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Disability - BRIDGE [Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment]

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Cynthia A. Rice

09/20/98 05:24:38 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Cecilia E. Rouse/OPD/EOP, Lisa M. Brown/OVP @ OVP
cc: Cynthia Dailard/OPD/EOP, Sonyia Matthews/OPD/EOP
Subject: Friday's BRIDGE meeting and next steps

In your absence:

1) NEXT MEETING

We tentatively planned to meet again on Thursday September 24th from 2:00-3:30.
Does that time work for you?
Is rm 239 available?
If so, can Sonyia send out a reminder?

2) ISSUES DISCUSSED

a) Options for Defining the Consortium

We discussed the Sept. 16th options paper prepared by DOL. DOL and the Task Force recommended option 2 (b) [which encompasses 2(a)], in which applicant consortiums would be required to include 3-4 core agencies and would gain additional points in their applicant evaluation if additional agencies were included. Nearly everyone agreed upon this option, but had slightly different lists of who would be mandatory and who should be optional. Andy Imparato of the National Council on Disability prefers option 1(b) which encourages but does not require any agencies to be in the consortia but was willing to entertain option (2). Questions on the table include: should TANF (Bob Williams strongly advocated yes), state education agency & school to work (Andy and Becky argued yes) and state DDMR agencies (Becky and Marie Strahan from SSA argued yes) be mandatory? Shouldn't employers, non profits, people with disabilities, and housing agencies be at least on the extra point list? Next steps: DOL will redraft its option paper to present alternative combinations of mandatory and optional consortia members.

b) Target Population Issues

DOL and the Task Force recommended Option #3, but there was a great deal of discussion as to whether \$150 million would be enough to provide grants for 1) systems integration to help all people with disabilities and 2) for demonstration projects for special populations. If so, should an application process allow consortia to apply for 1 & 2 separately or would an applicant have to do #1 in order to propose to do #2? One option is to have a separate pot of funding for each purpose. Bob Williams made the point that we would want to fund demonstrations in order to learn more about what works. Andy Imparato made the point that we need to be concerned about equity -- we don't want to repeat past history of directing most funding to certain subpopulations. Next steps: DOL will redraft its option paper to present new alternatives based on the discussion.

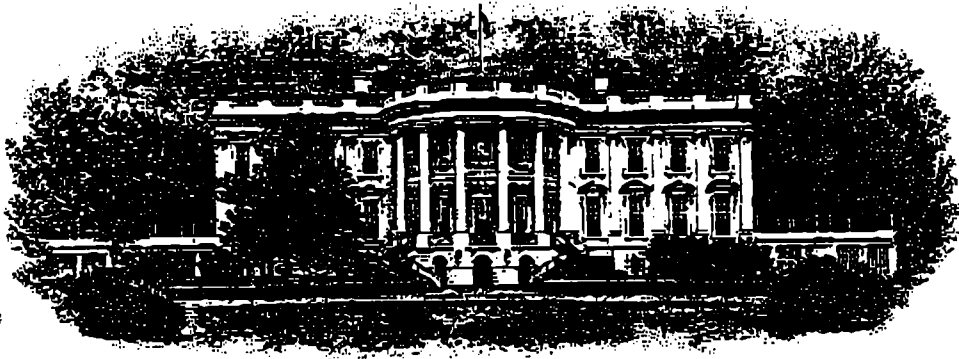
c) Allowable Activities

The discussion centered around the issues of 1) whether "pre-service" activities should be

allowable and what that term means and 2) should acquisition of computer software and hardware be allowable. DOL is going to rethinking these issues and present updated options paper.

3) Agenda for next meeting:

- a) Linkages bet. proposed BRIDGE program and existing competitions (9/14 memo)
- b) Revised options for BRIDGE program evaluation (9/18 memo-- revised from 9/14))
- c) Options for Defining the Consortium (revised DOL memo to be produced)
- d) Target Population Issues (revised DOL memo to be produced)
- e) Allowable Activities (revised DOL memo to be produced)



THE WHITE HOUSE

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DATE: 9-17-98

PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 38

COMMENTS: _____

Here are background papers for tomorrow's BRIDGE Program meeting at 2:00 pm in room 239 OEOB. (2 memo's, Target population Issues, Options for defining the consortium, BRIDGE draft paper.) Thanks.

Call Sonyia at 456-5351 if fax is incomplete.

BRIDGE PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION LIST

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14 September 98

TO: CECILLIA ROUSE & CYNTHIA RICE

FROM: JUDITH E. HEUMANN & CURTIS RICHARDS

**RE: LINKAGES BETWEEN THE PROPOSED "BRIDGE"
PROGRAM & EXISTING COMPETITIONS**

ISSUE:

How will the proposed BRIDGE Program be linked and/or integrated with similar existing grant and cooperative agreement programs, such as the ones administered by the Social Security Administration and the Department of Education?

BACKGROUND:

Currently, there are two coordinated efforts underway to establish model demonstration projects that stimulate and advance systems change in order to expand competitive employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. With \$4.5 million, the Social Security Administration is coordinating one demonstration grant competition targeted at people with disabilities who are on SSI or SSDI. With another \$2 million, the Department of Education, through its Rehabilitation Services Administration, is coordinating another competition aimed at removing employment barriers for individuals with disabilities on any form of public assistance.

Both efforts have the participation of other Departments, such as Labor and Health & Human Services. Both efforts are coordinated with the assistance of an Interagency Employment Initiative Committee. And, there is a coordinated evaluation mechanism for both efforts, as well, administered by the Social Security Administration. Grants and cooperative agreements under both efforts will be in place by September 30th. The Department of Education expects to fund five or six projects, while the Social

Security Administration anticipates funding 10 demonstration projects.

