

SOAR National Outcomes Data – May 2008

Preliminary outcomes for 19 of the 34 states participating in the SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery) Technical Assistance Initiative are presented below.¹ Following training using SAMHSA’s *Stepping Stones to Recovery* curriculum, **70 percent** of applications assisted were approved in an average of **93 days**.

For comparison purposes, allowance rates on initial application for homeless applicants who do receive assistance are estimated at 10-15 percent.² The national average for all persons applying for SSI is 37 percent.³ Allowance rates for SSA’s Homeless Outreach Projects and Evaluation (HOPE) program were 40 percent.⁴

Persons assisted by the states had been homeless an average of **27 months**. The variability in allowance rates among the states below is dependent on the extent to which SOAR critical components are implemented in each community (see www.prainc.com/soar).

State	Locality	Initial SSA Disability Decisions (Since inception of SOAR) ⁵			
		Total # Decisions	Total # Approved	Allowance Rate (% Approved)	Time to Approval (in days)
1. Connecticut	Hartford/New London	12	10	83%	80
2. Florida	Broward Co.	256	143	56%	135
3. Georgia	Atlanta	63	42	67%	75
4. Indiana	Indianapolis, South Bend, Jeffersonville	12	10	83%	121
5. Kentucky	Covington	89	63	71%	64
	Louisville	54	28	52%	91
6. Massachusetts	PATH Team	123	86	70%	NA
	Boston/Western MA	121	32	26%	NA
7. Michigan	Statewide	55	43	78%	53
8. Minnesota	Statewide	NA	186	NA	NA
9. North Carolina	Statewide	4	3	75%	127
10. New York	NYS DOC (SOAR pilot)	99	87	88%	59
11. Ohio	Statewide	110	50	45%	88
12. Oklahoma	Oklahoma City/Tulsa	71	39	55%	62
13. Oregon	Josephine/Lane/ Multnomah Co.	82	54	66%	92
	B.E.S.T (Portland)	10	9	90%	25
14. Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	34	34	100%	30
15. Rhode Island	Pawtucket	12	6	50%	155
16. Tennessee	Nashville	87	85	98%	56
	Chattanooga	4	4	100%	75
17. Utah	Salt Lake City	363	298	82%	116
18. Virginia	Richmond	112	86	77%	126
	Wytheville	51	49	96%	NA
19. Wisconsin	Waukesha	69	63	91%	66
TOTAL		1, 893	1, 510⁶	70%	93

Other Systemic Outcomes:

- *Community trainings.* As of June 30, 2008, 224 SOAR trainers have conducted 300 trainings in 180 cities with 9,400 attendees.
- *Increased access to housing.* There is limited, but very positive indications that SSI approval leads to quicker placement in permanent housing for people who were homeless.
 - Covington, KY, reports that they are able to place people, most of whom have been homeless for more than three years, into housing *immediately* upon receipt of benefits.
 - In Atlanta, GA all those receiving benefits are housed. Their average length of homelessness is almost 3 years.
 - Nashville, TN, reports people who receive benefits are housed *within 40 days* on average.
- *Collaboration with SSA and DDS.* In several states, SSA and DDS “flags” SOAR applications from people who are homeless. Some SSA and DDS offices have designated staff or a specific unit to work with applications from people who are homeless.
- *Fewer consultative exams (CEs).* All SOAR states are seeing fewer CEs requested by DDS. These are requested when DDS doesn’t have enough information to make a decision and are almost never helpful for applications from homeless persons.
- *Increased use of SSA Form 1696.* Case managers in states with the highest allowance rates are using SSA 1696, Appointment of Representative form, which allows them to receive SSA correspondence and act on the applicant’s behalf.
- *Cost savings:*
 - Utah reports that the state has recovered more than \$496,000 in general assistance benefits from SSA over the past two years in the Salt Lake City region alone.
 - Accepting referrals of homeless persons from a local hospital, the SOAR project in Covington, KY, helped people who were homeless get benefits and helped the hospital to recoup over \$182,000 in uncompensated care from Medicaid and Medicare since the start of the program in December 2006. The B.E.S.T program in Portland Oregon reports that \$111,000 of past medical bills has become reimbursable through retroactive Medicaid for only three cases to date.

For more information, contact Margaret Lassiter at Policy Research Associates, Inc. (518-439-7415 ext. 230; or mlassiter@prainc.com) or visit the SOAR website at www.prainc.com/soar.

¹ The 34 SOAR states are: AL, AK, AZ, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, GA, HI, IN, KY, LA, MD, MA, MI, MN, MT, NV, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, and WV. WI has not yet received federal SOAR TA, but is implementing SOAR using the State’s PATH allocation and is included for this reason.

² Dennis, D., Perret, Y., Seaman, A. and Wells, S. (2006). *Expediting Access to SSA Disability Benefits: Promising Practices for People Who Are Homeless*. Delmar, NY: Policy Research Associates, Inc.

³ Social Security Advisory Board (2007). *Social Security Advisory Board Annual Report 2006*. Washington, D.C. Social Security Advisory Board).

⁴ Westat (2007) *Evaluation of Homeless Outreach Projects and Evaluation (HOPE): Final Evaluation Report*. Westat: Rockville, MD, pp. 3-12-13.

⁵ There have been three waves of SOAR states starting in the fall of 2005, 2006, and 2007 respectively. Data from the earliest SOAR states dates to July 2006 and is cumulative. AK, AL, AZ, CO, DC, DE, HI, LA, MD, MT, NH, NV, NJ, TX, WA and WV have not yet begun to track outcomes of their SOAR efforts.

⁶ Minnesota, included in this total, was excluded from calculation of the allowance rate.