SUSTAINING PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT

Examples and findings from Jobs-Plus research, 3.23.16
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Why discuss engagement?

- Place-based programs must not just reach a broad and substantial portion of residents but sustain engagement.
- Fall-off in engagement is natural in service delivery, but especially challenging in Jobs-Plus:
  - Voluntary program
  - Potentially large resident/staff ratio
  - Residents may be receiving other services elsewhere
  - Start-up lags and administrative challenges can cut against credibility and sustained engagement
- What are strategies for maintaining engagement from broad and substantial proportion of the development?
Outline of topics

- Sustained engagement around model components
  - Employment services
  - Rent incentives
  - Community Support for Work
- *Integrated strategies* for engagement
  - Employment services/CSW
  - CSW/JPEID
  - JPEID/Employment services
- Questions/discussion
Sustaining engagement: ES

Challenges: both referral and quick-placement models may cut against need for sustained contact with Jobs-Plus

Past strategies have included:

- From orientation, model career paths for longer-term goals
  - Jefferson Houses: “You can make $80,000/year. How?”
  - Describe career pathways in health sector
- Create framework for value-added, sustained contact
  - New job leads for unemployed residents of varied backgrounds
  - Follow-up around service referrals, to assess quality
  - Advertising new services or activities available, for broad needs
  - Supporting employed residents in retention and advancement
- Develop expectations for regular check-in and engagement that build on these approaches
Sustaining engagement : CSW

Challenges: outreach is necessary but may not be sufficient to keep residents deeply engaged in Jobs-Plus

Past strategies have included:

• Surveys and questionnaires about service needs and preferences – “hooks” for continued engagement
• Resident advisory boards for Jobs-Plus
• Facilitating self-help, cohort-based, and/or interest groups, for peer-to-peer engagement
• Sustaining visibility of program through varied events, and partnerships with community or cultural organizations
• Serving youth and other family/household members to reach rest of the family
Sustaining engagement: JPEID

Challenge: rent incentives can sometimes seem too distant to matter to residents, and they may not trust they’ll work

Past strategies have included:

- Saturation-level marketing of benefit from multiple angles
  - Property management staff
  - Community events and flyers
  - Outreach work in multiple languages
- Language that explains JPEID clearly, and appeals to shared values
  - Struggles that families may face
  - Desire for better opportunities for residents and children
- Marketing to both employed and unemployed residents
Integrating strategies: ES/CSW

Past strategies have included:

- Have community coaches or staff record information from residents about interests and needs, convey to ES staff for follow-up
- Use outreach as opportunity for follow-up with active caseload
  - Carry messages back and forth
  - See how jobs or job search is going
- Integrating job fairs or job information into other community events
- Provide networking support for work (carpooling, babysitting in a pinch)
- Provide transportation or other types of assistance to support engagement
CSW/JPEID

Past strategies have included:

• Publicizing JPEID throughout development through CSW campaigns (“Mr. Freeze” in SAHA)
• During CSW door-knocking, describe how benefit can help unemployed residents, and develop referral strategy for recently-employed
• Encourage follow-up to property management, to apply for benefit
Past strategies have included

- Talk about how residents will be able to keep more of earnings, during case management/job development
- Talk about savings and make plan for them
- Integrate and enhance any savings through asset-building, financial counseling, or credit repair programs
Discussion and questions

- What strategies have you found successful to maintain engagement and interest *in each of the three components* of Jobs Plus?
- What’s been most successful in *combining* strategies to sustain engagement?
- What’s challenging about *combining* strategies for sustained engagement?
- How have you tried to address them?