- Through the Task Force on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities, an FY 2000 budget request has been proposed and is beginning to take shape. The proposal is to create a new \$150 million grant program known as the BRIDGE Program. The purpose of this proposed grant program would be to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering the development of consortiums among state and local disability service systems or programs that promote full integration of employment-related services and support to adults with disabilities. The work of the consortiums would be to identify and eliminate conflicting policies and programmatic barriers, and to create policies and programs that integrate service delivery systems and the support services needed to obtain and maintain employment.

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

What will be the relationship of the existing projects to the new BRIDGE Program? What will the impact of the BRIDGE Program be on the existing projects, and vice versa? How can duplication be avoided, and lessons learned be applied? Should there be any linkages? If so, what should they be?

The existing demonstration projects will be in their second year of funding by the time the BRIDGE Program competition could be completed. Preliminary data would be available, but a full scale evaluation of the existing projects will not.

Below are several options which must be considered when shaping a new grant competition, such as is proposed with the BRIDGE Program. Any one, or a combination, of these options could be built into the BRIDGE Program proposal.

- 1) **DIRECTED COMPETITION:** Under this option, the BRIDGE Program would be a "directed" competition, or set of competitions, designed to create a hybrid of the two existing

projects using any lessons learned by that point in time as well as use information based on preliminary data analyses. For example, the grant application could require a broader base of agency participants than the two existing demonstration projects.

- 2) **ALL NEW COMPETITION:** Another option would be to run a separate, disconnected grant competition to spread the money around and draw additional proposals from state and local jurisdictions. Under this option, there would be no direct linkage between the existing demonstration projects and the BRIDGE program.
- 3) **SUPPLEMENT EXISTING PROJECTS:** One option is to have the BRIDGE Program competition limited to simply providing an augmentation for the existing projects, particularly for those which are substantially undefended.
- 4) **FUND NEXT PRIORITIES FROM EXISTING COMPETITIONS:** An option for linkages also could be to use new BRIDGE Program dollars to fund the next levels of acceptable demonstration projects under the Education and Social Security competitions. In other words, if, for example, Social Security had 18 viable projects under its competition, but was only able to fund the top 10, then BRIDGE funds could be directed toward the next eight applicants.

Under any option, or combination of options, the BRIDGE Program must be viewed as both an opportunity to create "glue" or "magnet" money to draw resources from a variety of places, as well as an opportunity for practicable demonstration projects.

14 September 98

TO: CECILLIA ROUSE & CYNTHIA RICE

FROM: JUDITH E. HEUMANN & CURTIS RICHARDS

RE: OPTIONS FOR "BRIDGE" PROGRAM EVALUATION

ISSUE:

How should grantees under the proposed Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE) Program be evaluated?

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Education and the Social Security Administration are conducting separate, but coordinated, competitions to fund model demonstration projects of program coordination and systems change designed to increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Social Security Administration soon will be awarding a contract to conduct an evaluation of these demonstration projects.

The evaluation will include two site visits to each project per year in order to evaluate the way the State Projects are organized, monitor record-keeping, provide guidance and technical assistance, and identify the elements of the demonstration that lead to positive work outcomes for beneficiaries. The primary goal of the evaluation is to analyze the systems which State Projects develop to streamline employment and rehabilitation services and other supports. The second related component is to measure the outcomes for participants and describe how changes in the infrastructure of each of the State's service delivery systems lead to these outcomes.

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Building on these demonstration efforts, the Task Force on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities is proposing a similar, but much more significant, FY 2000 initiative known as the Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE) Program. An evaluation component of this program will be critical. Below are a few options for consideration as the BRIDGE Program takes shape.

- 1) *Longitudinal Study:*** This option would require four waves of data collection on a statistically significant sample of individuals served by each project. The first wave would include baseline data from each consumer regarding employment histories, enhanced data on their disabilities, additional data on current and prior receipt of services, and their expectations regarding the services they have applied for. The remaining three waves of data collection would occur one year apart and would query the consumer on their satisfaction with services and the outcomes they obtained including employment outcomes and integration into the community. During each wave, the study sample's case records would be abstracted, and project records, cooperative agreements, policies, procedures, relevant state and local legislation, etc. would be reviewed and service providers, managers, administrators, state and local decision makers and other key personnel involved would be interviewed to document the projects' systems-change, infrastructure-building, and program integration. The purpose of the interviews and records review would be to provide an analysis of what changes occurred at the state and local levels, how they were accomplished, and how they achieved, or encouraged, the achievement of consumer outcomes. Where the service model permitted, there would be random assignment of individuals to either model or conventional services to identify services' impact. There would be a comprehensive analysis of the integrated project database and relevant ancillary databases (e.g. Unemployment Insurance, etc.). This option would provide information on the impact of services at project or sub-project level (at least, where the services models

permitted), and comprehensive information on project evolution, services provided, and outcomes attained. This would provide the richest analytical database for subsequent decision making. It is estimated that the cost of Option 1 would be approximately \$8,000,000.

2) Longitudinal Case Studies and Comprehensive Survey: In this option, a restricted number of consumers, service providers, managers, administrators and local decision makers would be followed intensively for four years and their experiences would be documented in-depth. Relevant supporting records would be reviewed. This would produce a series of intensive case studies for each project. In the fourth year, a comprehensive survey would be conducted with a statistically significant number of consumers and interviews would be conducted with relevant providers, managers, administrators local decision makers, etc.. Case and project records, cooperative agreements, state and local legislation, etc. would be reviewed, and the integrated project databases and ancillary databases would be comprehensively analyzed. This option would provide qualitative (but non-generalizable) data on the projects' evolution, processes, and consumer experiences through the case studies. It would also provide a comprehensive retroactive examination of project processes, services and outcomes. This option would not contain optimal service impact measurement methods, but it would still provide a relatively rich analytical database. It is estimated that the cost of Option 2 would be approximately \$6,000,000.

