Research to Policy Roundtable

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Presented at the 2013 Annual Compendium on Disability Statistics
Washington, D.C.
December 11, 2013
Objectives

- Employment trends and other related outcomes
- Policy challenges
- Lessons based on existing research
  - What we know
  - What we do not know
Gaps in Employment Rates Are Increasing

Source: 2012 Annual Statistics Compendium.
Poverty and Government Spending

• Poverty:
  – Relatively high for people with work limitations (31 percent)

  Source: 2012 Annual Statistics Compendium.

• Federal expenditures
  – $357 billion in 2008
    • 12.0 percent of all federal outlays, up from 11.3 percent just six years earlier

Policy Challenges
Characteristics Related to Employment

- Relative to those without disabilities, people with disabilities are
  - Older
  - Have less education
  - Less likely to be married

- Large differences in relative employment rates at older ages and for less educated groups

- Implications
  - Return-to-work policies have to address multiple potential barriers

Source: Sevak 2013.
The Fragmented Disability System

Federal and State Agencies

- SSA
- HHS
- DOT
- HUD
- ED
- USDA

Local Public and Private Service Providers

- SSA Field Office
- Health Services
- SNAP
- TANF
- Housing
- LTC/HCBS

People with Disabilities

- Taxpayers
- FIT
- Federal Revenues
- FICA
- SIT, Sales, Property...
- Federal and State Agencies
- SSA
- DOT
- HHS
- HUD
- DOL
- ED
- Labor
- TANF
- One Stop
- Mental Health Services

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Work Disincentives and Lack of Timely Supports

- Limited spending on employment supports relative to other supports
- Eligibility criteria for major programs focus on inabilities to work
What Do We Know About Effective Employment Strategies?

- **Intervention**
  - Piloting before going to scale
  - Customization and intensity of service delivery matters

- **Target population**
  - Larger employment outcomes in younger populations

- **Intervention goals**
  - Have to be clearly understood by service providers and target population

What Don’t We Know About Effective Employment Strategies?

• Lack of evidence on the potential of coordinated and early intervention approaches
  – Few incentives for agencies to jointly pursue early interventions
    • Target populations are hard to identify

• Lack of testing of systemic changes
Summary

• Employment trends
  – Downward trends indicate continued policy problem

• Multiple potential challenges to promoting employment
  – Diverse population with multiple at-risk characteristics
  – Fragmented support system
  – Large work disincentives and lack of coordination

• Evidence suggests some potential to address challenges
  – Customized supports to well-targeted supports with clear emphasis on employment are promising

• Challenge for agency leaders
  – Tradeoffs of developing incremental policies (single agency) versus systematic changes (cross-system)

