

September 2013

SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery

Illinois: SOARing Together

SOARing to Success!

Betty Hartwig—TLS Veterans—McHenry County

TLS Veterans has two SOAR-certified staff members, and since June, we have begun to assist three veterans from our Veterans Resource Center in McHenry. One case we're working on involves assisting a veteran with an appeal. This veteran is notably grateful for our ability to provide time to work on the appeal, currently in process.

The second case came to us through our monthly mobile food pantry, operated from our McHenry location. When veterans and families came for food recently, one of them approached a SOAR certified Peer Specialist to seek assistance. Documents are still being collected in accordance to his comfort level but we look forward to assisting him!

Finally, we recently began a new application for a veteran. He was referred to us from the local Community Based Outreach Clinic (CBOC). We are thrilled to 'put feet on the street' to assist veterans and add value to the community by building awareness with local partners to service their clients' SSI/SSDI claims. **Together, we'll SOAR!**

Cari Biamonte—Housing Authority—Henry County

There was a person who hung around outside the Sr Center everyday and I made several attempts to approach him. He finally agreed to speak with me and we were able to get him housed in a clean, safe environment. Our agency is still in the process of setting up psychiatric evaluations and I have been working with my SOAR contact at the SSA office on his claim.

Did You Know?

Heartland Health Outreach is hiring for a SOAR trained position!

Heartland Health Outreach is hiring a Senior Benefits and Entitlements Specialist. *The Senior Benefits and Entitlements Specialist* provides services related to securing benefits for participants. This includes doing an eligibility screening, completing applications, and tracking the progress of applications. The Senior Benefits and Entitlements Specialist must have comprehensive knowledge of state and federal programs. Visit the [Heartland Health website](#) to fill out an application.

SSA Rep Payee Program Offers Support. Through SSA, clients can receive support for financial management of their payments when they are not capable of managing their money themselves. If you are working with clients who may need assistance, call your SSA contact or SSA at 1-800-772-1213. There are many useful publications about the topic of being a rep payee. **The SOAR TA Center** produced an issue brief entitled "*Organizational Representative Payees: Some Practical Suggestions.*" To access that brief, click [here](#).

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



Inside Edition

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- What's Up, SOAR?
- SOAR Q&A

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.



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SOAR Q&A

Q: A client came to my office who is a veteran. Can I help them with a SOAR application?

A: Veterans waiting to access VA benefits can get SSA benefits while waiting but there are some stipulations when working with veterans and disability through SSA. [Click here for more info.](#) Watch the webinar on [SOAR and VA benefits](#) on the SOAR website.

With your help, they will SOAR to success!



September

Motivating You!

Hospital Collaborations

Tips and Tools to engage hospitals and expand SOAR

Why are hospitals important for SOAR?

They are a key partner in building the presence of SOAR in your community. Hospitals often have charity care for uninsured individuals and see many persons who are homeless and mentally ill in the ER. A mutually beneficial relationship with a local hospital can result in more persons receiving disability benefits and securing housing and services.



Benefits of hospital collaboration include:

- ✓ Access to funding for SOAR related positions
- ✓ Better access to patient medical records
- ✓ Recovery of costs for hospital's uncompensated care (which can sometimes be turned into funding for SOAR positions)
- ✓ Many more!

How do I get started?

There are many ways to make sure your agency is prepared to enter into a relationship with a hospital. It is important to make sure your agency is actively engaged in using the SOAR model and has been successful with applications. In addition, SOAR clients may have accessed services at this hospital in the past, making it easier to

What's Up, SOAR?

SOAR TA Forum Coming Soon. SAMHSA's SOAR TA Center assists CoCs with implementation in their community through technical assistance grants. Springfield's CoC applied and was accepted earlier this year. *In late October, the one day forum will be held and will include TA Center staff as well as community partners.* They will work to design action plans, discuss SOAR implementation in their area and work to start building a strong foundation. Stay tuned for more details!

Meet our new liaison! Abigail Lemon is a Senior Project Associate at Policy Research Associates, Inc. She is taking over as our state liaison from Kristin Lupfer, who was promoted to Associate Director. Abigail will be responsible for overseeing implementation of SOAR in our state including ongoing technical assistance for our trainers and leadership team and is organizing the October forum in Springfield. The TA Center is critical to the success of SOAR across IL and I know Kristin has been a great help to me when I started my role as SOAR Coordinator last year. We are excited to welcome her as our liaison!

Questions? Have feedback or ideas for future newsletters? Please email [Beth](#) and share your thoughts.

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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 three weeks away. Stay informed by visiting the sites below and checking out this page for updates!

Meet the Toons!

The rollout of ACA is underway and, in less than 3 weeks, enrollment will begin. There are many resources available on the [Illinois Health Matters](#) page including updated blogs and information about ACA implementation. This video highlights, in a fun, informative way, the changes coming and how they affect everyone. Take a moment to view and please share it with your colleagues and clients.



Take a moment to visit the partners across Illinois working to promote access to healthcare.

**Illinois
Health
Matters**



HealthCare.gov

Take health care into your own hands

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**.