3) Comprehensive Survey: In this option, the projects would be monitored through three annual site visits. Unstructured interviews would be conducted with small numbers of consumers, service providers, managers administrators, state and local decision makers and other personnel involved in the projects.. Project records, policies, procedures, cooperative agreements and reports would be reviewed. In the fourth year a: 1) comprehensive survey would be conducted, and 2) comprehensive analysis of the integrated database and ancillary databases would be

TOTAL P.08

implemented per Option 2. This option would provide very useful data and analyses, but the data analyses would not be as compelling as those derived from Options 1 and 2. It is estimated that the cost of Option 3 would be approximately \$2,000,000.

As a condition for receiving grants, all applicants should agree that they will adopt computerized, integrated data systems with key data identical across all projects, and grant funds should support the development and implementation of such systems. The computerized data systems should include: a) uniform (for all projects) case record data on each person served including characteristics of individuals served, services provided, service costs, and employment outcomes and b) a real-time tracking system so the individual's trajectory through the integrated, coordinated service system can be documented along with the support services provided and those service costs. These data systems should include links to other key databases including Welfare, JTPA, Unemployment Insurance, etc. Moreover, at the project level (which transcends the case level) a uniform taxonomy of services should be adopted by all projects as well as uniform methods of accounting for key costs - particularly overhead costs.

Draft: 9/15/98

BRIDGE Program's : Target Population Issues

Issues

- This options paper addresses whether successful grant applicants should be required to serve the general disability population, or should they also be permitted to serve sub-populations.

Option #1: Require that grants be used to fund systems change that benefits all customers with disabilities.

Pros

- Effectively requires grantees to address the large, systemic problems in their disability services delivery systems to address the common issues experienced by all adults with disabilities seeking employment.
- Decreases the chances of applicants choosing to focus on the easiest-to-serve groups within the disability community thereby assuring more equitable use of funds.

Cons

- States vary enormously with respect to systems change, effectiveness of different agencies, and the relationships between various agencies and programs. One size doesn't fit all.
- Populations that are the most under served and/or have the greatest need might not receive the special and extra attention they need.
- Customer involvement could be made more difficult.
- Could be more difficult to accomplish large, systemic change all at once with relatively modest grants. Change might better be accomplished in smaller, targeted efforts.
- Likely to be opposed by state and local officials, and their advocates in Congress, who will want to provide maximum flexibility to grantees.

Option #2: Require that grants be used to fund systems change that benefits only targeted sub-populations within the disability community.

Pros

- Greater flexibility to applicants for targeting groups whose services are in the greatest need of systems change and developing innovative approaches to do achieve systems integration for those subpopulations.

- Easier to accomplish systems change in a smaller, targeted effort than in all systems at once, particularly with relatively small grants being given.

Cons

- Might result in "creaming." Sub-populations that are the most in need, most difficult to serve, and currently under served might receive less attention than others. However, "creaming" could be effectively addressed in the award criteria.
- Might result in only limited systems change rather than a widespread integration of systems that serve adults with disabilities.
- May not accomplish the larger goal of increasing the employment rate of adults with disabilities by allowing too narrow a focus for too small a population.

Option #3: Require grantees to use grants to fund systems change that benefits all customers with disabilities but also permit applications for grants that fund systems change that benefits targeted sub-populations.

in addition to serving all.

Pros

- Offers a "best of both worlds" by allowing states to undertake large, systemic changes that benefit all adults with disabilities while also seeking funding that addresses systems that serve targeted sub-populations most in need of change.
- Gives some flexibility to state and local officials to design consortia in several ways and address their most acute systems change needs. May be sufficient to gain their support.

Cons

- Asks for too much to be accomplished with comparatively small amounts of money. As a result, it may not accomplish either goal.
- May not adequately address the "creaming" problem in the design of consortia to address the needs of targeted sub-populations. Again, "creaming" could be effectively addressed in the award criteria.

*could have a
on technology*

The BRIDGE Program - Options on Allowable Activities

Background:

The discussion of options for allowable activities under the BRIDGE program is addressed under three possible grant scenarios:

- 1) Grants would only include systems change activities for the population of all adults with disabilities;
- 2) Grants would include both systems change activities and demonstration grants to provide pre-service functions for all adults with disabilities. *case-management*
- write up
w/proof
detail* 3) Grants would include both systems change activities for the population of all adults with disabilities and systems change activities that allow better service to targeted sub-populations.

Option #1) Allowable Activities for Only Systems Change Grants:

Allowable activities would include:

1. Establish new structures and partnerships that use existing local, state, and federal resources to integrate income assistance, health or other benefits, job training and job placement services, and other services relating to employment that serve or could serve adults with disabilities.
2. Link services with the One-Stop system in a manner that supports coordinated delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.
3. Establish cooperative agreements and coordinated activities among members of the consortium.
4. Provide training and technical assistance among consortium partners and to the workforce development system on availability of benefits, services, and training for adults with disabilities relating to employment, and the eligibility requirements for these benefits, services, and programs.
5. Promote equal, effective, and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the state through training and technical assistance to consortium members on program accessibility.
6. Develop and implement common intake and referral procedures, customer data bases, resource information, and customer service hotlines.
7. Create unified information systems that link all components of statewide workforce investment system and other consortium partners relating to labor market information such as employment statistics, information on job vacancies, and resume and career planning.

8. Establish linkages with service providers outside the consortium required for adults with disabilities to find and keep gainful employment.
9. Establish linkages among local public agencies and not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions necessary to the employment of adults with disabilities.
10. Evaluation of the efforts funded under these grants.

Prohibited activities would include:

1. Building construction and rental of facilities, except as required for participation in the One-Stop system.
2. Payment for direct services --- other than those specifically enumerated above --- to adults with disabilities.

Pros and Cons of Activities under Systems Change Only

Pros

- Would provide incentives to state systems -- workforce development, vocational rehabilitation services agencies, and others -- to integrate systems directed to "one point of delivery of service" for people with disabilities seeking employment.
- Would provide incentives to understand and implement waiver authorities under Medicaid and other SSA work incentives.

