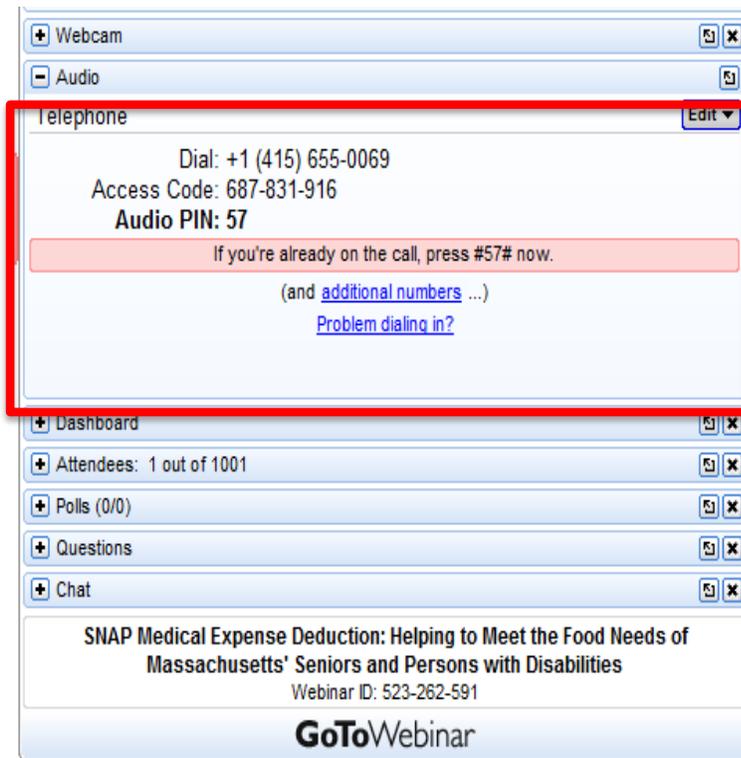


An Overview of the SNAP E&T Pilot Projects and Effective Approaches to Increasing Employment and Earnings

Ed Bolen
LaDonna Pavetti

June 2014

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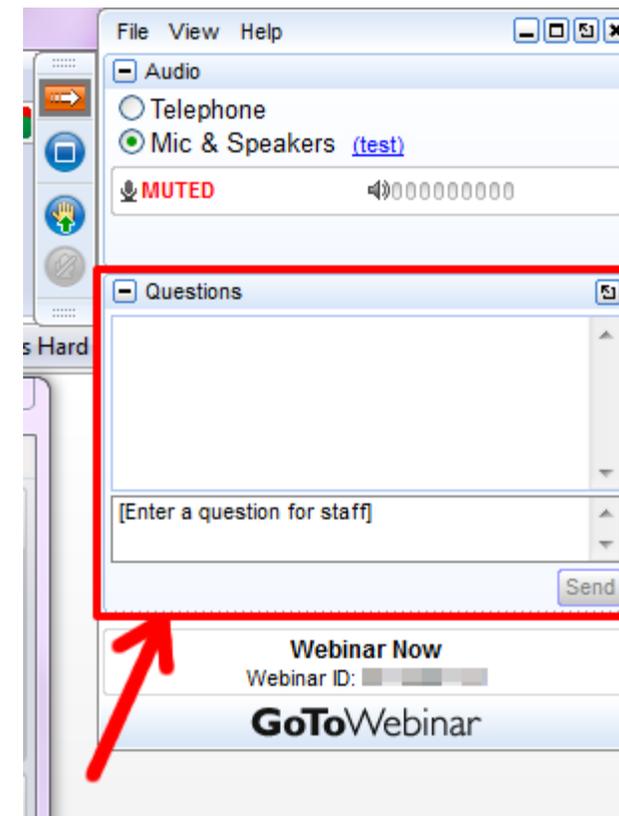
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- CBPP is a public policy nonprofit that works at the federal and state levels on fiscal policy and public programs that affect low- and moderate- income families and individuals.
- Additional webinars in the works:
 - Engaging on SNAP E&T (late July)
 - Post-RFA issues (late August)
- We are available to work with you or help you connect with other resources.

