CABHI: SOAR and IPS Pilot Check-in Call

August 4th, 2016

# State Updates

## Arizona

No updates provided on this call, outside of the Arizona spotlight (below)

## Colorado

Pablo Sandoval reports that all of their referral and screening forms have been updated to integrate SOAR and IPS and they will start training staff on how to use this. The career profile was updated and highlights benefits planning along with employment. They will utilize these materials during the kick off activities. (*They have been added to the CABHI pilot website: https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/cabhi-soar-ips-pilot)*

The vocational units for IPS report that they have some referrals for the pilot. They are experiencing some pushback from agencies about kicking off the initiative, but have contacted supervisors to gain buy-in with IPS. Pablo will be attending IPS Trainer College at Dartmouth in a couple of weeks.

## Connecticut

Trish from Chrysalis Center reports that she has been on the steering committee with CABHI and Journey Home. The person who was doing SOAR for the Hartford office left and they are working on training a new SOAR staff member. However they are still working on two SOAR/IPS cases!

## Illinois

Stephanie Frank reported that they have been identifying agencies in the state that have both SOAR and IPS and identified 3 agencies to participate in the pilot. They held a phone call with an agency in Peoria that has already started integrating SOAR/IPS and is excited to be part of the pilot. There are plans to hold a SOAR Fundamentals half day training with them, and then meet to talk about the program and integration strategies. They use the data outcomes spreadsheet from the pilot to talk about outcomes and sustainability. They identified two other agencies to participate in the pilot. Both are in Chicago and the group will be arranging calls with them at the end of August or beginning of September to kick off the pilot at those agencies.

## Massachusetts

Clare Deucher reported on the previous call that the IPS program closed on July 1st due to lack of funding. However, she received a call from Michael Stepansky at the Dept. of MH, who is interested in IPS and is working to build capacity at local agencies for IPS and SOAR integration. They are speaking with local homeless services providers about possible training opportunities.

## Michigan

No updates provided on this call

## Mississippi

No updates provided on this call

## Nevada

No updates provided on this call

## Ohio

No updates provided on this call

## Tennessee

Jenna Robl reports that they have a strong IPS/SOAR implementation in the state. They are struggling with data collection strategies as they don’t overwhelm providers and are developing a data collection tool for the pilot sites. The sites are experiencing challenges related to fears of employment and how it impacts benefits and other programs consumers are enrolled in.

## Utah

Phyllis Sharples reports that many of the people Sue Hanson (IPS trainer) works with are also filing for disability. However, they are seeing challenges of consumers quitting employment while applying for SSI/SSDI due to fears of how it will affect their application. They recently hired a peer specialist for the state CABHI team, who will be training in both SOAR and IPS and will work with teams at the ground level. She is an attorney and excited to be an advocate for the program. Sue is starting to work with case managers and vocational specialists to train them in the IPS model. After their conference in June, they generated a lot of interest in IPS.

## Wisconsin

Randy Hahn reports that they are working on streamlining the data collection. A difficulty is that they have scattered sites around the state for IPS, while SOAR is centrally located. He is excited to report good numbers in the next reporting period.

# Arizona Spotlight

Patrick Winters (St. Joseph the Worker) provided an overview of engagement around employment. His organization created a streamlined process to reduce/eliminate barriers to employment and provide comprehensive services to individuals. *(His slides are available on the pilot website)*

About half of the individuals they serve have felony backgrounds, so they work hard to dispel myths and fears about going back to work. A few resources and myth-busters for individuals with criminal backgrounds who are looking for work include:

* https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Reentry\_Council\_Mythbuster\_FCRA\_Employment.pdf
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Peter in Colorado asked if Patrick has had experience working with people who were receiving SSI and helping them access employment, and if there are any unique barriers.

* Patrick answered that once they get to St. Joseph the Worker, individuals have received benefits counseling and resources, which helps encourage work.

How do people react when you ask them what they want to do or if they feel they don’t have the skills to work?

* They sit down and talk about the skill sets necessary to perform that work and discussing transferable skills the client may have and new skills building
* Aim to get the client to where they want to be and that might be exploring several different opportunities to work up to that dream job
* The employment specialist may go with a person to his/her job to address employer concerns and ask how they can help improve skills through coaching

For people who are on the fence about employment – at what stage do they decide to choose work?

* Patrick’s agency is client focused and emphasize client choice when making the decision to explore work
* They often see individuals in the homeless population where one person will explore work and influence others in the group to also explore employment. Success at work can be contagious!
* They have a “success bell” that they ring when someone gets a job. They also give the client McDonald’s gift cards to help supplement meals.

Where do you get the private funding to pay for these services?

* Patrick reports that their funding is through grants as well as an annual fundraiser and individual giving

# Open Discussion

The SOAR TA Center is developing a conversation guide about work and dispelling fears and will distribute this to the group when it is cleared by SAMHSA.

What resources have been found to help a client without an ID or birth certificate, who is receiving benefits (SSA benefits), to obtain a birth certificate or ID?

* Patrick’s group provides ID and birth certificates. There was a chaplaincy program that assisted with this and ran the ID program and St. Joseph the Worker took over this program. They secured additional funding to expand services from two days a week to five days a week and also store copies of ID for individuals.
* SAMHSA is working on developing a guide for resources on this issue
* In Atlanta, the program would use individual fundraising for obtaining IDs by encouraging individual donations of $25 for ID copies. It was a great way to engage with the community.

Have you seen any interest in the federal government wanting to fund employment for individuals who are applying for SSI/SSDI at the same time?

* Yes! Through the CABHI program

We polled the group to ask for topics we should address on upcoming calls:

* Best practices for SOAR and IPS integration
* Interaction of applying for SSI and applying for employment at the same time
* Innovative job retention strategies

# Next Call:

**October 6th from 3-4:30pm ET**