Cons

- Would primarily fund state or local bureaucracies that may or may not be able to improve service to people with severe disabilities.
- Does not allow for innovation and flexibility in services to disabled consumers since activities/services are delivered within the constraints of existing federal eligibility and other requirements.

Option #2. Allowable Activities for Systems Change and Demonstration Grants:

- a) Systems change allowable activities are those described above in Option #1.
- b) Allowable activities for demonstration grants would include only pre-service functions that are necessary to ensure the array of available programs and supports are made available to adults with disabilities seeking employment.

1. Provision of information, referral, and employment-related counseling regarding services, programs, and benefits relating to employment through a single point-of-entry (whether electronic or staff) to adults with disabilities.

2. Acquisition of computer hardware and software to facilitate linking or consolidating information or services provided by existing state, local, and federal providers.

Pros and Cons of Demonstration Grants with Pre-Service Functions

Pros

- Combined systems change and demonstration grant activities provide greater flexibility by and within states to meet their specific situations and need. This would be helpful since states and local areas vary in terms of how integrated and progressive their workforce systems and collaborative linkages have evolved to-date.
- Demonstration grants may expand upon, or leverage, coordinated local efforts supported under Welfare-to-Work demonstration grants, generally consortia of a broad spectrum of local service providers, funded projects to serve individuals with severe disabilities.

Cons

- Does not allow for innovation and flexibility in services to disabled consumers since activities/services are delivered within the constraints of existing federal eligibility and other requirements.
- Will not address inadequacy of training and employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities who may need personal assistance on the job.

Option #3. Allowable Activities for Only Systems Change Grants for All Adults with Disabilities and to Better Serve Targeted Populations

a) Systems change allowable activities are those described above in Option #1.

b) Allowable activities for systems change grants to better serve targeted populations include those activities described in Option #1, plus:

1. Training and technical assistance provided by publicly funded state entities serving explicitly defined sub-populations of adults with disabilities (e.g., blind, deaf, psychiatric, developmental disabilities, and others) to members of the consortium on the specific needs and barriers faced by their clients.

2. Identification and implementation of systems changes that address unique barriers to employment for the targeted sub-population, including linkages and improved access to

TOTAL P.17

transportation for those with mobility impairments, resolution of housing issues facing those experiencing deinstitutionalization or public housing support, and other similar barriers to entry into employment and job retention.

3. Identification and implementation of approaches to service delivery for targeted sub-populations that cut across state systems to address the specific barriers.

Pros and Cons for Systems Change Directed to Target Populations

Pros

- Would provide incentives to address other publicly or privately funded support systems that are necessary for some sub-populations of the disabled to obtain and retain employment.
- Would engage the expertise of national and local organizations servicing specific client groups to ensure their concerns for service delivery are met.
- Would increase likelihood of consumer organization involvement in systems change efforts.

Cons

- Might be too narrow in scope given amount of funds involved.

September 16, 1998

The Bridge Program: Options for Defining the Consortium

Background

- The proposed Bridge program builds on existing programs that provide grants to consortia to better integrate service delivery for persons with disabilities, but these programs take distinctly different approaches to defining which entities have to be in the consortium and which entities are eligible to receive the grant on behalf of the consortium.
- The SSA program is least prescriptive in specifying the composition of the consortium but most prescriptive in defining eligible applicants.
- The SSA program does not specify that any agency or entity has to be in the consortium, but instead relies on the evaluation criteria for judging the adequacy of the grant application to ensure there is adequate cooperation and collaboration, including evidence of coordination with and commitment from (e.g. such as interagency agreements or other agreements) a number of different agencies and entities serving a broad range of persons with disabilities.
- At the same time, the SSA program limits eligible applicants to one type of entity — a State agency.
- In contrast, the Education program is fairly prescriptive in specifying a minimum core of five State agencies that must be in the consortium, and in specifying that the consortium must develop partnership agreements with a variety of other Federal, State and local entities.
- At the same time, the Education program is very flexible in defining eligible applicants by allowing the members of the consortium to designate one of their members to apply for the grant or allowing the consortium to establish a separate, eligible legal entity to apply for the grant.
- This options paper first presents options for defining the consortium, ranging from significant flexibility with no minimum core of participants to minimum flexibility with a long list of entities that must be included in a consortium, with suboptions for each option related to adding evaluation criteria that would give preference to applications that have the desired composition for their consortium.
- As a secondary issue, the paper then considers two different options for defining eligible applicants.

Options for the Composition of the Consortium

Option 1: (a). *Specify no required members of consortium*

Pros

- Would produce the greatest diversity in composition of consortia and perhaps greatest innovation in integrating service delivery for persons with disabilities.
- Allows effective and motivated agencies or programs to "work around" ineffective agencies and programs.
- Allows the greatest flexibility in tailoring the structure of consortia to a particular state's or locality's population of adults with disabilities.
- Will appeal to local and state officials, and to members of Congress who oppose federal mandates attached to federal funding.

Cons

- May result in numerous applications for consortia — and, as a result, service delivery systems --- that do not include entities essential to promoting employment for persons with disabilities, such as voc rehab, the public health insurance agency, the local PIC or WIB, and public and private sector employers.
- Does not require bringing ineffective agencies or programs into an integrated service delivery system that would likely dramatically improve their performance.
- Could result in adults with disabilities not being mainstreamed into the job training and job placement systems if those agencies are not included in a consortium.

(b). *Specify no required members of consortium, but add general evaluation criteria similar to SSA criteria.*

Pros

- Retains significant flexibility for local and state officials, but encourages them (without a mandate) to include all of the appropriate agencies and programs in their consortia.

Cons

- Still likely to result in numerous applications that do not include the entities essential to promoting employment.
- Forces applicants to make an "educated guess" as to which structure of a consortium will "win" a grant by making requirements for participants in consortia less transparent than a specific, advance mandate.

