Cumberland County Department of Social Services

Community Partners Information Session

Update: Work Support Strategies & NC FAST Projects 2/6/7

June 13, 2014

Brenda Reid Jackson, Director
Welcome!
County DSS Role

- **County Departments of Social Services are**
  - Federally mandated
  - State supervised
  - Locally administered

- **Example of Average Annual Data:**
  - FNS (food stamps) – 37,000 ongoing cases; 2,788 new applications; $9 million federal benefits issued that is spent in the local economy
  - Medicaid – 50,000 ongoing cases; 3,500 new applications
Federal & State Mandates

- Federal Affordable Care Act including Modified Adjustable Gross Income (MAGI)

- State Implementation of NC Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST)

- USDA Food Stamp Timely Processing Mandate
Federal Mandates – Affordable Care Act

Effective October 1, 2013:

- **Medicaid Expansion**
  - North Carolina opted not to participate in the expansion program
  - Approximately 500,000 NC citizens may not qualify for healthcare benefits

- **Federal Qualified Health Programs – [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)**
  - Medicaid – DSS
  - Health Choice – DSS
  - Advance Payment Tax Credit – Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM)
  - Cost Sharing Reduction (Subsidy) – Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM)

- **“No Wrong Door Concept”**
  - Citizens can apply for services anywhere through the Federal Marketplace
  - Cannot force the citizen to come into the office
  - Telephonic & electronic access will be linked to North Carolina through ePASS

- **Navigator or Certified Application Counselors Program**
  - Local group of medical providers, county departments & community agencies working together to provide services in the community. **Ex. Legal Aid of NC, Stedman Wade Health, and Community Health & Sickle Cell Agency**

- **Will be up to local communities to build the coalition**
  - Information Session for community partners provided on August 5th & 9th
    - December 16th & 19th at DSS
**Federal Mandates**

**Modified Adjustable Gross Income (MAGI) – October 1, 2013**

- Impacts all Family & Children’s Medicaid programs. Excludes Special Assistance (SA) and Long-Term Care
- Will use income tax methodology to determine eligibility for Medicaid in the Family & Children’s programs
- Applications began trickling in February 2014 from the Federally Facilitated Marketplace and State DHHS
- By April 1, 2014 we received 4,287 MAGI applications and 1,877 traditional applications with 21,000 cases statewide backlogged awaiting federal and state processing

**Sequestration – October 1, 2013**

- Overall DSS is funded 50% by federal reimbursement. The October 2013 federal shutdown created delays in hiring temporary staff and processing Work First cash assistance cases

**USDA – January 24, 2014**

- The USDA food stamp compliance mandate to NC and their threat to withhold federal funds. These federal funds pay 50% of the cost to administer the program locally if NC does not address the 1766 backlogged applications by Feb. 10, 2014. Overall DSS is funded 50% by federal reimbursement.
NC FAST is the new way counties will determine eligibility services. State’s NC FAST implementation schedule:

- **Project 1 – Food and Nutritional Services (food stamps)**
  - Began in July 2012 with applications. Implemented in November 2012 and due to USDA compliance mandates this program’s applications and recertifications are up-to-date

- **Project 2/6 – Medicaid, Work 1st Cash and Refugee Assistance**
  - Began October 2013 with new applications
  - October/November 2013 for current active cases. Delayed with statewide staggered launch date in July 2014

- **Project 7 – Affordable Care Act**
  - Federal Facilitated Marketplace began accepting applications October 1, 2013. Local counties did not begin receiving these applications until late February 2014; Over 21,000 cases between the FFM and state have not been passed down to the counties
  - Services effective January 1, 2014

- **Project 3 – Child Care & Energy Assistance**
  - Expected to launch early 2014. Delayed with no anticipated new launch date
North Carolina ePASS

Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening Services (ePASS) is the public portal for citizens to apply for services on-line using NC FAST.

State’s ePASS implementation schedule:
- April 2013 launched Food & Nutrition Services (food stamps)
- June 2013 expanded to include Medicaid applications
- October 1, 2013 expanded to Affordable Care Act
- Allows for duplicate applications for all programs
THE PERFECT STORM

“UNKNOWNNS”
- Federal Shutdown
- USDA Food Stamp
  Crisis
- Agency Closings
due to inclement
weather

Affordable Care Act

Modified Adjustable
Gross Income

NC FAST & ePASS

County Department of Social Services

Sequestration
Work Support Strategies
What is Work Support Strategies?

- A new service delivery model for eligibility programs that maximizes customer self-sufficiency and reduces administrative churn

- A method to incorporate changes related to the federal Affordable Care Act and state NC FAST implementation

- It aligns with county and agency strategic goals

- For more information: www.ncwss.com
New WSS Service Delivery Model

No wrong door to access benefits

- **Customers have a choice in when, where, and how they apply for benefits**
  - Walk-in
  - Telephonic
  - Drop-off
  - Electronic submission
  - Mail
  - Fax

- **Avenues to access services**
  - Community partners ex. libraries, community centers, churches, other human services agencies
New WSS Service Delivery Model

Families tell their story once & receive the services they need

** Customer Service
- Long term goal of same day service
- Support working families

** Universal Worker
- One worker can determine eligibility for all programs
- Medicaid & Food Stamp Applications only

THANK YOU
FOR THE CALL!

7/2/2014
Economic Services Section: Local Implementation Plan & New Reorganization
Current Economic Services

- Clerical Support
- Family & Children’s Medicaid
- Adult Medicaid
- WFFA/WFES and Child care
- Call Center; Interpreters; Staff Development
Restructured Economic Services Section

Effective: August 1, 2013
Note: Revised May 2014
Next steps....

- Continue local implementation of new service delivery model through Work Support Strategies (NC FAST future projects and Affordable Care Act eligibility determination for Medicaid/Health Choice/MAGI, Child Care & Work First)

- Continue to inform & engage Community Partners

- Evaluation of staffing needs based on performance data

- Share critical State & Federal public information as we receive it over the next several months
What can my agency or organization do to help?

- Provide opportunities for community outreach and education
- Provide access to automated services through the use of technology in your agency or organization
- Provide training opportunities for your staff and the citizens you serve
What can my agency or organization do to help?

- Be prepared for the worst and hope for the best. Areas of concern due to any potential benefit and service delays:
  - Increased demand on food pantries
  - Increased demand for emergency financial assistance ex. rent & prescriptions
  - Increased demand for heating related crisis and utility assistance
  - Delays in Medicaid services and reimbursements including prescriptions
    - New Medicaid applications take 24 hours to process due to the changes in the provider identifier in the old system and the new NC TRACKS system ex. practice name versus doctor’s name
    - State DHHS has established an expedited process for medical emergencies
  - Potential impact on other government programs such as Section 8 and Housing Authority
Finally, the intent is not to cause panic but to promote awareness and preparedness for what might be forthcoming as we transition to a new service delivery model.

We ask for your continued patience, understanding, and support as we strive to improve access to benefits for our customers.
Questions and Answers