The RETAIN Report

November 2019

Welcome to the November 2019 issue of *The RETAIN Report*—the internal e-newsletter for awardees of the Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Demonstration Project.

Please feel free to share this subscription link with other RETAIN team members as appropriate.

Please Note: Several of the links in this newsletter take you to resources housed in the RETAIN Online Community (ROC). If you do not have access to the ROC and are a member of a state team, please visit RETAINTA.org and click "Request an Account" in the right-hand sidebar.

TA in Focus: All About Enrollment

If there is one common challenge we are hearing across the RETAIN teams, it is enrollment. For a variety of reasons, nearly every team is encountering challenges in recruiting worker participants and moving them to enrolled status. So in response, ODEP and the TA team have been laser focused on helping states develop and deploy effective recruitment and enrollment strategies.

The fruits of these efforts are a range of TA tools and products—all of which are available in the ROC. Examples include a podcast Q&A with Dr. Glenn Pransky, Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, who emphasized that effective recruitment is more likely if your project design is "based on the concept of mutually beneficial engagement for everyone involved in it."

Other highlights include a live Community of Practice (CoP) session on recruitment, an action brief on recruitment challenges and related strategies, and a webcast on "Attuning Your RETAIN Program to Workers' Concerns, Wants, and Needs." In this webcast, Dr. Jennifer Christian, ODEP Senior Advisor to RETAIN, explained that the most important tools possessed by RETAIN coordinators are words and relationships. And words have more impact when the listener perceives you to be a credible authority, and believes you understand their needs and specific situation.

The RETAIN TA team has also been facilitating "pop-up" office hours with Dr. Christian and Dr. Pransky. These scheduled sessions are opportunities for state teams to gain one-on-one guidance on their recruitment strategies and program models.

While recruitment and enrollment are challenging, RETAIN teams can take heart in these words from Dr. Pransky: "No one gets it right out of the box, ever. [Recruitment] has to be developed and refined in a cyclical and iterative process."

The RETAIN TA team is ready to assist you during that iterative process, so please contact us at RETAINTA@air.org to discuss your specific challenges.

Managing Refusals

An inherent part of project recruitment is dealing with refusals from your targets. In a new RETAIN blog post, the TA team's Julie Jacobson Vann explores effective practices for managing this aspect of the enrollment process. "Refusals, Refusal Prevention, and Refusal Conversion" examines ways to convert refusals to "yes" by implementing refusal avoidance and conversion approaches. Strategies addressed in the blog include using scripting, conducting refusal avoidance training (RAT), and engaging a refusal conversion specialist in follow-up contact. Access the ROC to learn more and read the full blog post.

Messaging Matters

This week, RETAIN TA distributed a series of stakeholder scripts designed to help you answer commonly asked questions about RETAIN from three key audiences—potential worker participants/patients, employers, and treating physicians. Each script includes a sample "elevator pitch" about RETAIN, as well as audience-specific answers to questions such as, "What is RETAIN?," "What's involved in participating?," and "How will I benefit?" They also include answers to more challenging questions that may arise during the recruitment and enrollment process. Developed in close coordination with ODEP and RETAIN subject matter experts, the scripts can serve as a foundation for RETAIN teams to customize based on their own project parameters. Please contact RETAINTA@air.org with any questions about these core messaging documents. If you did not receive them via email, you can find them in the ROC.

News You Can Use

We hope you are enjoying the new RETAIN email communications we have been sending these past few weeks—specifically the *Friday Flash* and *For Your Insight* eblasts. Both are designed to keep RETAIN awardees up to date on helpful resources and recent TA offerings.

The *Friday Flash* is distributed every other Friday. It is designed to serve as a centralized snapshot of upcoming events, featured tools, and other TA offerings. *For Your Insight: Research and Practice from the Field* is also a bi-weekly email highlighting relevant research for RETAIN states. The emails feature article links and abstracts while summarizing key takeaways that may benefit RETAIN program implementation.

If you have questions about these offerings, or tips on content to include, please contact your AIR TA team liaison.

FEATURED RESOURCES

RETAIN TA Issue Brief: "Barriers to Return to Work: A Research Practice Brief"

This new research brief explores four return-to-work (RTW) barriers that injured or ill individuals commonly experience—injury characteristics, individual perceptions of injury and other psychological characteristics, healthcare and rehabilitation issues, and workplace issues—along with strategies for tackling them.

Access the Brief

New CoP Resources

The past few months have brought a number of live RETAIN CoP sessions on various topics related to strategic partnerships and communications. Check out the CoP section of the ROC to find slides and summaries of the live sessions, as well as effective practices shared by presenters and participants. (Scroll down to the "Archived Communities of Practice" section of the page.)

Read the CoP Materials

The ROC At-A-Glance Fact Sheet

Do you know your way around the ROC? Take a look at this new fact sheet highlighting the various sections and features of the RETAIN Online Community.

Download the Fact Sheet

Archived RETAIN Webinars and Podcasts

We have hosted a number of RETAIN TA webinars and podcasts since our last issue. Visit the ROC's multi-media archives to find recordings of these valuable resources. Recent additions include recordings of "Facilitating Accommodations in the RTW/SAW Environment" and "Attuning Your RETAIN Program to Workers' Concerns, Wants, and Needs."

Download Webinars and Podcasts

NCSL Article: "Staying in the Game"

A recent article by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) explores the state-level economic benefits of stay-at-work/return-to-work strategies. It references the RETAIN demonstration projects, the personal story of an injured firefighter in Colorado, and the case for supporting injured and ill employees in their return to the workforce.

[Read the NCSL Article]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **RETAIN Webinar: "Effective Strategies for Recruitment in the Business Sector,"** December 10, 2 – 3 p.m. ET. *Registration details coming soon!*
- **Live Community of Practice Session: "Getting to Yes and Getting Past No—Preventing and Reversing Potential Worker Participant Refusals,"** December 12, 2 – 3 p.m. ET. *Registration details coming soon!*