3

Option 2:

(a). *Require that every consortium include 3-4 core agencies -- Vocational Rehabilitation, the public health insurance agency, the SSI/DI agency, and the local Private Industry Council or Workforce Investment Board -- essential to promoting employment.*

Pros

- Ensures that each consortium will include the agencies that provide the largest volume of services to the largest population of adults with disabilities that are essential to promoting employment.
- Permits a significant amount of diversity and innovation in consortia.
- Assures that the systems providing closely related services and, therefore, most in need of integration -- particularly the VR and WIB agencies --- are included in every consortium. Also, assures that the largest funding streams for services to adults with disabilities will be leveraged in the process of systems integration.
- Consistent with the Workforce Investment Act.
- Assures state and local officials, and their advocates in Congress, that their agencies will receive some portion of each grant.

Cons

- May result in consortia that focus too heavily on persons with disabilities who are the hardest to serve.
- May result in consortia that do not involve nongovernmental entities essential to promoting employment -- e.g. public and private employers.
- Assures that every consortium will be focused in part, or dominated, by large public organizations rather than smaller not-for-profit entities.

(b).

Add specific evaluation criteria requiring participation of other entities, including the state mental health agency, the state welfare agency, local school boards, local community colleges, the local transportation agency, local SSA district offices, and the local small business office and economic development agency.

Pros

- Provides structure allowing mandated consortia members to supervise and ensure performance of entities that are linked to consortia by agreements. Assures that consortia will not be limited to the mandated agencies, but permits some flexibility in the selection of additional participants in consortia.
- Increases the likelihood that consortia will include both agencies that traditionally participate in employment-related services for adults with disabilities and others that have not traditionally participated.

Labor likes →

addition 3-4 core agencies, + criteria that encourage inclusion of others.

+ housing + private sector employers

State development disabilities vocational rehabilitation mental health economic development

4 mandatory (see a)
+ list of others that would be part of selection criteria

Cons

- May limit diversity and innovative consortia.
- Creates a class system in which certain agencies are deemed essential to the employment of adults with disabilities while others are stigmatized as "expendable."
- Forces applicants, in part, to make an "educated guess" as to which structure of a consortium will "win" a grant by making some requirements for participants in consortia less transparent than a specific, advance mandate.

Option 3: *Mandate members of consortium to include all agencies and entities included in Options 2(a) and 2(b).*

Pros

- Ensures that all entities relevant to promoting employment of persons with disabilities and to serving those target groups that are the hardest to serve are included in the consortium.
- Avoids requiring applicants to "guess" which agencies should and should not be included in their consortia.
- Assures a comprehensive, integrated service system in those jurisdictions that participate in the grants program.

Cons

- Likely to be very complex to form consortium with so many mandatory members, and may create a disincentive to participation for some jurisdictions.
- Would eliminate concept of limited number of consortium members supervising and ensuring performance of other entities involved in effort.
- Prohibits flexibility for local and state officials and, as a result, may require structures and delivery systems that are not appropriate to a population of adults with disabilities in a particular state or locality.

Options for Defining Eligible Applicants

Option 1: (a). *Specify one governmental entity to receive grant, such as PIC or WIB.*

Pros

- Ensures that all consortia are led by the local governmental entity most essential to promoting employment of persons with disabilities.

Cons

- May result in consortia led by local PIC or WIB that is not effective in particular local area and therefore local entity not most effective in promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

(b). *Specify one entity as above, but allow waivers to requirement.*

Pros

- Ensures that all consortia are either led by local PIC or WIB if that local entity is effective and therefore led by local governmental entity most essential to promoting employment.

Cons

- May result in waivers based on political considerations as opposed to effectiveness considerations.

Option 2: *Allow consortium members to decide who applies for the grant.*

Pros

- Allows for greater diversity and possibly greater innovation in the designation of entity to head consortium.

Cons

- May result in consortia whose focus is not totally on promoting employment for persons with disabilities.

18 September 98

TO: CECILLIA ROUSE & CYNTHIA RICE

FROM: JUDITH E. HEUMANN & CURTIS RICHARDS

**RE: REVISED OPTIONS FOR "BRIDGE" PROGRAM
EVALUATION**

ISSUE:

How should grantees under the proposed Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE) Program be evaluated?

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Education and the Social Security Administration are conducting separate, but coordinated, competitions to fund model demonstration projects of program coordination and systems change designed to increase the employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Social Security Administration soon will be awarding a contract to conduct an evaluation of these demonstration projects.

The evaluation will include two site visits to each project per year in order to evaluate the way the State Projects are organized, monitor record-keeping, provide guidance and technical assistance, and identify the elements of the demonstration that lead to positive work outcomes for beneficiaries. The primary goal of the evaluation is to analyze the systems which State Projects develop to streamline employment and rehabilitation services and other supports. The second, related component, is to measure the outcomes for participants and describe how changes in the infrastructure of each of the State's service delivery systems leads to these outcomes.

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Building on these demonstration efforts, the Task Force on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities is proposing a similar, but much more significant, FY 2000 initiative known as the Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE) Program. An evaluation component of this program will be critical. Below are two options for consideration as the BRIDGE Program takes shape.

