

Joint Agency Lean Workshop Focusing on Reducing Transition Gaps A Success!

The Community Services Division (CSD) continues to reevaluate its WorkFirst processes through a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) process. The fifth in a series of six VSMS has been successfully completed. Twenty-seven participants from CSD, Commerce, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Employment Security Department and Goodwill came together during the week of June 9, 2014 for a five day VSM workshop.

The goal of this workshop was to identify and implement strategies to improve the communication which occurs between WorkFirst participants, DSHS case managers or social service specialists, and/or partners or providers to determine the appropriate next steps to lead the participant to the right activity at the right time. This helps participants avoid getting “lost” in transition, maximize their limited time on WorkFirst and make sure that every possible hour that can be counted will be counted.

The group identified 53 kaizens and is working toward implementing 29 of those improvement ideas over the next 90 days. Ideas fell into five categories:

- **Training** (ideas such as changing required office visits for good cause; not describing commerce programs as paid or unpaid, and more consistent training on eJAS reports)
- **Policy** (ideas such as allowing partners to print and review the Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) with clients and sign an updated IRP; shorten timeframes with clients for appointments, and create longer IRPs when it would meet the needs of the participant)
- **IT Changes** (ideas such as developing a monitoring report of the client flow instead of snapshot; review job search coding component in commerce programs, and create one auto populated IRP for all commerce activities)
- **Breaks From Programs** (ideas such as year round activities for short gaps; activities during breaks at the colleges, and DSHS provides break activities and code all participation hours during breaks from college)
- **Best Practices** (ideas such as allow all partners to work with pending TANF status cases; Commerce to start stacked activity full time at the beginning of participation; co-locate partners in the CSO)

Thank you to everyone who participated. Your innovative ideas, and passion for the work we do will assist in improving processes and making a better WorkFirst!

For more information on the WorkFirst Lean project you can go to www.workfirst.wa.gov/wflean/default.htm

