



# Working Healthy

*Making health care work*

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## ***Employment First Summit***

*By Mary Ellen O'Brien Wright, Working Healthy Program Senior Manager*

**K**HPA's *Working Healthy* and the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities are co-sponsoring an *Employment First Summit* at the Capitol Plaza Hotel April 15th and 16th. The purpose of the Summit is to educate consumers, families, providers, state agency staff, and other stakeholders about the importance of employment for all people with disabilities. The *Employment First Summit* will include many national speakers who will address employment issues such as community inclusion, supported employment, Ticket-to-Work, small business development, as well as speakers from states that have incorporated "best practices" in their policies and procedures to ensure that people with cognitive disabilities have the opportunity to live and work in their communities. The final session will be a "Community Conversation" about employment between conference attendees and state agency heads.

Scholarships are available for consumers, including the registration fee, meals and rooms (transportation is not covered). All other stakeholders must pay a \$50.00 fee (refundable upon attendance) which will cover the conference registration and meals (rooms and transportation are not covered). Specify the *Employment First Summit* when making reservations in order to get the conference rate of \$79.00 per night.

**Save the Date: Kansas *Employment First Summit*  
April 15th & 16th, 2010 at the Topeka Capital Plaza Hotel.  
Registration will be available in February through the  
Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD).  
For questions and more information about the Summit  
contact KCDD at (785) 296-2608**

# Benefits Specialists' Corner

*By Steve Curtis, Working Healthy Program Coordinator*

**O**n December 7, 2009 I began my new position within *Working Healthy* as the *Working Healthy* Program Coordinator. This change saw me move from SRS to KHPA.

Due to current budget constraints, I will still serve as the Benefits Specialist for 19 counties in the SRS Northeast Region. My new e-mail address is [Steven.Curtis@khpa.ks.gov](mailto:Steven.Curtis@khpa.ks.gov) and phone number is now (785) 368-6454. Those of you who have worked with me may still contact me for your *Working Healthy* and/or benefits counseling/planning requests.

In 2010, we will be offering a Benefits Planning Academy for interested persons who work with Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. The Benefits Planning Academy will be a 2-day presentation and workshop to develop benefits planning skills among those providing direct services to persons with disabilities. The presentation is divided into 4 sessions. These sessions include an introduction to SSDI and SSI; SSDI work incentives; SSI work incentives; and Medicare, Medicaid, and other medical programs for persons with disabilities.

We are offering the Benefits Planning Academy because we believe having one or more persons who are familiar with benefits planning working at agencies providing direct services will lead to higher employment rates among those with disabilities. Higher employment rates may also lead to increased enrollment in *Working Healthy* and WORK.

The Benefits Planning Academy will be free of charge and will occur at various venues across the state. Attendees may only need help from their agencies for travel, lodging, and meals.

Please contact me for more information or to request a Benefits Planning Academy for your agency or area.

## ***WORK (Work Opportunities Reward Kansans)***

*By Nancy Scott, Working Healthy Program Manager*

**T**he WORK program provides attendant care services for employed people with disabilities who qualify for the *Working Healthy* program. This new program was implemented July, 2007 using a Cash and Counseling model to provide services in a way that gives participants more control over how their services are provided. The Cash and Counseling model is a new concept for Kansas and we continue to refine and enhance the program services. We recently revised the WORK Program Manual with some changes based on input from our Advisory Group and the Technical Assistance provider.

At the beginning of this year Medicaid experienced a 10% reduction in reimbursement rates to providers. This reduction has not affected the WORK program services and we don't anticipate any reductions in allocations. The WORK Program continues to steadily grow. Currently 150 people are enrolled in the WORK program and receiving allocations for their support. If you want more information about the WORK program you can find the most current forms and a recently revised copy of the WORK Program Manual on our website, [www.workinghealthy.org](http://www.workinghealthy.org), or contact a *Working Healthy* Benefits Specialist by calling 1-800-449-1439.

## *“Think Beyond the Label” Media Campaign*

**I**n February, *Working Healthy* and nearly 30 other Medicaid Infrastructure Grant state projects will roll out a national media campaign targeted toward employers to encourage them to hire people with disabilities. The campaign, “Think Beyond the Label,” will be seen in major print, television and online media outlets as well having its own website hub. Kansas will have both a website and toll-free number for employers to contact.

### *What is “Think Beyond the Label” and How is it Funded?*

- A multi-media national marketing campaign, making a business case for hiring people with disabilities.
- A national website with links to state-specific websites offering employer resources.
- Ready-made print/audio/visual materials for implementation at the state and regional level.
- Funded by state agencies using Medicaid Infrastructure Grants (MIG) funds. MIGs are grants from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA) administers the Kansas MIG (Working Healthy).

### *Who is Collaborating on the Media Campaign?*

- The collaboration is a partnership of state MIGs that have chosen to be a part of the national and state media campaign. Partnerships and the media campaign are designed to enhance systems that provide opportunities for people with disabilities to enter the workforce.
- Health & Disability Advocates (HDA), a national non-profit organization and technical assistance center promoting income security and improved access to health care, coordinates the campaign as its fiscal agent.

### *When will the Campaign Launch?*

- National media to launch in February 2010.

### *What will the Media Plan Look Like?*

- The campaign includes national TV (both network and cable), print media (e.g. Time, Fortune, Wall Street Journal, Business Week and The Economist), and digital medias (including search engine advertising and websites like CNN.com, WSJ.com, ESPN.com and SHRM.org).

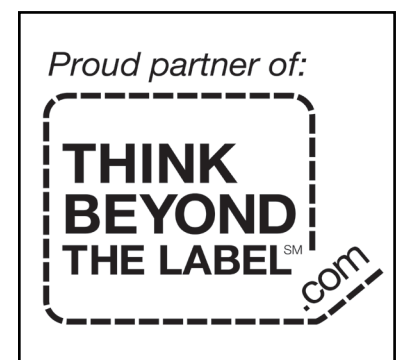
### *What is Kansas Doing to Maximize this Opportunity?*

- A state media campaign throughout Kansas which complements the national campaign.
- A “response network” for employers, including a Kansas specific website, toll-free number for employers, and a marketing outreach person dedicated to reinforcing the media efforts.

### *How can Interested Partners get Involved?*

- Businesses and corporations can become sponsors of the campaign by contributing financial support and helping to spread the campaign’s message.
- National organizations and trade associations can work with the partnership to strengthen its impact and broaden its reach.
- State and local employers can get involved by “thinking beyond the label” and hiring qualified workers with disabilities.

[www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com](http://www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com)



# WORKING HEALTHY

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**This newsletter and other information regarding *Working Healthy* can be found on-line at: <http://www.workinghealthy.org>**

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*Additional copies and copies in alternate formats are available upon request by writing the University of Kansas, CRL - Division of Adult Studies, Attn: Noelle, JR Pearson Hall, Room 521, 1122 West Campus Rd., Lawrence, KS 66045-3101, by calling (800) 449-1439, or by emailing, [pixie@ku.edu](mailto:pixie@ku.edu)*

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