



ESIA – Work and Education for IA Clients

Standing Committee on Community Services
February 7, 2017

Presentation Outline

1. ESIA Program Overview

- Goals and Budget

2. Wages from Employment

- Why we do it and how it works

3. Employment Supports & Educational Programs

- Eligibility and financial supports

4. Post-Secondary Programming

- Overview and recent changes

1. ESIA Program Overview

Employment Support & Income Assistance (ESIA) Program

PURPOSE: The ESIA program provides assistance to persons in need and supports their movement toward self-sufficiency.

HOW WE HELP:

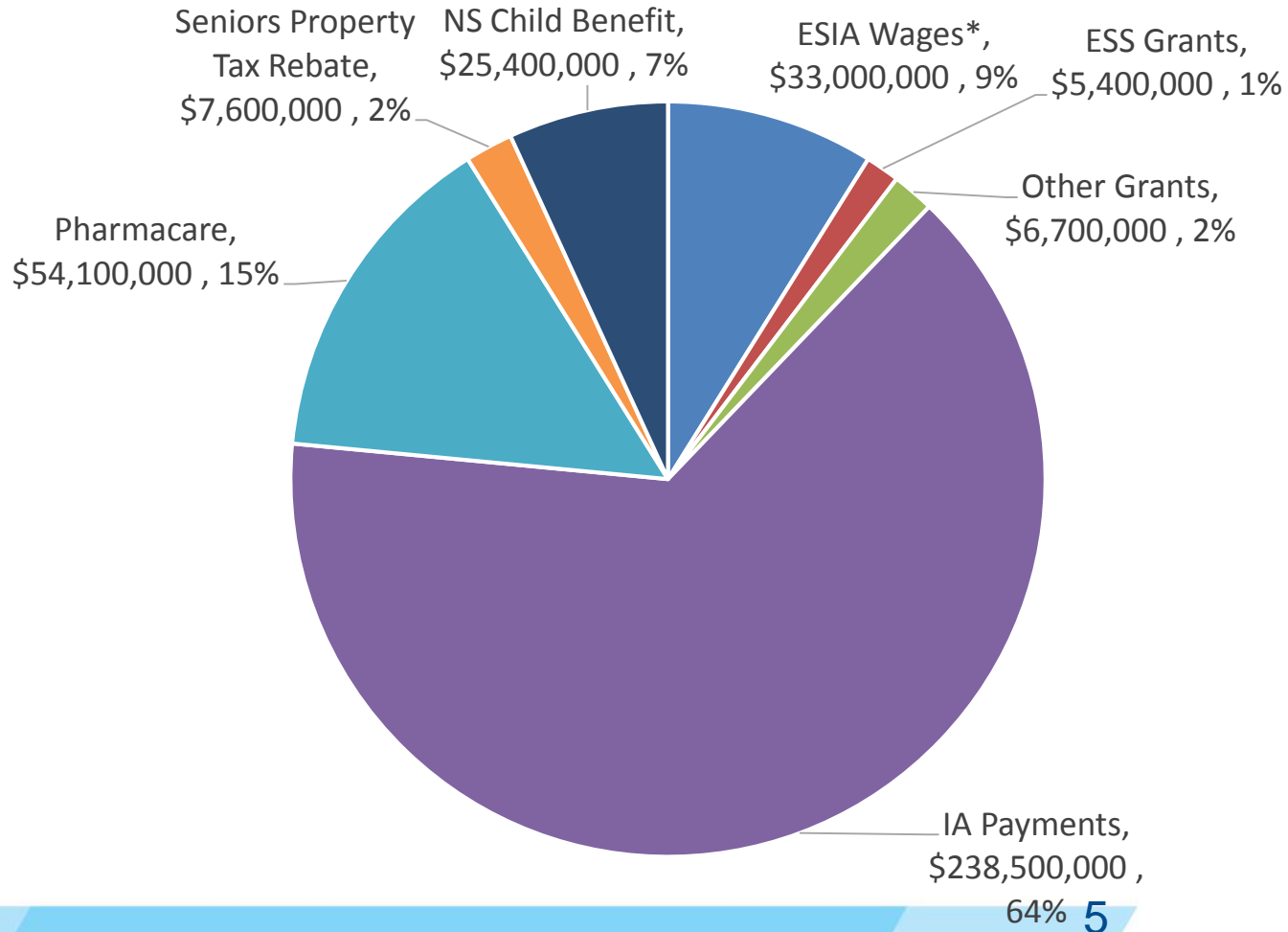
- Food, clothing, shelter and special needs
- Access to employment supports
- Access to community supports

GOALS:

- Independence
- Inclusion in Community
- Self-Sufficiency

ESIA Program Overview

2015-16 Operating Budget Actuals



2. Wages from Employment

The Wage Exemption Policy

WHAT IS IT?