Our Plan for Today

- Brief Overview of E&T
- Summary of E&T pilots
- Q&A
- Considerations when designing an E&T pilot
- Examples of effective approaches
- Q&A

SNAP work requirements

SNAP participants are work registrants unless they are:

- Under 16 or over 59 years old;
- Physically or mentally unfit for employment;
- Caring for dependent child under 6 or incapacitated person;
- Complying with work requirements in another program;
- Receiving UI;
- In a drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program;
- Working 30 hours a week;
- A student enrolled at least half time.

- Work registrants can, but do not have to, be assigned by the state to an E&T activity
 - States can exempt additional individuals
 - Programs can be mandatory or voluntary
- If the state assigns an individual:
 - The state must determine the appropriate activity
 - The state must reimburse for an individual's expenses that are reasonable and necessary to participate
 - Individuals in mandatory programs can lose benefits for failure to comply

Allowable Activities in E&T

Activity	Participants (in 000s)	Percent
Job search	698	55
Job search training	88	7
Workfare	139	11
Work experience	105	9
Education (Adult Basic Ed, GED, ESL, higher education)	35	3
Training (on-the-job, vocational)	50	4
Workforce Investment Act programs	16	1
Job retention up to 90 days	9	1
Total	1269	

Source: 2011 data from USDA, Food and Nutrition Services

Federal SNAP E&T Funding: FY 2012

Type of funding	Amount (in millions)	
100% federal	90	
50% reimbursements	240	
Administration	182	
Dependent care	27	
Transportation	31	
ABAWD Pledge states	20	
Supplemental allocation	12	
Total federal funding	362	

Pilots offer a great opportunity to learn more

- Targets a diverse group underserved by most E&T programs
- Comes at a time states are refocusing on E&T
- There's not much research or data on SNAP E&T
 - What does – and doesn't – work
 - Why don't people comply (and what can help participants succeed?)

SNAP Pilots

- Statutory goal: to test new methods for E&T programs and services to *increase employment and earnings and reduce reliance on public benefits.*
- Up to 10 pilot projects with a rigorous independent evaluation
- Diverse range of pilots:
 - Target low skills/limited work, workfare, and individuals who are working
 - Geographically diverse
 - Include education and training, rehabilitative services, rapid attachment to work, and mixed strategies
 - Mandatory and voluntary

Time and Money

Timeline:

- RFA must be issued by Aug. 7, 2014
- RFP for evaluation will be issued soon after
- Pilots must be selected by Feb. 2015 and can run no more than 3 years

Funding:

- \$200 million -- \$10m in 2014, \$190m in 2015
- Cannot supplant existing funds
- To be used for:
 - Program and administrative costs of the pilots
 - Developing systems and data for evaluation
 - Evaluation

Criteria for States

- Must agree to participate in evaluation, with robust data collection system
- Commit to collaborate with workforce board and job training programs
- Keep E&T funding at FY2013 level

Criteria for Selection

- Likelihood of enhancing existing E&T programs
- Likelihood of enhancing earnings of participants
- Evidence of easy replicability
- State capacity to operate high quality E&T programs

Permissible activities

- All SNAP E&T activities, including Title 20 workfare and job retention
- Substance abuse and mental health treatment, rehabilitation services
- Subsidized work in the public or private sector
- Unsubsidized work
 - E&T funds pay for supportive services like child care

Engaging with your state

- It's not just about the pilots
- What's the state plan on E&T? on the pilots?
- E&T participants at risk of losing benefits
- All E&T programs, including pilots, must comply with existing SNAP rules:
 - Review exemption and sanction policies
 - Are individuals being directed to appropriate activities?
 - Are individuals reimbursed for necessary costs of participation?

