CASE STRATIFICATION:
TAILORING NEXT STEPS TO YIELD
THE BEST RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

This workshop highlights innovative approaches in case management. Case stratification allows the program to target specific enforcement tactics and services to non-custodial parents based on their financial, case and relationship characteristics. Speakers will address new ways of organizing the caseload to create greater worker efficiency and allow workers to focus on tasks that complement their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

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Case Stratification
Case Study - Nashville, TN

ERICSA
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Agenda

- Limitations of current business processes
- What is case stratification?
- Stratification objectives
- Planning steps
- Adding predictive modeling
- Preliminary results
- Lessons learned and observations
Limitation of Current Business Processes

- Nationally state CSE programs utilize the same array of tools to enforce child support obligations.
- These tools have not changed significantly since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996.
- Most state programs have reached the point of maturity where the benefits derived from these tools have leveled.
- The economic downturn has severely impacted low income non-custodial parents.
- To significantly improve performance, states must maximize caseworker performance.
Case Stratification Overview

- PSI’s Case Stratification solution replaces the one size fits all approach to case management by:
  - Stratifying cases into treatment groups based on historical payment patterns and personal motivation factors
  - Providing targeted enforcement techniques designed to maximize outcomes
  - Reengineering business processes to integrate new enforcement techniques
  - Repositioning staff into specialized teams by treatment groups
  - Training staff to take full advantage of treatment approaches
  - Improve outcomes by continuously monitoring the effectiveness of each treatment model
  - Working within state and federal case management requirements
Early Stratification Outcomes

- **El Paso County, Colorado**
  - Percent of Current Support Collected increased by 5.6% (from 47.1% to 52.7%)

- **Knoxville, Tennessee**
  - Overall Collections increased by 4.9% (compared to the control group)
  - Percent of Cases Under Order increased 15.7% (from 40.8% to 56.1%)

- **Cheyenne, Wyoming**
  - Percent of Current Support Collected increased by 4.2% (from 64.5% to 68.7%)
  - Percent of Cases Paying on Arrears increased 4.7% (from 66.0% to 70.7%)
## 2008 – 2009 Collection Comparisons

- PSI offices with Stratification in place for the entire 2009 period
  - Note: State figures exclude the comparison site(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PS Site and Corresponding State</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Paso County, Colorado</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Colorado</td>
<td>-2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton, Virginia</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chesapeake, VA</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Kanawha County, WV</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of WV</td>
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Common Case Assignment Approaches

● Functional split
  ▪ Establishment
  ▪ Enforcement
  ▪ Locate

● Alpha split

● Case-type split
  ▪ Foster care
  ▪ Interstate

● Some task-based split
  ▪ Financial
  ▪ Modification

● Others?
What is Case Stratification?

- Stratification involves the *assessment* and *treatment* of cases based on selected criteria.
- What criteria?
- PSI’s stratification model recognizes that NCPs have:
  - Different *motivations* for making child support payments
  - Different financial *abilities* to pay support
  - Need different sets of services
Case Stratification Objectives

- Defined scope of work for staff
- Greater efficiency
- Improved morale and job satisfaction
- Increased paying cases
- Improved customer satisfaction
PSI’s Case Stratification Model

- Focus on enforcement
- Long-term goal is to apply same concepts to establishment
- Stratification does not change how specific enforcement actions are taken
- Case assignment different from state system (CSES) default
- Stratification respects the primacy of the CSES
  - All actions are taken in CSES
PSI’s Case Stratification Model

Case stratification offers:
- Different approach to interacting with NCPs
- Proactive contact and positive reinforcement
- Teaming with community partners
- Ability to fit skill sets and personalities of workers with needs of NCPs
PSI’s Case Stratification Model
Stratum 1 – Paying Cases

“Willing and Able”
- Monitor to ensure ongoing compliance
- Early intervention for missed payments
- Employer contact as first action
- Friendly collection call reminders
- Follow-up letters
Stratum 2 – Target Cases

“Unwilling but Able”
- Small caseloads
- Collection Calls as first action
- Escalated contact with NCPS
- Utilize all available Admin & Judicial Remedies
- Swift enforcement
Stratum 3 – Active Monitoring

“Unwilling and Unable”
- Investigative locate
- Monitor for change in status, locate, automated enforcement
- Bankruptcy, incarceration, disability, receiving benefits
- Automated locate with new resources
- Closure management
Stratum 4 – Teaming Cases

“Willing and Unable”

- Conduct in-person interview with NCP to determine employment barriers
- Develop individualized plan to address barriers
- Refer to community services to help overcome barriers and obtain employment
- Modify order and suppress collection while NCP is complying with plan
Case Stratification Readiness Assessment

- Caseload size
  - If size does not warrant segmenting cases, concepts can still be implemented

