

SOAR Dialogue Highlights 2/19/19

Attendees: Emily Carmody, Alicia Merrill, Tara Gilbert, Jennifer Nichols, Connie Ness, Stacey Costner, Carla MacKenzie, Jessica Modra, Pamalia Davis

Introductions

- Emily Carmody, NCCEH, Raleigh- Upcoming SOAR training at the end of March in Charlotte
- Alicia Merrill, Pisgah Legal, Asheville- received an approval
- Tara Gilbert Ross, VAMC, Fayetteville- reached out to another SOAR caseworker in the area
- Jennifer Nichols, Servant Center, Guilford- starting a new community group
- Connie Ness, Southlight, Raleigh- SSA to present to the Wake County workgroup about continuing disability reviews
- Stacey Costner, MHA Cleveland County- working on 2 cases for younger applicants and waiting on 2 decisions
- Carla McKenzie, WakeMed, Raleigh- no updates
- Jessica Modra, Mecklenburg County Mental Health Court, Charlotte- getting back involved with SOAR

Review of the SSA-3369 and Interviewing for Work History

Overview

Recently, the Atlanta Regional Office for SSA began emphasizing a policy in the SSA POMS that states that applicants experiencing homelessness must complete a SSA-3369 form (<https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0411005025>).

NC DDS now needs this form in order to evaluate applications. However, many SOAR applicants have a difficult time remembering work history and completing the form. In an effort to support SOAR caseworkers, NC DDS created talking points to walk NC SOAR caseworkers through completing the form. On this call, SOAR caseworkers reviewed the SSA-3369 form and the talking points document.

Completing the SSA-3369

Emily reached out to SSA headquarters and received word that if a SOAR applicant is unable to complete the SSA-3369 form that the caseworker should ask SSA field office staff and then DDS staff for assistance. Emily has a call scheduled with the NC Area Regional Director's Office for SSA to clarify what SOAR caseworkers can expect for support from the field offices.

DDS advised SOAR caseworkers in their talking points to complete the SSA-3369 to the best of their applicant's abilities. SOAR caseworkers should use the comments on the form to state all issues that the applicant has in providing work history as well as additional information about jobs listed in the form (did the applicant receive any supports or have any modifications for the job, etc.) Also, SOAR caseworkers need to let DDS know if information included in the form is a best guess by the applicant.

DDS also advised that the activities for each job on the SSA-3369 should add up to 8 hours. A SOAR caseworker asked what to do in situations where two or more activities are done at the same time (standing and reaching). Emily followed up with DDS, and they advised, “Those can “overlap” because you can reasonably reach AND stand at the same time. It’s really more for sitting/standing that the 8 hours needs to be considered. Because you are really sitting a portion of the day and standing/walking the rest. You can’t do both at once.”

Obtaining Work History Information

SOAR caseworkers discussed ways of obtaining work history for applicants, and shared some tips with the group:

- If you have permission, talk to family or friends who may remember work history
- If they are getting frustrated, change the subject and come back to it
- Talk about jobs you have had in the past and ask if they experienced anything similar
- Ask about work history in the context of their life story. For example, if you are talking about when they left home for the first time ask if they had a job at that point.
- Questions to ask:
 - For time when they had the job: Do you remember air conditioning or heaters while at work?
 - To establish the year: Do you remember a popular song that may have played a lot at that job or when you had that job?
 - Use their children’s ages to establish a timeline

Next SOAR Dialogue Call will be March 19th at 10 AM: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1338/>