Questions?
Comments?

**SNAP E&T Demonstration Projects:
An Opportunity to Answer
Unanswered Questions and Build
on What We Know About Effective
Approaches to Increasing
Employment and Earnings**

LaDonna Pavetti

June 2014

Plan for Today's Talk

- **Considerations when designing a SNAP E&T program**
- **Common characteristics** across effective programs
- **Examples of effective approaches** that have increased employment and/or employment stability among disadvantaged populations
- **Research questions** of broad interest

Considerations for Designing SNAP E&T Programs

Considerations for Designing an Effective SNAP E&T Pilot (1)

- **Careful attention to targeting**
 - SNAP caseload is very diverse
 - Diverse needs require diverse solutions
 - The approach to E&T needs to fit the group you intend to target
 - Where are the best opportunities for making a positive impact?
- **Clarity on goals for program participants**
 - What do you hope to achieve –e.g., increased employment (move people from zero hours to some hours or from some hours to more hours, etc.), increased earnings
 - What is your theory of change? How will your proposed strategy produce the outcomes you envision?
- **Clarity on what you want to learn from the pilot**
 - Important to be very clear about what you want to learn and ensure that your program design will give you the answers you are seeking
 - Also important to ask: who else cares about the question I hope to answer?

Considerations for Designing an Effective SNAP E&T Pilot (2)

- **Assessment: A Critical But Often Under-developed Element of Service Delivery**
 - If you plan to target broadly: How will you identify recipients who should be exempt and/or need special accommodations because they have a disability and/or are facing personal or family challenges that will impact their ability to participate?
 - If you plan to offer alternative pathways based on individuals' circumstances and needs: How will determine which pathway is the most appropriate and has the most chance of producing a successful outcome?
 - If you plan to offer a narrowly-defined intervention (e.g., training): How will you identify recipients who are interested in training and have the greatest chances of success?

Common Characteristics Across Effective E&T Programs

Common Characteristics Across Different Types of Effective Programs

- Focus on goal-setting and individual choice
- Upfront investments and individual sacrifices (including less initial employment) to reap gains later
- Keen attention to current life circumstances
- Individualized and ongoing support
- Greater financial investments in people

What We Know About The Effectiveness of Various Approaches to E&T

What We Know About the Effectiveness of Job Search

- Job search intensity matters
- Impacts are positive, but quite modest: Mandatory job search assistance for UI recipients cut UI benefit durations by about half a week
- Impacts on earnings is an open question: very large sample sizes are required to detect earnings impacts
- Most effective job search programs offered more than job search; are better classified as “mixed employment assistance models”

“Mixed” Employment Assistance Models

- **Key program elements:**
 - Supports a diverse set or pathways to work including education, training, subsidized employment, unpaid work experience and job search
 - Targeted to diverse populations – focus on a good fit
 - Can be voluntary or mandatory – strong focus on work as the end goal
- **Evidence of effectiveness:**
 - Portland, Oregon NEWWS: increased earnings by 25 percent over 5 years; focus on holding out for a good job; support for education and training (usually short-term)
 - Riverside GAIN: increased earnings by 42 percent over 5 years; very strong focus on hiring job developers to work directly with employers; many participated in education
- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**
 - Easy model to replicate in a variety of settings
 - Replication requires availability and accessibility of a broad range of options, but options don’t need to be provided directly by the program

Subsidized and Transitional Employment

- **Key program elements:**
 - Paid employment opportunities for individuals with limited employment prospects
 - Level of support varies depending on target population and goals
 - Strong ties to employers may be important for long-term success
- **Evidence of effectiveness:**
 - Florida Back to Work: 20 percent increase in earnings year after subsidized job ended for all participants; 30 percent increase for long-term unemployed
 - All programs have produced short-term increases in employment (while the subsidy is provided), but not all have produced long-term increases in employment
- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**
 - Significant interest, especially for the long-term unemployed
 - As budgets rebounds, some states creating entirely state-funded programs
 - Many program variations, ways to keep program costs down
 - Links with private sector employers seems to be very important

