



NC Benefits Counseling Expansion Project Year 3 (of 3)

7/1/2020 – 12/31/2023

System Gap Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research on Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects demonstrates that individuals who receive benefits counseling services are more likely to pursue employment, maintain employment, and leverage available incentives that support their goal of greater financial security and independence. The North Carolina Benefits Counseling Services Demonstration Project initiative will attempt to demonstrate the impact of using a tiered model to address the lack of system capacity for providing benefits counseling services to individuals receiving federal and state public assistance.
Initiative Goals and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand benefits counseling services throughout the state by increasing capacity through the training of employment service staff as Benefits Liaisons to collect basic information and provide general benefits information and referrals. Increase employment participation through provision of Information and Referral, initial benefits counseling advisement, benefits service plans and on-going support. Train 50 individuals or families (Initial Year) through partner agencies. Development of Referral network (Years 1, 2, and 3). Development of Benefits Liaison training curriculum (Years 1, 2, and 3). Enhance training of Benefits Liaison's through including specific examples of the impact and benefits of Benefits Counseling examples.
Description of Activities	<p>Year Three will include the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver additional, enhanced training to agencies Increase and enhance educational materials send out to referrals networks Improve in gathering and analyzing outcome data and success stories Delivering family seminars across the state to support financial family decisions Increase number of individuals choosing to pursue competitive, integrated, employment through the impact of Benefits Liaisons training(s).
Achievements and Outcomes to Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached out to 298 organizations that serve individuals with I/DD across the state Built 18 new partnerships with family and parents groups. Additionally, formalized 21 partnerships through MOUs with agencies providing services to I/DD individuals Established Benefits Counseling Expansion advisory committee –11 members Trained 133 Benefits Liaisons across the state 137 individuals with I/DD received benefits counseling from a trained Benefits Liaison 296 family members have been trained in benefits Provided benefits counseling services to 40 individuals with I/DD and their families