

What is a “person centered approach” in benefits counseling?

May 20, 2025



Agenda

Welcome and Grant Updates

SNAP Grant Updates and Reporting

Peer Call Learning Topic (Breakout Groups)

Closing

NCOA Presentation Speakers



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You!

Leaders in SNAP enrollment!

Grant Updates and Reporting

Updates:

1. Reminder: Monthly reports were due last week.

2. Follow Up Survey Workbook

The survey workbook should have been submitted with your report this month.

Wording updated for question about follow up (next slide)

Please don't hesitate to reach out to (Andy.Stamp@ncoa.org) if you have any question or concerns. (cc your POC)

3. Reminder: success stories are required once per quarter.

Grant Updates and Reporting

Updates: Question in Follow Up Survey

The report asks for “Number of clients who were contacted in follow-up efforts for the first time during the month (do not duplicate clients already reported as contacted).” This question has caused some confusion. I sincerely apologize and would like to clarify. The purpose of the question was to help determine the cause—and possible solutions—if there were relatively few survey responses. Are not enough clients being contacted or are the clients not responding? The team believes the following wording would have been clearer: “# of clients for whom an initial 3-month follow-up attempt was made during the month (do not duplicate clients already reported in prior months).” Please follow this guidance going forward. Given the purpose of this question, correcting past reports is not required, but if you want to make changes, please reach out to your POC and we will assist.

Monthly TA Peer Calls: Topics

Upcoming Call Topics and Dates

May - (5/28-30) NCOA Age + Action Conference

June - (6/17) Ecosystem Mapping: Increase partnerships to scale impact

July - (7/15) Interim Financial Reporting & Check-In on Expanding Your Reach

August – (8/19) Impact: The Power of Data and Storytelling

Peer Learning Topic

What is a “person centered approach” in benefits counseling?



Person Centered Approach

Definition:

A person centered approach in benefits counseling means tailoring support and advice to the unique needs, goals, values, and circumstances of the individual receiving the counseling.

Instead of offering one-size-fits-all information, a benefits counselor using a person-centered-approach focuses on empowering the person to make informed decisions based on their own life situation

Person Centered Approach

Key Elements of a Person Centered Approach

1. Respect for Individual Preferences and Goals:

The counselor actively listens and respects the individual's values, choices, and goals—whether those relate to employment, education, housing, healthcare, or independence.

2. Holistic Understanding:

The counselor considers the full context of the person's life—disability, health status, income sources, family situation, and aspirations—not just their eligibility for benefits.

3. Empowerment Through Information:

Instead of telling someone what to do, the counselor provides clear, customized information so the person can make their own informed decisions. This may include how work affects benefits like SSDI, SSI, Medicaid, SNAP, etc.

Breakout Sessions

Questions and Share



Breakout Sessions

Questions

1. What steps do you take to ensure that benefits counseling is responsive to the diverse cultural backgrounds, identities, lived experiences, goals, and preferences of each individual? How do you avoid a “one-size-fits-all” approach?
2. How do you train staff to consistently apply person-centered principles that are also equity-driven and culturally responsive? In what ways do you support staff in recognizing and addressing implicit bias or systemic barriers in their interactions with clients?
3. How does your organization collaborate with other services (e.g., employment, housing, healthcare) to create holistic, person-centered solutions?
4. What feedback from individuals has helped your organization improve your person-centered counseling approach?

Questions

For General helpdesk
assistance,
center4EWB@ncoa.org



Reminders

Age + Action 2025: SNAP Networking Session

SNAP Grantee Networking Session taking place at *Age + Action 2025* on **May 28th from 5 - 6 PM.**

Support your Peers!! Innovative Approaches to SNAP Enrollment: Lessons Learned from the Field on **May 29th from 2-3 PM.**

If you have any questions, please contact kayla.little@ncoa.org.

If you haven't already, please register for *Age+Action 2025*, taking place from **May 28–30th** in Crystal City, VA. All grantees should have budgeted for conference attendance.

What are you looking forward to?

Reminders

- Monthly Report Due Date 6/15
- Next Peer to Peer Call
Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Topic: Ecosystem Mapping: Increase partnerships to scale impact

