

Joint Agency Lean Project with Employment Security Department focuses on WorkFirst Job Search a success!

On December 9, 2013, DSHS and Employment Security Department (ESD) came together to kick-off the first of six WorkFirst Value Stream Mapping workshops, to be held between December 2013 and July 2014. This five-day event focused on improving client participation for those in the WorkFirst, Job Search Program.

Twenty-one participants from DSHS and ESD tackled the issue of the Job Search Churn and developed recommendations and action plans to reduce the churn and ultimately assist clients in obtaining full time employment. Lean facilitators from both DSHS and ESD will continue to work and meet with the workgroup, project leads, and their agency sponsors over the next 90 days to assist with ensuring action items are progressing and troubleshoot any obstacles.

The team came up with 42 kaizen bursts and are implementing 16. The improvement plans were condensed to 8 themes that the group are implementing which are:

- **Pairing DSHS and ESD workers**
- Improving **Staff to staff communications** through standardizing the process for communication, a 10-12 week case staff and no refer backs when clients are working part time
- Clarifying **Staff to client communications** through communicating clearly on ESD expectations in job search and explaining the benefits of job search
- **Standardizing the refer back process**
- Clarifying **Job Search ready criteria**
- Reviewing the **Referral connection process** through limiting referral lag times to orientation and creating a standardized schedule statewide for RI
- **Celebrate success** with clients
- **IRP captures 24 week job search** through ESD

These improvements will be implemented over the next 90 days. If you are interested in following the status updates on the project go to the [WorkFirst Lean Project Website](#). You will be able to find more information regarding charters, who is participating in the events and how to attend an event. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact the WorkFirst Project Team at WFLeanProject@dshs.wa.gov.