

SNAP Technical Assistance Learning Collaborative

Client: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Overview

For the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, Insight provided expert technical assistance to selected state agencies administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to improve their internal business processes and performance. As part of this work, a SNAP learning collaborative was formed to promote and support dynamic and interactive engagement among state and county agencies. The shared goal was to rapidly improve SNAP customer service and program access by (1) reducing the number of days to make SNAP eligibility determinations, (2) increasing application processing timeliness, and (3) decreasing churning at recertification (program exit and reentry of households within a short period of time).

Insight paired trainers in process improvement methods and subject matter experts in SNAP policy and operations to support learning collaborative teams in using business process reengineering techniques to meet their team goals. Learning collaborative activities were guided by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's collaborative model, a simple yet powerful tool for accelerating improvement. Specifically, as part of this project, Insight—

- Conducted readiness assessments to identify and assess the readiness of SNAP agencies to participate
- Recruited three state and nine county SNAP teams to participate in the learning collaborative
- Facilitated technical assistance activities both onsite and offsite with state- and county-level teams to achieve improvements in a focused process area



- Led three in-person learning sessions
- Provided onsite training and technical assistance to help teams create value stream maps of their current processes to identify bottlenecks, unnecessary steps, and areas of change needed for improvement
- Helped teams apply the Plan, Do, Study, Act (known as PDSA) cycle to test the changes in the real work setting
- Provided training to federal staff in industry-standard process improvement techniques (e.g., Lean Six Sigma, Lean, business process reengineering) so they could provide coaching to states working to improve business processes and performance in application processing and case management

Products

Recruitment materials, handouts, frequently asked questions lists, webinars, web portal, readiness assessments, as-is and to-be value stream maps, process maps, written report, briefings