- 1. Longitudinal Study:** This option would require five waves of data collection on a statistically significant sample of individuals served by each project as well as interviews and reviews of documents. Each wave would include: a) site visits for the purpose of interviewing relevant personnel, obtaining data from case records, project records and other sources, and b) surveys of a sample of consumers who were followed longitudinally. The first data collection wave would focus on obtaining baseline data on relevant elements of the local communities and states involved including descriptions of service delivery networks, program cooperation and coordination, and local economic and labor market characteristics. Baseline data would also be obtained on a significant sample of consumers regarding employment histories, enhanced data on their disabilities, additional data on current and prior receipt of services, and their expectations regarding the services they have applied for. Comparative data would be gathered from matched geographic areas/communities not directly affected by the demonstrations using available records, and this comparative data would be monitored during each successive wave of data collection. The remaining four waves of data collection would occur one year apart and would query the consumers on their satisfaction with services and the outcomes they obtained including employment outcomes and integration into the community. New consumers would be inducted into the study sample during waves two and three and would also be followed longitudinally in order to assess the affects of project implementation on the consumer population over time. During each wave, the study sample's case records would be abstracted, and project records, cooperative agreements, policies, procedures, relevant State and local legislation, etc. would be reviewed and service providers, managers, administrators, State

and local decision makers and other key personnel involved would be interviewed to document the projects' systems change, infrastructure-building, and program integration. The purpose of the interviews and records review would be to provide an analysis of what changes occurred at the State and local levels, how they were accomplished, and how they achieved or encouraged the achievement of consumer outcomes. Where the service model permitted, there would be random assignment of individuals to either model or conventional services to identify the services' impact. There would be a comprehensive analysis of the integrated project database and relevant ancillary databases (e.g. Unemployment Insurance, etc.). This option would provide information on the impact of services at project or sub-project level (at least, where the services models permitted), and comprehensive information on project evolution, services provided, and outcomes attained. This would provide the richest analytical database for subsequent decision making. It is estimated that the cost of Option 1 would be \$10 million to \$12 million.

- 2. Documentation of Model Projects' Processes and Consumer Surveys:** This option also would require five waves of data collection but would not select a sample of consumers to be followed longitudinally. Each wave would consist of site visits for the purpose interviewing relevant personnel, obtaining data from case records, project records and other sources. The first data collection wave would focus on obtaining baseline data on relevant elements of the local communities and States involved including descriptions of service delivery networks, program cooperation and coordination, and local economic and labor market characteristics. During the first wave, baseline data would also be obtained on a significant sample of consumers whose cases had recently been closed regarding the services they received, their satisfaction with services, their employment backgrounds, dependence on public assistance and current employment situation. Data would be abstracted from their case records documenting their trajectory through services. Comparative data would be gathered from matched geographic areas/communities not directly affected by the demonstrations using available records, and this comparative data would be monitored during each successive wave of data

collection. The remaining four waves of data collection would occur one year apart. During each wave project records, cooperative agreements, policies, procedures, relevant State and local legislation, etc. would be reviewed and service providers, managers, administrators, State and local decision makers and other key personnel involved would be interviewed to document the projects' systems change, infrastructure-building, and program integration. The purpose of the interviews and records review would be to provide an analysis of what changes occurred at the State and local levels, how they were accomplished, and how they achieved or encouraged the achievement of consumer outcomes. During the fifth data collection wave, another statistically significant sample of consumers, whose cases had recently been closed, would be surveyed and data would be obtained on the services they received, their satisfaction with services, their employment backgrounds, dependence on public assistance and current employment situation. Data would be abstracted from their case records documenting their trajectory through services. The sample surveyed in the first wave would then be compared with the sample surveyed in the fifth wave. There would be a comprehensive analysis of the integrated project database and relevant ancillary databases as in Option 1. It is estimated that the cost of Option 2 would be \$8 million to \$10 million.

As a condition for receiving grants, all applicants should agree that they will adopt computerized, integrated data systems with key data identical across all projects, and grant funds should support the development and implementation of such systems. The computerized data systems should include: a) uniform (for all projects) case record data on each person served including characteristics of individuals served, services provided, service costs, and employment outcomes and b) a real-time tracking system so the individual's trajectory through the integrated, coordinated service system can be documented along with the support services provided and those service costs. These data systems should include links to other key databases including Welfare, JTPA, Unemployment Insurance, etc. Moreover, at the project level (which transcends the case level) a uniform taxonomy of services should be adopted by all projects as well as uniform methods of accounting for key costs -- particularly

overhead costs.

Bridge Meeting

→ "give \$"

9/8
+ private orgs

grant program - magnet \$ for st + local agencies, to
+ form consortia
come together to provide seamless + easily
accessible services to people w/ disabilities.

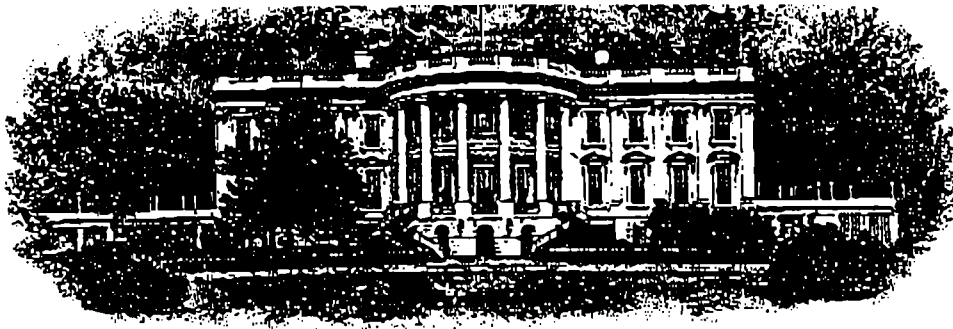
\$150m - 1st yr

(8) (2)
(now SSA + education are funding grants of \$500k
each)

Include HUD, Justice, EEOC.

assignments { Allowable activities - DOL (Sett)
Population / competitive / formula - Andy Imparato
agencies which must be included - DOL

next wed - 2pm



THE WHITE HOUSE

CECILIA ROUSE
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT
NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL
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MEETING NOTICE - THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING IS TO CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSION OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAM, PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON EMPLOYMENT OF ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES. (WHICH SHOULD BE ATTACHED.) THANK YOU.

Call Sonyia at 456-5351 if this fax is incomplete and to give clearance info.

Oops.
This meeting will be Wed., Sept. 9th
at 2:00 pm OEOB Rm 239.

