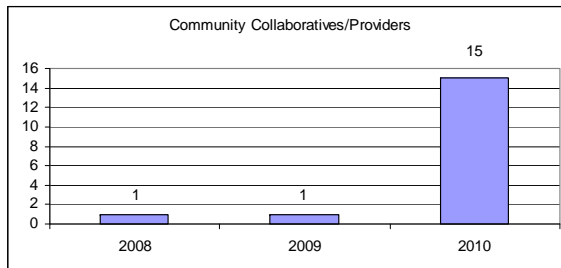


PROGRAM REPORT CARD: SNAP EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Program Purpose: To provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients with employment and training services to obtain employment.

Quality of Life to Which Program Contributes: SNAP recipients receive education, vocational training and employment support services to improve their employability thus increasing their potential to achieve self-sufficiency.

Performance Measure 1: Number of Community Collaboratives/Providers:



Story behind the baseline:

Step 1: Building a Partnership

On July 20, 2006, DSS partnered with a group of non-profit agencies that included Making Connections, Our Piece of the Pie, Co-opportunity, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Community Renewal Team, Connecticut Association for Human Services and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to discuss the feasibility of implementing an Employment and Training (E&T) Reimbursement Program.

Step 2: Laying the Groundwork

After that meeting, DSS met with Capital Community College (CCC) to review appropriate programs and services. We completed our discussions and in July 2007, DSS and CCC agreed to exchange data to identify CCC students who were SNAP recipients.

Step 3: Executing a Memorandum of Agreement

DSS and CCC executed a Memorandum of Agreement effective July 1, 2008. CCC agreed to provide vocational training to SNAP recipients via basic tuition costs and help pay for books, uniforms and other materials needed to complete the program and obtain employment. DSS agreed to provide CCC with a list of active SNAP recipients each month.

Step 4: Legislation enacted

In July 2008, the CT General Assembly enacted legislation (Public Act # 08-161) authorizing DSS to administer a SNAP E&T Reimbursement program and linked the program outcomes with poverty reduction strategies as defined by the Child Poverty and Prevention Council.

Step 5: Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

On February 25, 2009, DSS posted a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to invite additional collaborative/providers to participate. Proposals were due from April 1, 2009 through August 31, 2009. Since only four (4) proposals were received by July, DSS extended the deadline to September 30, 2009.

Step 6: Proposals Evaluated

DSS received 15 submissions, eleven of which were received on September 30, 2009. DSS evaluated all of the submissions by December 2, 2009 and recommended to the Commissioner that they all be offered the opportunity to negotiate contracts. Letters were sent to all fifteen collaborative/providers in December 2009.

Step 7: DSS Requests Additional Funding from USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

Existing Federal Allocation - Connecticut receives an annual federal allocation to provide E&T services to SNAP recipients. The federal allocation is based on the number of SNAP mandatory work registrants. The federal fiscal year 2010 allocation was \$486,121. Each state is required to submit an E&T Plan by August 15 of each year describing how they will use those funds. FNS must approve the state's plan before any funds are distributed. CT has consistently targeted its funds to support job search/counseling, adult education, vocational training and community service.

In addition to the FNS annual allocation, states may request 50% reimbursement for any non-federal funds they expend for E&T services for SNAP recipients. DSS requested an initial \$435,000 in FFY 2009 based on the agreement with CCC, \$1.5 million in FFY 2010 for continued services with CCC and recently requested \$5 million for the additional 15 new collaborative/providers.

FNS Cautions States and Places Hold on Funding Requests/Approvals:

On May 27, 2009, FNS issued a warning memo to all states to reinforce the FNS position that federal E&T funds were provided *"to support approved activities for a relatively select few SNAP recipients who are placed in - or volunteer for - E&T components designed to help them achieve self-sufficiency."*

FNS recently placed a hold on state requests for funding/approval to implement E&T Reimbursement

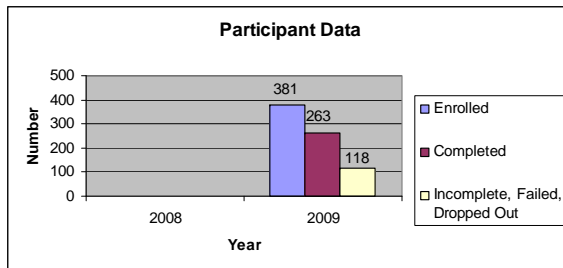
PROGRAM REPORT CARD: SNAP EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

programs. FNS is writing new guidelines because of their experience with the programs implemented in other states. DSS has been told that these guidelines will be issued imminently. The new guidelines may require changes and until we know the impact of the new guidelines, we are uncertain when we can seek new collaboratives/providers. In addition, and more importantly, FNS must approve the activities and the costs before we can implement any E&T Reimbursement program.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

1. we will create new opportunities for communities to identify new community collaboratives once we receive the new FNS E&T reimbursement guidelines.
2. we will monitor existing community collaboratives to learn the outcomes of the participating SNAP recipients.

Performance Measure 2: Number of SNAP Recipients Receiving E&T Services:



Story behind the baseline: CCC started enrolling SNAP recipients in December 2008 for programs that started in January 2009. At the end of the first full year 381 SNAP recipients had enrolled, 263 (69%) of whom successfully completed their programs. The remaining 118 (31%) SNAP recipients withdrew or dropped out. The programs in which SNAP recipients participated were C.N.A., C.N.A. refresher, Patient Care Technician, Emergency

Medical Technician, Medical Billing & Coding and Small Business Management.

Because of the many disruptions in their lives, it is difficult for SNAP recipients to remain engaged in an activity for long periods of time. The longer the time commitment required, the more likely the participant is to drop out. 118, or 31%, of the enrolled participants at CCC were unable to successfully complete even short term programs (6 weeks to 19 weeks). In order to maximize participant success, we made the decision to support short term programs.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

1. continue to review participant success and failure rates
2. examine/develop other supports needed for those who failed

Performance Measure 3: Number of Participants Who Obtain Employment

Story behind the baseline: Although it is too soon to obtain data about employment for the SNAP participants, we did search the Department of Labor (DOL) files for the SNAP participants who completed their programs. We learned that 19 obtained employment.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

1. continue to review DOL files quarterly.
2. examine other measures to verify employment status

Performance Measure 4: Reimbursement Dollars Received from FNS:

Story behind the baseline: For the period January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009, Capital Community College expended a total of \$844,302 providing E&T services to SNAP recipients. DSS earned \$422,151 in federal SNAP

E&T reimbursement. DSS retained 5% or \$21,108 for administrative expenses as authorized by Public Act 08-161. DSS distributed the balance or \$401,043 to CCC. CCC has used the reimbursement to waive the tuition for the SNAP recipients, pay for books for 357 students and uniforms for 209 students.

The amount of federal SNAP E&T reimbursement is limited to the amount of non-federal money expended on allowable activities for active SNAP recipients and the capacity of the collaboratives/providers.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

1. see Performance Measure #1