SOAR Works! SOAR is a national program designed to increase access to the disability income benefit programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) for eligible adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR seeks to end homelessness and promote recovery through increased access to SSI/SSDI income supports.

SOAR reduces uncompensated care and increases public reimbursements. States can recover funds for people who are eligible for SSI/SSDI. Once someone is approved for SSI and Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California), providers can bill Medicaid for services provided up to 90 days prior to the SSI protective filing date. Ten states reported an average of $10,465 per person in Medicaid reimbursement as a result of SOAR.*

SOAR facilitates re-entry efforts through access to income, housing and healthcare. Access to SSI/SSDI diminishes the possibility of a return to institutional life and contributes to positive reentry efforts for justice involved or institutionalized persons. When SOAR is used to initiate applications while individuals are still incarcerated or institutionalized, their income and health care benefits can begin as soon as they return to their communities, reducing the possibility of homelessness and recidivism.

SOAR provides the means to maintain housing and generates money for the local economy. Nationally, $1.1 million in new revenue was generated from SOAR assisted awards of SSI and SSDI over the last 3 years. These benefits provide financial assistance to pay for housing, food, and clothing – ending homelessness, increasing stability and promoting recovery.

SOAR-assisted approval rate on SSI/SSDI applications in California: 58% vs. 10% for non-SOAR applications. SOAR-trained caseworkers prepare comprehensive quality SSI/SSDI applications that are more likely to be approved, and approved quickly. SOAR reduces frustration and time navigating the process, providing time for staff to focus on enhanced services. There are 130 SOAR-trained caseworkers working throughout California.

**Success Story**

“Now I won’t have to come back here!”

Mary is a 61-year-old Native American suffering from morbid obesity and mental health issues. As a result of her illnesses and having no medical insurance, Mary was chronically homeless since 2002, in and out of the Village service system 11 times. In the fall of 2015, SOAR team members met Mary for the first time, collected medical records and referred her for medications and health care. Four previous SSI cases had been denied but with SOAR assistance, Mary was approved for SSI in November 2015 and began receiving back benefits and her monthly payments in December. Today, with permanent housing options, Mary is able to pay her portion of housing costs, has health insurance and is firmly on her path of recovery and community membership.

**Reducing Homelessness with SOAR**

There are homeless people in every county of the state. To help them achieve income, housing, health care and recovery, we need SOAR-trained case managers in every county.

**CALL TO ACTION: SOAR is a community-driven initiative**

To Expand SOAR and serve MORE Individuals, Families, and Communities in California!

- Ensure that there are SOAR trained case managers in every county in the state
- Increase funding for full-time SOAR positions
- Grow collaborations with hospitals and with organizations that service justice involved persons
- Utilize SOAR statewide to reduce the number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness