

## **CMS Guide for Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Technical Assistance Networks**

### ***1. Goals and Parameters of State-to-State Technical Assistance:***

Under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Program, CMS requires that States contribute a portion of their grant funds and staff resources toward State-to-State technical assistance. State-to-State technical assistance is designed to bring together the collective ideas, experiences, data, methodologies and best practices of Medicaid employment infrastructure development from around the country.

Specifically, State-to-State technical assistance should work toward the following objectives:

- Provide technical assistance directly to States seeking to design or expand Medicaid employment programs. Technical assistance should work to coordinate and facilitate discussions between States through conferences, references, and peer-to-peer conversations that will promote idea exchange.
- Facilitate dialogue and information exchange among States with varied Medicaid infrastructure programs. State-to-State technical assistance should gather resources and best practices and provide that these resources are available for all States across the country. All technical assistance efforts should work toward the development and implementation of an on-line resource warehouse that will contain sample policies, legislation, contract solicitations, job descriptions, data, fiscal analysis, outreach materials, best practices and other information useful to develop Medicaid infrastructure efforts.
- Gather input, data, and best practice information that will influence policy-making and planning for Federal initiatives. State partners should report on and submit all resources and practices developed in coordination with States in order to help CMS develop policy and plan next steps in promoting the competitive employment of people with disabilities. States should collaborate to develop policy initiatives for CMS to consider that include program changes that will further employment initiatives.

This list of activities is not meant to be all-inclusive. CMS welcomes ideas for activities that will help promote coordination among State's Medicaid infrastructure programs.

### ***2. Foundation of State-to-State Technical Assistance Networks***

State-to-State Technical Assistance should evolve as a collective Network of States working together and in partnership with CMS to develop and disseminate resources and ideas. States must contribute an adequate amount of funds to ensure an effective network, and may do so from Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funds. As a condition of the

MIG funding, each State is also required to contribute in-kind resources to staff the Network. While a non-State organization may play a lead role in facilitating a State-to-State TA Network, individual States are still expected to contribute staff time and expertise to the work of the Network. If there is more than one State-to-State TA Network, all Networks must work together and develop a plan to coordinate and minimize duplication of efforts.

A State-to-State Network must have a membership of at least five States. While a State-to-State TA Network is not required to provide direct TA to a non-participating State, each Network must make TA materials available via the Internet and the annual Systems Change conference. State-to-State TA Networks must offer CMS the opportunity to comment on any material that may be published either on paper or via the Internet. CMS will be given 45 days to provide comments. Each State-to-State TA Network should have a representative act as a liaison with CMS through regular conference calls, e-mail, and through an annual report.

### ***3. State-to-State Technical Assistance Agreement***

A State must identify at least one State-to-State TA Network in which it will be participating in either the yearly continuation application or new applications for funding. In the grant budget, each State must indicate the level of monetary, resource and staff contribution that it plans to allocate toward the State-to-State TA Network for the applying grant year. According to the terms and conditions of the MIG grants all States in the conditional and full eligibility categories **must** engage in technical assistance activities or risk disapproval of the application's budget. States receiving over \$500,000 must demonstrate that they are contributing significantly more funding and resources to the State-to-State TA Networks with which they choose to contract.

Beginning in 2003, CMS will not renew a State's MIG grant unless the State demonstrates full participation in a State-to-State TA Network that has a working agreement for coordination with CMS. The basis for such a working agreement will be a Network plan for technical assistance that is sufficient in scope and deliverables to ensure its value, including:

- A list of States committed to participating in the State-to-State TA Network. This list should be supplemented with letters of endorsement from each partnering State agency granted funding under the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant program;
- A budget that outlines the level of funding and staff commitment contributions of each State involved in the State-to-State TA Network;
- An organizational chart explaining the roles of the State-to-State TA Network leaders. Please include a primary contact for coordination with CMS.
- A schedule of deliverables and narrative of proposed goals and objectives for the year. This should include a plan for coordinating efforts between States, for working with other State-to-State TA Networks, and for communicating regularly with CMS. CMS will review these plans and objectives to determine if they are consistent with the goals of the legislation and the needs of the States and CMS.

A State-to-State TA Network may choose to use resources and Network staff to perform all TA activities. A State-to-State TA Network may also choose to use pooled resources to contract out TA activities. In this instance, State staff could work together to develop TA activities that would benefit all States within the Network and serve as an advisory board over the TA contract.

#### ***4. Reporting Requirements***

In an effort to increase coordination, CMS will conduct monthly calls with the State-to-State TA Networks. The State-to-State Technical Assistance Networks should also keep CMS staff apprised of completed TA activities by submitting:

- A. A series of brief monthly update reports. This report focuses on different coordination activities conducted by the Network on a monthly basis.
- B. One annual report. This report will outline activities completed throughout the year.

Templates for these reports will be provided to the State-to-State Technical Assistance Networks.

**Note: The reporting requirements for State-to-State Technical Assistance Networks will not be included as part of Medicaid Infrastructure Grantee's quarterly and annual report submissions. There will be a separate report form that pertains specifically to technical assistance activities. It will be up to the State-to-State TA Network to decide who has the responsibility for completing and submitting reporting requirements to CMS.**

#### ***5. Due Date for Submitting Technical Assistance Plans to CMS***

Applicants for CMS Medicaid Infrastructure Grant State-to-State Technical Assistance Networks must submit to CMS all Network documentation on or before October 31, 2003.

One copy of the materials should be electronically submitted to:

Jeremy Silanskis  
JSilanskis@cms.hhs.gov

Followed by one submitted hardcopy to:

Jeremy Silanskis  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
Center for Medicaid and State Operations  
Mail Stop S2-14-26  
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850