

Recovery and Reemployment Research Conference

Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA)

Jacob Benus

September 16, 2009

Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Initiative

- ❑ In 2005, ETA awarded grants to 21 states to pilot the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) Initiative.
- ❑ FY 2005 REA funding was \$18 million
- ❑ FY2010 REA funding request is \$50 million
- ❑ The REA initiative provides funds for states to provide new REA services that may result in:
 - More rapid reemployment for UI claimants; cost
 - Cost-savings for the state's UI trust fund.

REA Services

REA services include:

- In-person interviews (at One-Stops)
- Review of UI eligibility
- Provision of labor market information
- Development of work-search plan
- Referral to reemployment services and/or training as appropriate

Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Study

- ❑ In FY 2005, 9 REA states were selected as REA research partners:
 - Minnesota
 - Washington
 - Connecticut
 - North Dakota
 - South Carolina
 - Florida
 - California
 - Nevada
 - Ohio

- ❑ Research partners were selected purposefully

- ❑ REA Study was NOT a national evaluation of REA

Case Studies

- Detailed case studies conducted in:
MN, SC, CT, WA, ND
- Reviewed each state's comparison group design
- Reviewed each state's evaluation design
- Conducted follow-up interviews in selected states

Claimant Follow-up

- At states' request, IMPAQ conducted follow-up telephone interviews of selected claimants (REA participants and control group claimants)
- Follow-up interviews were conducted on behalf of:
 - Minnesota,
 - North Dakota,
 - Ohio, and
 - South Carolina

Process Study Findings: Diverse REA Objectives

States varied in their REA objectives:

- Early intervention
- Multiple/more frequent in-person meetings
- Expand number of claimants contacted
- Direct clients to more intensive reemployment assistance

Process Study Findings: Implementation

States were successful in implementing REA:

- Enhanced collaboration between UI and employment services
- Cross-training of UI program rules and reemployment
- REA provided additional depth and intensity of existing services
- Generally positive about REA's effect on reemploying claimants

Process Study Findings: Reporting of Results

- Although DOL funding was available to support the data reporting, a number of states indicated that they were having trouble complying with data reporting requirements.
- Shortage of programming staff prevented some states from reporting the required ETA 9128 data form (activities).
- Even more states had difficulty reporting the ETA 9129 (outcomes).

Comparison Group Design and Implementation

States had varied success in establishing rigorous comparison group design

- Some states established rigorous random assignment designs
- Other states established designs that prevented a rigorous impact evaluation
- Still other states agreed to change their design based on IMPAQ's technical assistance

Measuring Program Impacts

- As a result of the lack of state reported REA data, IMPAQ developed an alternative strategy for evaluating REA impacts.
- IMPAQ analyzed program impacts using UI administrative data and follow-up interview data.
- Impact evaluations were conducted in Minnesota and North Dakota

Minnesota REA Study Design

- Control group: all eligible claimants whose SSN ends in “6”
- Two treatment groups:
 - Treatment 1 (single REA interview) or
 - Treatment 2 (multiple REA interviews)

Minnesota REA Analysis Issues

- Control group selected as soon as claimant enters the pool
- Treatment group members are subject to selection for 8 weeks.
- Adjustments were necessary to make the control and treatment groups comparable.
- Final Analysis sample of the UI admin data:
 - Controls = 544
 - T1 = 3,038
 - T2 = 2,316

Findings from UI Data

- Regression-adjusted analysis shows that multiple REAs (T2) reduced:
 - weeks claimed by 0.9 weeks,
 - weeks compensated by 1.2 weeks,
 - the likelihood of exhausting UI benefits by 3.7 percentage points,
 - the likelihood of having an overpayment by 3.8 percentage points.
- Single REA (T1) reduced the likelihood of having an overpayment by 3.5 percentage points.

Findings from Follow-up Interview Data

- REA increased likelihood of returning to work w/in 6 months of initial claims for T2 by 5.6 percentage points, but not for T1.
- REA had no impact on hourly wages.
- REA increased hours worked per week for both T1 and T2.
- A majority of MN REA participants had a favorable impression of the REA process.
- Few reported that the REA process helped them to return to work more quickly.

Conclusions

- States experienced both successes and challenges in implementing the REA Initiative
- An analysis of REA impacts in Minnesota indicates that REA :
 - Enhanced the rapid reemployment of unemployed workers,
 - Reduced overpayments, and
 - Realized cost savings for the UI Trust fund.