- The Wage Exemption Policy exempts wages earned through employment for ESIA clients.

WHY DO WE HAVE IT?

- The goal is to encourage those who are ready and able to enter the labour market to move permanently into employment.
- Approximately 2,800 clients report wage income from employment =

Over \$1,620,000 in wages

The Wage Exemption Policy

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Depending on a client's employment type, a portion of wages are exempt from the IA eligibility calculation. The remaining earnings are used to reduce the amount of IA paid by DCS.

1. For clients with 'regular wages':

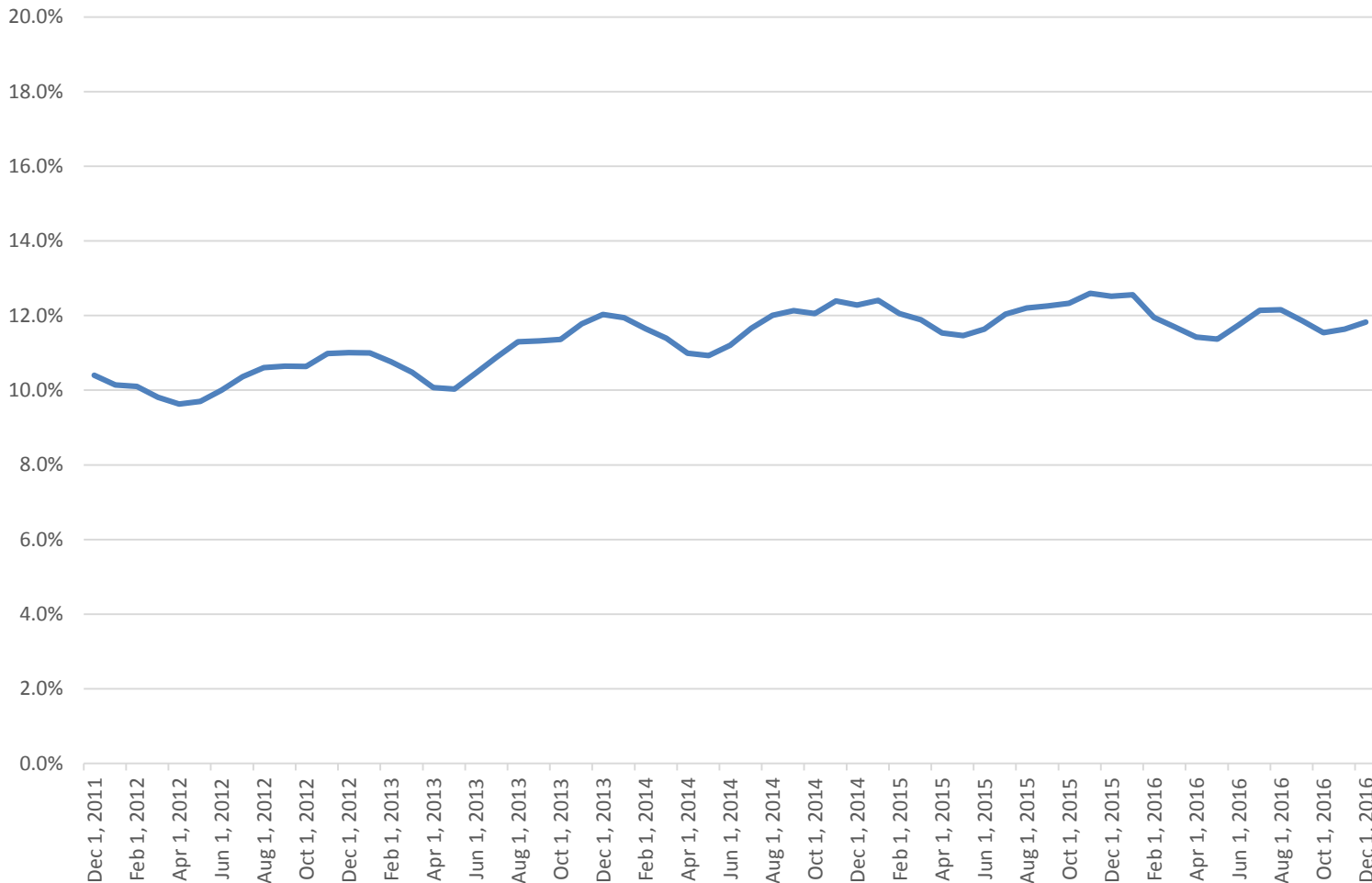
- The first \$150 earned is retained, then 30% of the remaining net wages per month.