- Case reassignment capabilities exist within CSES
  - Central support
  - Via macros

- Case reassignment is not possible within CSES
  - Consider alternative approach that supports reassignment of alerts/prompts

- Data extract mechanism
- Productivity tracking ability
Nashville - Planning Steps

● Identify variables for each stratum
  ▪ Assess data extract
  ▪ Develop business rules
  ▪ Run test and validate results, refine

● Address process/macros needed to support case reassignment
  ▪ Test with many cases

● Catalogue what is and is not impacted by stratification
  ▪ Are there cases/processes that will still be specialized?
Key Challenge in Nashville

● Challenge:
  ▪ Inability to deviate from TCSES case assignment methodology

● Solution:
  ▪ Developed an alternative tool for assigning cases and prompts/alerts
    • Allows for sorting of cases
      ▪ Like actions needed
      ▪ Identify potential compliance issues
    • Required training line staff in Excel – including sorting and filtering
    • Now adding a predictive modeling score
Planning Steps - People

- Determine caseload/staffing ratio per stratum
  - Stratum 2 must be low enough to allow for effective follow-up and monitoring
- Define ideal KSAs for staff in each stratum
- Conduct KSA assessment for staff
- Assign staff based on their KSAs to stratum
Planning Steps - Processes

- Assess support needs from local community organizations and judiciary
  - Begin planning process with partners
  - Establish clear referral processes and compliance expectations
- Revise standard operating procedures accordingly
  - Develop clear escalation of tone based on case facts
- Revise correspondence to reflect escalation tones
Planning Steps - Tools

● Assess local tools and modify to support needs
  ▪ Nashville
    • Case listing
    • Daily prompt/alert report by worker
    • Management report on prompt/alerts pending by worker
    • Utilized PSILink for productivity tracking where not supported sufficiently by TCSES
    • Developed macros to produce documents most efficiently

● Incorporate quality assurance and goal setting into restructuring
Planning Steps - Training

- Identify training needs
  - Stratification concept training
    - Movement of cases
  - Negotiation and collections training
  - Excel training
  - Other enforcement process training
  - Case review training
  - Other system training
    - Some office tools may be new to shifting staff
Planning Steps - Change

● Identify change management needs
  ▪ Set expectations with staff well in advance
  ▪ Sell why this is good (WIIFM)
  ▪ Engage staff in planning
  ▪ Incorporate goals into training
  ▪ Communicate frequently – ask for feedback and suggestions
    • What is working – What is not
  ▪ Celebrate successes
  ▪ Fix problems and celebrate problem identifiers and solvers
Observations

- Positive response from attorneys
  - Multiple contacts make it easier to argue in court

- Positive comments from customers
  - Attempts to work with NCPS
  - NCPs are hearing about alternatives through word-of-mouth

- Workers like the complete snapshot of caseload
  - Allows for back-up work when system is not available
  - Gives them a complete perspective on what they need to accomplish

- Stratifying helps to find cases that have data issues

- Hitting more cases
Lessons Learned

- Daily debriefs after implementation help to reinforce processes and revise as necessary
- Adjusted Stratum 1 to prevent too much flipping in caseload
- Be vigilant in balancing caseloads to allow for proper coverage of Stratum 2
- Develop sweet-spot between NCP contact and appropriate contempts
- Review worker goals and revise as necessary
Predictive Modeling

How it Works

- Examines individual, case data and enforcement action outcomes from CSES
- Prioritizes cases that are likely to fall out of compliance or likely to have a positive outcome to enforcement actions
- Utilizes a model to suggest/recommend an action with a known probability of a desired result.
  - E.g., License suspension will likely be successful on this NCP; low-level collection call will likely be successful on this NCP; pull out all the stops, this NCP needs a contempt
Pulling It All Together

● Stratification – case assignment
  ▪ Determines who works the case
  ▪ Guides you in how to work the case

● Predictive modeling score
  ▪ Suggests which cases to work first

● CSES
  ▪ Where you take actions
  ▪ Where you receive alerts for key case tracking requirements
  ▪ Where you document activities
Outcomes in Nashville

Six Months Pre and Post Implementation

- Unemployment rate continued to increase post-implementation
- % current support paid showed no change
- Base collections increased 0.6%
- Total IAs decreased by 2%
  - New Hire Reports declined during the post period as well
- Manual IAs increased by 2%
- Legal enforcement actions increased by 26%
- Collection contacts (calls and letters) rose substantially (172%)

Six Months into implementation (Sep 2009 vs. Feb 2010)

- Percent of Case in Stratum 1 stayed same at 30%
- Percent of Cases in Stratum 2 increased by 6 percentage points to 56%
  - As a result of more targeted locate
Questions?
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