

# Vulnerable Immigrant and Refugee Populations

Unique Collaborative Models (Attorney / Healthcare Provider) Make A Difference

January 30, 2018



# Introduction to RDBO

- Dedicated to assisting disabled refugees and immigrants in accessing:
  - Federal benefits
  - Tailored vocational assistance
- Today's focus is **the role of primary care providers** for patients who qualify for federal disability benefits.



# Why are disability benefits so important to patient health?

1

## Benefits

### Benefit Prerequisites

*Supplemental Security Income benefits are a prerequisite for many other benefits such as subsidized housing, SNAP (food stamps), and state assistance.*

2

## Medications

### Medication Affordability

*Supplementary Security Income benefits enable patients to afford critical medications.*

3

## Homelessness

### Prevent Homelessness

*Supplementary Security Income benefits prevent homelessness and overuse of emergency room care.*

# What impact does provider involvement and support have on legal outcomes in disability cases?



**Medical evidence** of health conditions is **required** to establish eligibility for federal disability benefits.



Social Security Administration regulations place **special emphasis** on evidence from treating sources.



In about **70%** of all cases in WA State, information from treating sources provides enough documentation for the final determination of disability.

# How can providers support their patients in getting benefits?



## Ideal Approach

Holistic incorporation of SSA criteria into chart notes.



## Our Model

Work with patient's attorney to draft letter based on chart notes



# A closer look at our model:



We...



Review all chart notes to confirm eligibility.

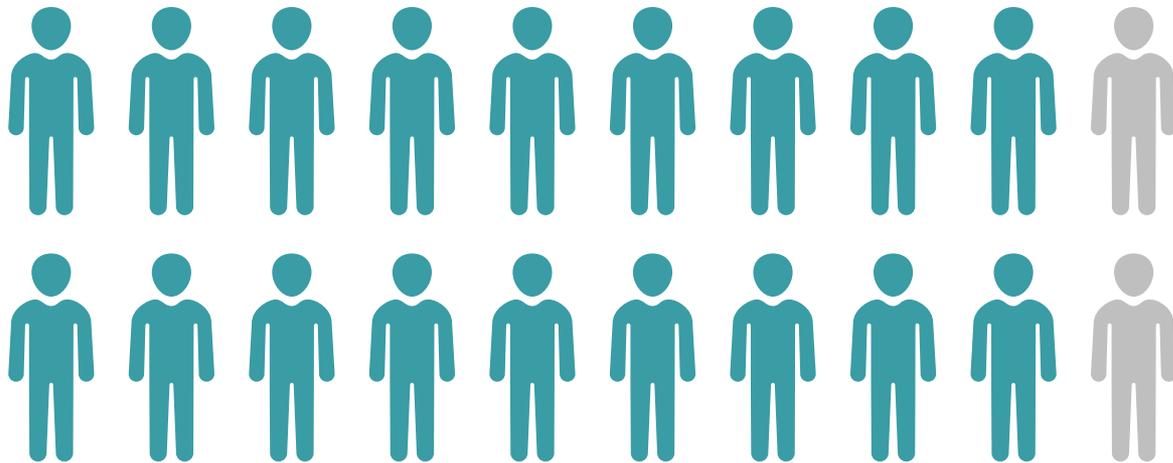


Develop draft letter for provider signature, based on SSA criteria.

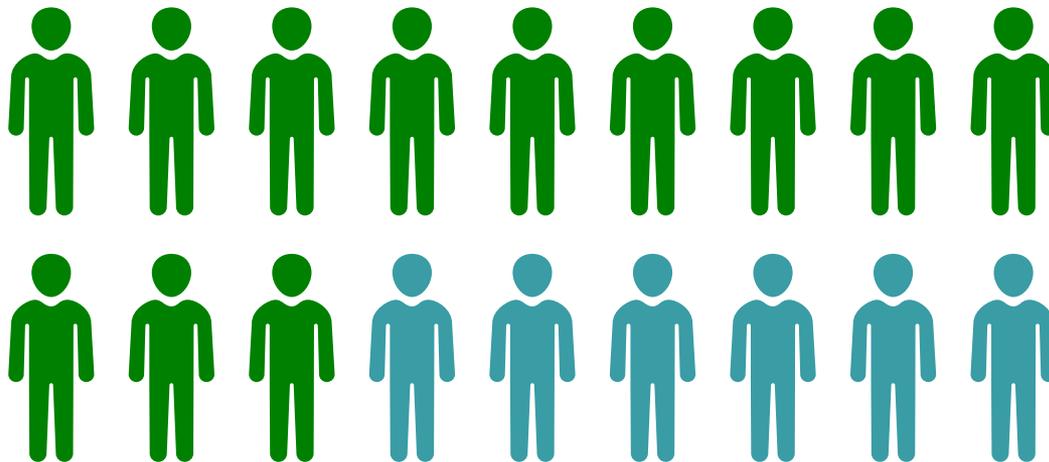


Work with healthcare provider to fine-tune.

# How well is our approach working?



**90%**  
Success  
rate for  
cases that  
reach  
a final  
decision.



**60%**  
of clients receive  
benefits in 2-6  
months, rather  
than the  
average 2 years  
it takes in  
Oregon to go to  
hearing.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The average national rate of approval at hearing is 46%; at earlier stages it is 36%.

# Questions?