately eight months. Her client was extremely ill when he came to [Rosecrance](#) and was very symptomatic the day of his scheduled phone interview. A PATH team member picked him up at the shelter and transported him but he disappeared between the front door and Cathie's office.

The entire PATH team split up to search for him within Rosecrance.

Cathie ran into him and brought him back to her office. A team leader was able to calm him down and a PATH team member came to sit with him while they completed the phone interview. *The client was approved in THREE weeks*, received income support and Medicaid and now has a small apartment. Cathie's client found the support he needed with the Rosecrance team. **SOAR's truly a TEAM effort!**

Sarah – Facing Forward to End Homelessness – Chicago

Sarah has been working with SOAR for two to three years. The client was a resident of Facing Forward's Supportive Housing Program and was her home since 2008 when Sarah began the disability process.

Over the course of five years, Sarah worked to secure disability for her client. In December, 2012, the case was referred to Sue Augustus at [Health and Disability Advocates](#) and subsequently accepted. Sue worked with the case manager to gather additional evidence and the case was approved. *"SOAR really cares about the consumer and their well being," Sarah said.* Her client now receives supports because of the **SOAR team approach!**

Did You Know?

Social Security FY 2012 data is out. A chart outlining decisions made in 2012 for disability determination was recently released. Outlined within are the percentages of allowances and denials at the various stages of the disability determination process from initial application through federal court decisions.

Illinois currently has a 67% approval rate using SOAR. To see how this stacks up to the current SSA data, [download the chart here](#). You can also research previous years' data on their website, accessible [here](#).

Upcoming Webinar: SOAR and Appeals, Wed., Aug. 28 3-4:30 pm (ET)

Learn how to file necessary documents to protect your applicant's appeal rights. Hear from SOAR practitioners who have prepared appeals and learn helpful skills. The call will also cover requesting an 'on the record' decision with help from a SOAR practitioner who had success representing clients at the hearing level. Useful tips about preparing for a hearing will also be shared. Don't miss it! [Register here](#).

Questions? Comments and Feedback? Email [Beth Orchard](#) for assistance.

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SOAR Q&A

Q: *I'm waiting for medical records for my SOAR client. Should I wait to send the application to SSA and secure the protective filing date?*

A: **Send in the application ASAP. Records can be sent in once received. Waiting will delay the protective filing date and can affect how much benefit the client receives.**

With your help, they can SOAR to success!

Share your successes!

Email [Beth](#) to print it in the newsletter.



Motivating You!

Quality Review Checklist

Below are some tips and tools to use when doing a Quality Review check of a SOAR application

What is Quality Review (QR)?

This process helps the case worker review all components of the application to make sure the information is complete, nothing is incorrect or omitted and ensures the SOAR application follows the process. This also includes the Medical Summary Report (MSR), a critical component of a successful SOAR application.



What is included in a QR check? The components are:

- ✓ Establish a protective filing date
- ✓ SSI/SSDI Application: Non-medical components
- ✓ SSI/SSDI Application: Internet Disability Report
- ✓ Medical Summary Report (MSR)

Do we need to do one?

It is not a required component but is a very important part of the process. Having a second pair of eyes to review dates, pieces of medical evidence and the MSR will not only ensure the SOAR process was followed correctly but makes it more probable any errors will be caught before submission.

Download a Quality Review Checklist.

Click [here](#) to download a QR from the toolbox on [SOAR's website](#). Still have questions? Download a PowerPoint of the Quality Review webinar [archived online](#) or view the video [here](#).

What's Up, SOAR?

As of June 24, 2013, proof of identity will be required for anyone applying for either a replacement Social Security card or requesting a print-out. These documents must prove U.S. citizenship (if not established in their records) or current work authorized immigration status/new valid non-work reason. Implementing these changes is hoped to lessen issues of counterfeit, misuse and identify theft of the cards.

Please direct clients to the [Social Security website](#) before sending them to an SSA office. The [list of documents](#) they must bring to the office are online and will save clients time.

Arriving Soon: SOAR Online Training! The SOAR TA Center is launching an online curriculum. *This will be offered as an alternative to in-person trainings.* Pilots for the curriculum will be conducted in August and September with a goal to make it widely available by Nov 1. Individuals will learn core elements of completing SSI/SSDI applications using SOAR, including completion of a SOAR packet. *Stay tuned for more information in the September newsletter!*

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The ACA and You

What's happening with the Medicaid expansion and ACA implementation across Illinois

Implementation of the ACA is less than two months away. Two websites were launched to provide comprehensive resources on health insurance options and mental health treatment.

Healthcare.gov provides resources for Americans to select their health insurance options. The interactive website explains available plans provided by the Affordable Care Act and is available in both English and Spanish. For those requiring assistance with selecting the best insurance option, funding for Navigators and Assisters was [announced recently](#) outlining where they can go for help. Visit the [website](#) for more information.



MentalHealth.gov is supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A navigation menu helps people search for information about featured topics concerning mental health as well as what signs to be aware of and a national mental health treatment locator. Additional resources are available for families, providers and community leaders. Find out more by visiting their [website](#).



**Illinois
Health
Matters**



*Are there topics you would like to see discussed in the newsletter? Would you like to share a success story? Contact [Beth Orchard](#) to print them in the upcoming September edition of **SOAR News**.*