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Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

"...We must forge a national disability policy that is based on three simple creeds-inclusion, not exclusion; independence, not dependence; and empowerment, not paternalism . . ."

*President Bill Clinton
1996*

Introduction

On March 13, 1998, the President issued an Executive Order entitled "Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities" with the goal of increasing the employment of adults with disabilities to a rate that is as close as possible to the employment rate of the general adult population. The Executive Order called for the Federal Government to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to reduce the unemployment rate of individuals with disabilities and to assist those individuals in obtaining competitive jobs. To accomplish this goal, the Labor Department, Education Department, Social Security Administration, Small Business Administration, Transportation Department, Commerce Department, Health and Human Services Department, and the Veterans Affairs Departments are proposing an initiative called "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program.

The purpose of this proposed grant program is to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering the development of consortiums among state and local disability service systems or programs that promote full integration of employment-related services and support to adults with disabilities. The work of the consortiums would be to identify and eliminate conflicting policies and programmatic barriers, and to create policies and programs that integrate service delivery systems and the support services needed to obtain and maintain employment.

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. And, of the non-employed, 75% have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998). Most importantly, the numbers of working age adults with disabilities who are not employed have not increased in the past 10 years. The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through programs funded at the federal, state, and local level, and often at all three levels. Examples of these programs include Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid (including Medicaid waiver programs), Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps.

Despite the increase in potential for employment -- created by legislation, technology,

and changes in societal attitudes — only a small percentage of adults with disabilities on public benefit programs actually leave these programs for employment. For example, over the past decade, the total number of SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries has doubled to more than eight million working age individuals. Federal cash payments to these individuals have steadily increased to more than \$75 billion per year (SSA, 1998). Yet, annually, fewer than 1% of the eight million SSI and SSDI beneficiaries actually return to work and terminate benefits.

The Policy Problem

"...Eligibility is linked to SSDI and gross earned income qualifying determinations. Either I have it or I don't...Incredibly, despite these kinds of requirements, there is no such thing as Federal or State accounting assistance for working benefit recipients! Government representatives . . . deal with only one program per letter, and nothing ever gets comprehensively integrated . . ."

**Phil Schultz, SSDI beneficiary
Racine, Wisconsin**

People with disabilities are a diverse population, they need a variety of services and supports to seek or retain employment and federal assistance is dispersed between many programs and agencies. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. Lack of information and poor integration of public support programs causes program-related barriers and complexities that inhibit individuals with disabilities from effectively using available services. From the individual's perspective, public programs make no sense, are too complex, have conflicting rules and goals and work at cross-purposes much of the time.

There is also limited information sharing and/or program coordination by federal administrators with their counterparts at other federal, state, local, and nonprofit agencies, and with the private sector or with the disability community. The consequence of this is evidenced in the difficulty adults with disabilities experience in getting reliable information about the various work incentives, the myriad of state health care benefits under Medicaid, and the impact of work on their federal benefits status for SSI, SSDI, Medicaid and Medicare.

Lack of service coordination and integration also has negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. For example, in some states, counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be independently contacting the same

employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employer; the very relationship that is critical to employment success.

Clearly programs and agencies need to coordinate, by sharing basic program information, establishing compatible eligibility criteria, and cooperating in service provisions.

Current Efforts

Currently the Social Security Administration, and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services have discretionary and demonstration grant initiatives to develop and evaluate models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state and local level. Much of this effort is focused on beneficiaries of federal SSI and SSDI programs.¹ These agencies have published individual and joint grant announcements for competitive grant awards to be made in FY 1998 (less than \$8 million total for projects in 4-6 states).

The following five examples of proposed projects under the current demonstration grants initiative at the Social Security Administration provide insight into different approaches to addressing employment barriers experienced by certain SSA beneficiaries. (Applicants are not identified because the SSA awards have not yet been announced. These examples do not necessarily represent the grand award recipients.)

1. Project #1 proposed to involve three of 28 existing Department of Rehabilitation/Mental Health Cooperative Project sites, by adding services for at least 200 individuals with severe psychiatric disabilities each year at sites that have One-Stop Career Centers. The sites will enhance services by adding two staff positions: a Benefits Coordinator and a Service Coordinator. The service delivery to the individual will use a team approach with representatives of SSA, VR, MH, and other relevant agencies. At the state level, a State Coordinating Council will seek waivers from SSA, HCFA, and perhaps others (i.e., HUD). The waivers will be used to pilot ways to encourage adults with disabilities to work and be less dependent on public assistance.

2. Project #2 proposed to address barriers created by the fear of losing public health insurance and income supports experienced by beneficiaries who are mentally ill, mentally retarded, and developmentally disabled. Barriers will be addressed through education of SSA beneficiaries who are VR clients on available work incentives, promotion of VR services, and the use of a Medicaid Earned Income Disregard Waiver and an SSA Waiver to Suspend the Extended Period

¹ There is also a similar ongoing multi-year health care project sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ).

of Eligibility.

3. Project #3 proposed to integrate current workforce development efforts in ways that increase efficiency of operations, enhance program quality and outcomes, and ultimately increase the employment and wages of beneficiaries with serious mental illness in meaningful jobs. The proposal will request waivers from HCFA, SSA, and HUD. Employment services will be integrated through One-Stop Career Centers, a centralized location that can simplify the service interface for consumers. The project will also explore new structures such as "Consumer Credit Unions" to help solve the complicated financial problems of consumers. The project also projects two regional pilots to test employment vouchers in years 3-5 of the funding.
4. Project #4 proposed to use interventions in two cities to increase employment and decrease reliance on public supports. A third comparable city will be selected to collect control group data. The project plans to serve SSI/SSDI beneficiaries who have severe and persistent mental illness and are served by DVR; who are blind or visually impaired, and are served by the Division of Services for the Blind; and consumers who have physical disabilities that might be able to transition to employment through the Independent Living Program (ILP). The main approaches will be to reduce uncertainty regarding the effect of increased wages on benefits and streamlining access to employment supports and services through use of Benefit Counselors, increasing incentives for working via waivers regarding SSI related benefit reductions, ensuring health care by targeting employers who provide health benefits, and providing specific training to make participants attractive to those employers.
5. Project #5 is the product of five years of study and pre-testing. To continue its work in this area, this project, coordinated through a state health agency, proposed to provide 1,800 SSI/SSDI beneficiaries with physical disabilities, mental illness, developmental disabilities, and AIDS/HIV with comprehensive help in securing and maintaining gainful employment. It will make better use of existing SSI/SSDI work incentives and add new assurances of health and long term care coverage regardless of earnings. It will reduce fragmentation and assure participants are better off financially as a result of employment.

