The RETAIN Report

January 2020

Welcome to the January 2020 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.

Data Talk: Highlights from the January All-Grantee Call

On January 23, RETAIN awardees gathered for an all-hands call focused on data collection. The call featured presentations from AIR and Mathematica representatives who explored the value of data, and key considerations when collecting and reporting it. AIR's GeMar Neloms, RETAIN TA Project Director, reviewed key uses of project data, which include evaluation; project oversight and accountability; measuring project effectiveness; identifying trends; forecasting; and continuous quality improvement (CQI). While data can sometimes be a "cloud" over the data "umbrella"—particularly when they don't illustrate what you want them to—Neloms explained that we ultimately can use data to chart a path toward sunnier days. She reminded states that RETAIN TA is available to support them in any of these areas.

In addition to previewing the release of an upcoming *Recruitment-to-Enrollment Dashboard* (see following article), Neloms highlighted several existing RETAIN TA resources that can assist with data collection and reporting:

- "Guide to Identifying RETAIN Information System Needs and Gaps"
- "Functional and Non-Functional Requirements for State RETAIN Data Systems: Phase 1 and Phase 2 Challenges"
- "Continuous Quality Improvement Strategies"

Mathematica's Dr. David Wittenburg and Laura Kosar discussed data needs for the evaluation in Phase 2 and upcoming data collection milestones in Phase 1. They described Mathematica's role in providing TA for data collection, including supporting data transmissions and preparing data extracts, as well as SSA's plans to extend the Data Use Agreements to cover the Phase 1 extension. The evaluation TA team is developing a checklist of items for states to have in place for Phase 2, and they will work with

states in the coming months to develop specific Phase 2 plans, including options for customizing the Confirmit system.

The call concluded with a roundtable discussion during which each RETAIN team shared successes, challenges, and updates related to data collection.
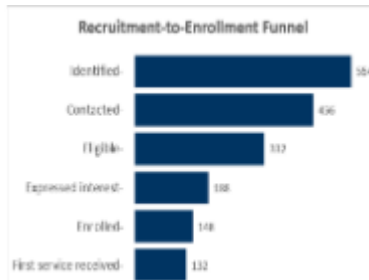
TA in Focus: RETAIN Recruitment-to-Enrollment Dashboard

Need help understanding your recruitment and enrollment process? RETAIN TA will soon launch the *Recruitment-to-Enrollment Dashboard*, an Excel-based tool to help RETAIN awardees assess the effectiveness of their recruitment and enrollment efforts and identify areas for improvement. This tool will help determine which referral sources yield the most or least eligible participants, identify and categorize reasons why some workers do not sign-up, and diagnose when and why some participants tend to drop out of the project. Using this information, states can develop a plan to address gaps in their recruitment and enrollment strategy. The RETAIN TA team looks forward to helping your state customize and optimize this tool for your particular needs. Please look out for an upcoming announcement about the Dashboard's launch, which will include a video introduction, webinar walk-through, and one-on-one assistance from the AIR team to help you customize the tool.

Assessment as a Business Engagement Strategy

RETAIN TA's latest podcast is coming soon to the ROC. In "Assessment as a Business Engagement Strategy and Return-to-Work Tool for RETAIN," Dr. Joe Ashley, former Assistant Commissioner with the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, explores assessment strategies in an insightful conversation with RETAIN TA Director GeMar Neloms. The discussion addresses the benefits of assessing the workability of injured and ill individuals, which in turn can help you better engage businesses and workers in stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) options. Highlights of the podcast include an overview of assessment, its role and value beyond a vocational rehabilitation setting, successful applications of "real work" and "simulated work" examples, the role of job analysis in the assessment process, and overall benefits of workability assessment for businesses. Stay tuned for instructions on how to download the podcast.

Talking About RETAIN

The next blog post by the RETAIN TA team will explore "How to Talk to Potential Participants About Your RETAIN Project."

The piece will examine effective ways to describe your RETAIN project, address informed consent, and engage with your control group. Stand by for more information about this upcoming blog.

FEATURED RESOURCES

Updated Resource: RETAIN Communications Toolkit

This [popular RETAIN TA](#) tool has been updated with new and enhanced content to help you develop branded, consistent communications materials for your demonstration project. Among the updates is a new section featuring samples of audience-specific language to use in your communications materials.

[Access the Toolkit](#)

Live Community of Practice (CoP) Summary: "Getting to Yes and Getting Past No—Preventing and Reversing Potential Worker Participant Refusals"

Be sure to review [the notes](#) from our December 12 live CoP. Presented by RETAIN TA's Dr. Julie Jacobson Vann, the event featured an insightful discussion on preventing refusals from potential worker participants.

[Download the CoP Notes](#)

Archived RETAIN Webinar: "Reflecting, Refining, and Refreshing RETAIN"

If you missed this [December 16 webinar](#), the archived version and transcript are available now. The session reflected on RETAIN progress in 2019 and highlighted where the initiative hopes to go for the remainder of Phase 1 and into Phase 2. ODEP and SSA revisited the RETAIN program goals and discussed the new timeline, while Mathematica and AIR revisited the evaluation and programmatic TA goals.

[View the Reflecting, Refining, and](#)

Archived RETAIN Webinar: "Effective Strategies for Recruitment in the Business Sector"

The archived version and transcript of our [December 10 webinar](#) are now available. Presented by Leslie Dawson of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and Shara Kempster of Phifer Incorporated, the webinar addressed SAW/RTW perspectives of RETAIN participants and businesses, along with suggestions for recruiting employers for your RETAIN project.

[View the Effective Strategies Webinar](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **RETAIN Consultative Group Session: Recruitment and Enrollment** featuring Dr. Glenn Pransky of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Thursday, Feb 13, 2020, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET (11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. PT). *Registration Link Coming Soon!*
- **RETAIN Webinar: Job Retention and RTW Coordinators** featuring the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' Leslie Dawson. *Details Coming Soon!*