2. For clients with 'supported employment' wages:

- The first \$300 earned is retained, then 30% of the remaining net wages per month.

Wage Exemption:

% of Clients with Earnings from Employment



3. Employment Supports & Educational Programming

Employment Supports Services (ESS) Overview

- The ESS Division of ESIA provides services and supports to help clients find and maintain employment.
- Clients must have an approved Employment Action Plan that may provide supports for:
 - Job Search Assistance
 - Essential Skills Development
 - Job Development
 - Transitional Job Support
 - Skills Development Training

Employment Supports Services (ESS) Overview

Clients are expected to actively participate in their employment plan and may be found ineligible for failing to comply.

Employment Action Plans:

- Are developed between a Caseworker and a client to determine what supports are needed to meet a client's employment goals.

Education Plans:

- If it is determined that further education is required to meet the employment goals, an Education Plan is developed.

Eligibility for Educational Programming

- *All clients and/or spouses are required to have an approved Education Plan to participate in educational programming.*
- **Eligibility:**
 - In receipt of assistance for at least 6 months prior to attending post-secondary
 - Available for work when not involved in the educational program
 - EI Reach Back Eligibility (EI claim in the last 60 months)
- **Clients may be eligible for:**
 - *Academic Upgrading:* High School Diploma, GED
 - *Literacy Upgrading*
 - *Educate to Work:* NSCC Core or Customized Programming, Private Career Colleges
 - *Career Seek:* University
 - *Continuing Education Courses*
 - *Skills Development Program (LAE)*

Financial Supports

- **ESIA provides:**
 - Educational costs (e.g. tuition, books)
 - Transportation
 - Childcare
 - Employability related needs (e.g. supplies, work-related clothing)

4. Post-Secondary Programming Overview

Post-Secondary Background

- Enrolments and completion rates have been declining.
- ESS made significant changes in 2016 to reverse this trend.

PROGRAM	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016/17
Career Seek	16	7	3	4	4	10
Educate to Work	321	267	292	290	150	197

- ESS undertook an internal review to identify:
 - Program gaps
 - Client barriers
 - Possible enhancements to address gaps and barriers

Review Findings: Completion Rates

ETW:

- 33% of those in a 2-year program completed the program (2013-15)
- 48% of graduates exit ESIA in 12 months

Career Seek:

- ~46% complete their degree
- ~58% of graduates exit ESIA in 12 months
- Student Loans provide better financial support than IA

Review Findings: External Impacts

Caseload Changes:

- Reduction in caseload numbers overall
- Increasing case complexity with numerous barriers

Population Trends:

- Colleges instead of universities

Educational Funding:

- Other sources (LAE – EI, Student Assistance) allowing independence of ESIA

Post-Secondary Programming

Educate to Work

LAE funds tuition for NSCC or private career college for ESIA clients

Client remains on ESIA for duration of program

DCS pays books, special needs, childcare and transportation

Career Seek

Allows client to remain on ESIA while enrolled in university

Client must access student loans for some education related costs.

Post-Secondary Enhancements

Announced Fall 2016



EDUCATE TO WORK DEPENDENTS

- Expand for ESIA dependents
 - 50% tuition support
- 100% books, health & dental, student fees



CAREER SEEK

- One year tuition
- Student fees
- Home internet/data plan
- Childcare and transport
- Campus Incidentals

Minimization of Barriers to Post-Secondary

Internal Improvements

- Increased caseworker supports to students
- Implemented working group with NSCC to improve outcomes
- Increased access to Post-Secondary Wage Subsidies
- Improved Job Development services to graduates

ESIA Transformation

Transformation is:

- Making sure our investments have the most effective, efficient and meaningful impact on client's lives.
- Making sure our caseworkers have the tools they need to support their clients.
- Looking at how we can work preventatively with youth-at risk to diminish reliance on ESIA.

Questions?