**Coordinated Team Approach - Best Practices for Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies**

The Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) project’s innovative use of Coordinated Team Approach (CTA) is an efficient method to lead Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries towards earning above SGA level funding. The goal of CTA is to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to SSDI beneficiaries' rehabilitation engagement and employment process by bringing together an array of expertise from team members. The results of the Mathematica Report from Kentucky and Minnesota demonstration sites indicate five best practices to assist with integrating CTA in Vocational Rehabilitation services.

**Leadership & Staff Buy-in**: Coordinated Team Approach requires that both leadership and staff must be on board with the new approach to services. Resistance to change may occur. Involving leadership and staff with planning can help mitigate tensions and encourage buy-in from reluctant personnel.

**Open and Active Communication:** Establish strong lines of open communication that define roles and responsibilities for leadership and CTA team members. Develop a communication mechanism that encourages feedback during the planning and implementation process to quickly respond to issues and celebrate successes.

**Early & Continuous Training and Support:** Early and ongoing training is vital to successful implementation of CTA. Training may include but not limited to:

SGA enhanced service provision training,

Leadership and facilitation skills training,

Financial and benefits training

**Adaptability:** Survey the unique strengths and challenges of your agencies and adapt CTA based on the needs of your clients and staff, which may include adopting flexible scheduling, use of technology, or shifting roles and responsibilities.

**Adequate staffing:** VR agencies that have adequate staff support are more successful in implementing CTA. Effective "teaming" or delegation of roles and responsibilities amongst CTA members can help with the challenges of understaffing and large caseloads. Increase in support personnel to assist CTA members has proven to be effective.

Reference:

Sevak, P, Kehn, M., Honeycutt, T., & Livermore, G. (September 2017). *Minnesota Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) Project Demonstration Final Evaluation Report*. Mathematica Policy Research. Washington, DC.

Sevak, P, Martin, F., Livermore, G. , Honeycutt, T., & Morris, E. (September 2017). *Kentucky Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) Project Demonstration Final Evaluation Report*.  Mathematica Policy Research. Washington, DC.