Sectoral Employment Programs

- **Key program elements:**
 - Industry-specific training programs – opportunities vary by local community
 - Preparation for skilled positions with higher pay and growth opportunities
 - Length of training varies – depends on the sector
 - May require participants to have higher basic skill levels
- **Evidence of effectiveness:**
 - Sectoral Impact Study: Earnings 29 percent higher in the second year
 - Year Up: Earnings 30 percent higher in the second year
- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**
 - Significant interest in doing more, may be new funding opportunities
 - Requires strong industry partners and deep knowledge of labor market trends
 - Opportunity to advocate for programs as community colleges transform themselves

Contextual Learning or Bridge Programs

- **Key program elements:**

- Provide education or remediation to allow individuals with low educational levels (typically at or below the 9th grade level) to access Industry-specific training programs
- Different models – some integrated with training and some designed to feed into training or post-secondary education programs

- **Evidence of effectiveness:**

- LaGuardia Community College, GED Bridge to Health and Business program: Participants significantly more likely to complete the course (68 vs. 47 percent), pass the exam (44 vs. 20 percent), and enroll in a community college program (24 vs. 7 percent)

- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**

- Some adult education and GED programs already exist – where are the opportunities to restructure them to make them more effective?
- Important to develop within the context of available training and post-secondary education options

- **Key program elements:**
 - Training designed to expedite credentialing
 - Articulation from one step of credentialing to the next (e.g., from CNA to LPN to RN)
 - Provision of specific components in small chunks; feasible to combine training and work
 - Support services and coaching to help people develop goals and a plan for meeting them
- **Evidence of effectiveness:**
 - At least two random assignment studies underway: Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS) and Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG)
- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**
 - Quickly developing field, especially in the health and information technology sectors
 - Lots happening at Community or Technical Colleges

Teaching Life Skills Through Home Visiting

- **Key program elements:**
 - Individualized, hands-on work to build life skills – setting goals, time management, making good decisions, stress management, etc.
- **Evidence of effectiveness:**
 - Building Nebraska Families: Significant and large impact on employment stability (increase of 16 percentage points, from 29.3 to 45.9 percent) and job quality as measured by wages and availability of health insurance – bigger than we've seen in any other employment program
 - Services provided in families' homes in rural communities by higher skilled staff
- **Replication opportunities and requirements:**
 - Are there opportunities to integrate some of the program elements into home visiting programs that are focused primarily on improving children's outcomes?
 - Could you achieve comparable results by doing similar work outside of families' homes?

Provision of Supportive Services

- **Key program elements:**
 - Provision of supportive services – child care, transportation, flexible funds to help purchase work clothes, repair cars, etc. – to help individuals work or look for work
- **Evidence of Effectiveness**
 - Correlational studies show that low-income parents who receive a child care subsidy are more likely to be employed and have a shorter transition to work
 - Lack of rigorous studies that show causality between getting supportive services and employment – area is ripe for experimentation

What Are Some Questions Worth Answering in the Context of the SNAP E&T Demo?

Some questions of broad interest

- What job search approaches and/or elements lead to improved employment and earnings?
- Does a “mixed model” that supports multiple pathways to work produce better employment and earnings outcomes than job search (or training) alone?
- Does the provision of supportive services lead to improved employment and earnings?
- Does the provision of skills training lead to higher earnings and more stable employment?
- Do wage subsidies paid directly to employers encourage employers to hire individuals they may otherwise not hire?
- Do programs that focus on building life skills result in better employment and earnings outcomes?

- FNS E&T Resource Center: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/employment-and-training-et-resource-center>
- Resources to improve work programs: www.buildingbetterprograms.org
- National Skills Coalition SNAP E&T Users Guide:
http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/assets/reports-/snapet_users_guide.pdf