

About US

Center for Studying Disability Policy

CENTER FOR STUDYING DISABILITY POLICY

Medical and technological advances allow people with significant impairments and chronic illnesses to lead more fulfilling, independent, and productive lives than they could have in the past. The aspirations of people with disabilities keep pace with the opportunities created by these advances, but policy often lags behind, in part because of inadequate information. Ill-informed policy change can harm people and escalate already rapid growth in public expenditures. We provide the nation's leaders with the information they need to develop disability policies and programs that are suitable for today's world.

The Center for Studying Disability Policy (CSDP) provides leadership and support for disability research and data collection conducted by Mathematica. To keep our work grounded in the realities facing people with disabilities, we communicate and collaborate closely with leading disability organizations and service providers. CSDP focuses on analyzing and evaluating interventions designed to empower people with disabilities and promote more efficient use of the nation's resources to address two fundamental issues confronting disability policy:

- Fragmentation in financing and service delivery, which can jeopardize well-being, undercut service effectiveness, and waste resources.
- Unintended disincentives, which can discourage people with disabilities from helping themselves, employers from hiring or retaining them, and programs and providers from delivering services.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Policymakers need up-to-date and high quality information about children with disabilities and their family circumstances to address health care, education, and the transition to adulthood. Our work in this area includes the following:

- An evaluation of the Promoting Readiness of Minors in SSI (PROMISE) demonstration programs designed to improve the economic self-sufficiency of child SSI recipients and their families.
- A study of the determinants of county- and state-level variation in child SSI participation rates.
- Evaluations of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) service interventions in two states designed to improve the education and employment outcomes of students with disabilities.
- A study of the postsecondary educational outcomes of youth with psychiatric conditions who received VR services.
- A study of the early adulthood experiences of low-income children with disabilities.

WORKING-AGE ADULTS

Employment issues are the focus of policy research on working-age adults with disabilities but are intertwined with health care, accommodation, parenting, and other issues. Our work in this area includes the following:

- An evaluation of VR service interventions in two states designed to improve the service receipt and employment outcomes of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries, including analysis of how waiting times for VR services affect the employment of SSDI beneficiaries.

SELECTED CLIENTS

- AARP
 - Center for Health Care Strategies
 - The Commonwealth Fund
 - National Council on Disability
 - The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - Social Security Administration
 - U.K. Department of Work and Pensions
 - U.S. Department of Defense
 - TRICARE Management Activity
 - U.S. Department of Education
 - National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
 - Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
 - Rehabilitation Services Administration
 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - Administration for Children and Families
 - Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
 - Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
 - Maternal and Child Health Bureau
 - National Institute of Mental Health
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
 - U.S. Department of Labor
 - Employment and Training Administration
 - Office of Disability Employment Policy
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- A study of the paths that working-age Social Security Income (SSI) and SSDI beneficiaries take toward exiting disability benefits.
- A study of the size and incidents of benefit overpayments experienced by SSDI beneficiaries who work.
- A study of the impact of the Affordable Care Act on disability program applications.
- A series of descriptive studies on the characteristics and employment outcomes of particular working-age SSI and SSDI beneficiary subgroups, including young adult beneficiaries, beneficiaries with intellectual disabilities, beneficiaries with psychiatric disabilities, and beneficiaries who are parents of minor children.
- The design of a payroll tax incentive that would encourage employers to hire and retain people with disabilities who are current or past participants in SSDI, SSI, or veterans' compensation programs.

ADULTS OF ALL AGES

Adults of all ages with disabilities face challenges with health care, personal assistance, and community services needed to live independent and fulfilling lives. The following exemplify our work in this area:

- Evaluations of interventions that address fragmentation in service delivery, including the Program for All-Inclusive Care of the Elderly, Social Health Maintenance Organizations, Community Partnerships for Older Adults Program, Medicare Coordinated Care Demonstration, and Medicare Disease Management Demonstration.
- The evaluation of Money Follows the Person, in which state Medicaid agencies help enrollees transition from institutional facilities to the community.
- A study of financial well-being during retirement of individuals who acquire disabilities before retirement.

COLLECTING AND IMPROVING DISABILITY DATA

We are at the forefront of efforts to improve disability data and statistics. Our efforts in this area include:

- Conducting and developing question modules for the new National Beneficiary Survey, which focuses on the employment-related activities of working-age SSI and DI beneficiaries.
- Documenting the federal surveys that collect information about people with disabilities, and assessing the need for and potential features of a national disability survey.
- Collecting survey data for the 2012 National Longitudinal Transition Study, a five-year study focused on youth ages 13 to 23, their educational experiences, and their transitions to adulthood.
- Developing and maintaining a longitudinal analytic research file on working-age DI and SSI beneficiaries, using the Social Security Administration's Disability Analysis File (DAF). The DAF contains information on more than 19 million working-age adults who received at least one month of DI or SSI benefits from 1996 through 2006. We have supported multi-agency efforts to match DAF records to the administrative records of Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries as well as clients of state VR programs. Our researchers have used the DAF to conduct the Ticket to Work evaluation, produce statistics on Medicaid Buy-In participants, and help design the Accelerated Benefits and Benefit Offset demonstrations.

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