

ACCELERATED BENEFITS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

OMB No. 0960-0747

ADDENDUM TO THE SUPPORTING STATEMENT

For OMB's reference, below is an overview and background history of the AB Demonstration Project.

a. Overview

MDRC, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR), and POMCO are conducting the Accelerated Benefits Demonstration (AB) project on behalf of the Social Security Administration (SSA). AB's primary goal is to enable more Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries to return to work and thereby maximize their economic self-sufficiency through employment. The AB demonstration will test whether providing early access to health benefits, care management, and expanded access to employment supports will help new SSDI beneficiaries stabilize or improve their health, regain their independence, and return to work.

AB targets new SSDI beneficiaries who are aged 55 and younger, have at least 18 months remaining before becoming eligible to receive Medicare benefits, and who reside in one of 53 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) selected as the sampling frame (Appendix A lists the MSAs selected for this demonstration). SSA used administrative data to identify this population. MPR screened the sample to determine insurance status. Only those beneficiaries who are uninsured at the time of screening are eligible for the demonstration. Eligible beneficiaries who consented to participate in the study and completed a baseline interview were randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups or to a control group:

- **AB-Basic** which provides immediate access to health benefits for new beneficiaries. The AB-Basic health plan will cover up to \$100,000 in costs for health care services until participants are eligible for Medicare. The plan provides basic health coverage as well as promising types of specialized therapy and rehabilitation supports, such as durable medical equipment. It includes dental care, vision care and prescription drug coverage. It has modest out-of-pocket expenses for participants to encourage service access.
- **AB-Plus** which provides the same access to health benefits as AB-Basic, but also provides by telephone: (1) a care manager to help participants make appropriate health care choices and follow-through on recommendations of health care providers (including medication adherence), (2) a behavioral intervention called the Progressive Goal Attainment Program (PGAP) that is designed to incrementally prepare individuals to be ready to return to work, (3) an employment specialist to help them connect to employment services and supports in their local area, and (4) a benefits counselor to help them understand how their work decisions affect receipt of SSDI and other benefits.
- The **control group** which retains their regular SSDI benefits.

0960-0747 Addendum
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The evaluation design includes a study of the implementation of the intervention, a study of the impacts of the interventions on health, health care usage, employment and continued SSDI benefit receipt, and analysis of the benefits and costs of the intervention.

There are four main sources of data for the evaluation: surveys with beneficiaries, SSA administrative records, Management Information System (MIS) information, and qualitative data collected through site visits. The surveys include a baseline survey administered before random assignment, an “early-use” survey of beneficiaries enrolled during the first several months of the demonstration and a “later follow-up” survey at 12 months after the beneficiary is randomly assigned. Since individuals were randomly assigned at least 18 months before they were eligible for Medicare, the survey is designed give us the best chance of understanding the effects of AB on healthcare outcomes before participants in all three research groups become eligible for Medicare health coverage.

We cleared the baseline and “early-use” surveys in our first ICR for this collection. In this submission, SSA is seeking OMB clearance to conduct the 12-month follow-up survey.