The BRIDGE Initiative

The new BRIDGE grant program builds on the current efforts of the federal agencies, described above. It would begin by providing all interested applicants intensive orientation to the relevant federal programs and technical assistance on the flexibility in federal programs, including the ability to obtain waivers and develop options specific to the state or local community. It would then support a much greater number of states and localities in the planning, creation and early implementation of integrated and coordinated service delivery at the state and local levels. Projects would be designed to put into practice the best approaches to competitive employment of adults with disabilities and take into account the economic, educational, health, and public policy environment in the state or locality in question.

BRIDGE grants would be awarded, primarily or exclusively, on a competitive basis from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for three years with funding in FY 2001 and FY 2002 being contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

In order to promote coordination and integration of services, the BRIDGE program will emphasize the need to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be flexible and adapt to state and local conditions. Specifically, individual programs and services would be linked by: (1) convincing service providers and officials of the need to cooperate and developing incentives for them to participate in cooperative consortiums, (2) getting key participants to agree to the goals of the initiative and the role of each entity in developing and implementing policy, program and systems changes, and (3) establishing a forum to address issues and promote change and to establish ongoing communication and integration of services. Some states have developed strategies that use this type of practical approach to improve service delivery and have reported that their coordination efforts have reduced time and expense for administrators and consumers alike. (p. 20, GAO/HEHS-96-126, 1996.)

The BRIDGE program would encourage coordinated and integrated service delivery approaches by encouraging the use of the following mechanisms by grantees:

- establishing formal interagency workgroups and alliances;
- entering into formal agreements for information sharing and coordination;
- developing needed waivers of federal and state program requirements
(e.g., Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements under SSA demonstration authority);
- developing state, local and private expertise in providing employment services and assisting individuals in the use of the myriad of programs and incentives;
- improving customer information systems and customer service;
- developing relevant cross-agency data analysis and comparative analysis;
- developing multi-program, multi-level evaluation capacity;
- improving and enhancing case management and supporting development of the individual's ability to self-manage program services and benefits;
- involving employers and unions in the public and private sector in planning and design of services and systems;
- supporting employers in the hiring, accommodation and provision of ongoing supports for workers with disabilities (as needed);
- measuring inter and intra-governmental cost-savings of return-to-work activities;
- measuring customer satisfaction;
- evaluating the impact of work on other social factors
(quality of life, community participation, recreation, health status, etc.);
- evaluating effectiveness and efficiency of interventions.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must demonstrate that they represent a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to identification, access and maintenance of employment. The public agencies should have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

For example, a consortium could consist of a local Private Industry Council, the local Small Business Administration office, the local metropolitan planning organization, the state vocational rehabilitation agency, the local One-Stop office, the local school district, the state Medicaid program office and, if appropriate, agencies providing access to the Medicare program. Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across disciplines and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. The consortium must also demonstrate that it has consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project.

Finally, each applicant would be required to demonstrate an ability and willingness to expend some percentage of the funds provided to evaluate customer satisfaction and the efficiency and effectiveness of their coordination and integration efforts in a valid and reliable manner.

Expected Outcomes

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country. Some of the expected outcomes will include the following:

Adults with disabilities will:

- enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a higher rate of pay than they do currently;
- more easily and rapidly access a wider and more diverse array of employment services resulting in efficient and rapid job placement that will improve job skills, job opportunities, job placement, and job retention for adults with disabilities;
- be more satisfied with employment and related support services;
- have more input concerning their life goals and career plans;
- have more choices with respect to employment and career decisions;
- be more readily accommodated within the work force;
- have a better understanding of work incentive provisions; and

- report that their quality of life has improved.

State and local service delivery systems will:

- be less fragmented, have improved communication across systems, and be more efficient by decreasing duplication of services;
- be more user friendly and customer oriented;
- be more cost-effective than services provided in less integrated delivery service systems;
- systematically decrease barriers to employment of adults with disabilities at state and local levels (e.g. lack of: transportation, health care/insurance, education, workforce training, housing, assistive technology, civil rights, on-site and off-site job accommodations and long-term follow-along supports);
- increase the use of Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements; and
- realize substantial cost savings in terms of reducing the costs of public benefit programs.

Outstanding Administrative and Policy Issues to be Decided

1. Which federal agency or agencies will administer the grant program?
(Which agency or agencies will receive the funding in the President's budget?)

DOL 2. Which federal agencies' local affiliates/systems must participate in a consortium for it to be a qualified applicant?

3. What is an appropriate amount for a grant, in terms of a capped or a floor-funded program?

Andy 4. Should grants be given out exclusively on a competitive basis, or should there be a formula component to assure that every state participates in this activity? For example, should some portion of the money be given to states or cities by formula and the remaining given to local consortiums by competition? Should consortia be required to serve entire disability population, or just targeted pops?

5. How will the grantees be evaluated?

6. Should there be a reward for achieving certain outcomes?

DOL/ 7. Required activities?
S&H

8. Match requirement?

9. Duration of grants?

Judy - 10. Relationship between this & other existing grant programs?