

SRC Performance Review Committee held on Thursday, February 7, 2019 held from 10 am – 12 pm.

LOCATION: State Office Complex, HC 2 South 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT, Conference Room ASH.

Meeting called by:
Marlena Hughes, Chair, at 10:11 am.

Members Present:
Jessica Brennan (VocRehab Counselor), Sherrie Brunelle, Marlena Hughes, Chris Kane (arrived at 11:15 am), Brian Smith, Deb Tucker Boyce (via conference call).

Members Absent:
Nick Caputo, Robin Ingenthron, Rose Lucenti, Bill Meirs.

SRC Liaison:
James Smith, VR Budget and Policy Manager .

SRC Coordinator:
Debra Kobus.

Interpreters:
n/a.

Speakers/Presenters:
Amanda Kohle.

Facilitator:
None

Guests:
None

1. Introductions (Marlena Hughes):
Discussion:

Members and guests went around the room and introduced themselves.

Conclusions:

Thanks everyone!

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None.

2. Approval of Agenda (Marlena Hughes):

Discussion:

Marlena asked if there were any proposed changes or additions to the agenda. There were none. Brian moved to approve the agenda as proposed and it was seconded. There was no further discussion. Motion approved Vote 4-0-0.

Conclusions:

The agenda was approved.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None.

3. Open for Public Comment (Marlena Hughes):

Discussion:

There was no one from the public present.

Conclusions:

None

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None.

4. Approval of Minutes – December 6, 2018 (Marlena Hughes):

Discussion:

Marlena asked if there were any proposed changes to the minutes. Sherrie said there was a typo on page 3 (IPE versus IEP). Sherrie moved to approve the minutes as amended, and it was seconded. No further discussion. Motion approved 4-0-0.

Conclusions:

The December 6, 2018 minutes were approved as amended.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Upload approved minutes to the SRC website, Debra Kobus, 2/12/19.

5. Provide Input on Satisfaction Surveys of Employers and Consumers
(Amanda Kohle):

Discussion:

Amanda handed out the VocRehab Consumer Satisfaction Survey Questions for feedback from the Performance Review Committee.

- Sherrie: In Q4, she is not sure the word “control” is the best term to use here to suggest a consumer’s input was taken into consideration . Brian suggested using some better language like “How satisfied were you in the experience?”. Amanda suggested providing options, i.e. very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, etc.
- Brian: Q12 & Q13, was it easy, was it accessible, thinks it would be cleaner with providing options.
- Sherrie said that she has trouble distinguishing the difference between Q14 and Q14b.
- James said VVR05 is fine but we may want to add a question such as “Were you more confident about going to work?” and then providing options for an answer.
- Sherrie said Q22 and Q24 are both about improving services and seems duplicative. Amanda said the difference is Q22 is looking to find how to improve services. Q24 is looking for information on what Voc Rehab could do to improve.
- Amanda reminded everyone that this is a telephone survey so some of these are prompts to frame the conversation for the next question. Market Decisions Research is doing the survey for us.
- Sherrie had a questions on Q25. What does 98 DK and 99 REF mean?

Amanda said DK means don't know, REF means refused.

- Sherrie said it would be helpful to have a question about VR's orientation process as CAP is looking at this. Specifically, CAP would like to know if this requirement of a consumer having to go through this process before they even apply for services, discourages them to continue and results in their loss; and would also like to know how helpful the orientation was to the consumer.
- James suggested a question asking, "What did the benefit counselor do to help the consumer?" and provide five or so easily understandable choices.
- James recommended adding another question such as "Did VR counselors actually help you to accomplish your goal?"
- Sherrie suggested "If you worked with a Benefits Counselor, where did they help you?"
- Sherrie is interested in seeing Q21 from a CAP perspective. "Did you contact CAP?" and "Was the information provided helpful?" so CAP can obtain a benchmark. James suggested adding to that "Why didn't you contact CAP?"
- We should ask Market Decisions Research if incentives would be helpful to get people to respond to the survey. James said that it could be costly for example a \$5 gift card provided to 700 respondents would cost \$3,500.00.
- Sherrie said that VVR11 is not clear to her. Amanda will ask Market Decisions Research to better clarify.
- James said that by April we should have the results. They have until June 1 to do a presentation. June would be a good time to present to the Full SRC.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

Put Satisfaction Surveys of Employers and Consumers in the Parking Lot of

the Steering Committee for a June Presentation, Debra, 4/15/19.

6. Discussion of Data on VR Consumer Population Changes Since WIOA
(James Smith):

Discussion:

James provided a handout to everyone and walked us through his presentation on the “Impact of WIOA and Loss of Re-allotment on DVR Services.” James thought it was important to share the changes VR has encountered since WIOA. Please see the 2/7/19 Performance Review Committee Prior Agendas page on the SRC website for this complete PowerPoint Presentation.

Coverage includes:

- Overview of WIOA Pre-ETS
- Overview of Re-allotment
- Impact of WIOA on age distribution of consumers served
- Impact of WIOA and re-allotment on number of consumers served

Overview of WIOA Pre-ETS

Prior to WIOA 100% of the Title I Basic VR grant was for standard VR services meaning:

- The consumer applied and was found eligible based on a disability that was a significant barrier to employment
- The consumer developed a plan for employment outlining necessary services
- The consumer was closed successfully if they achieved an employment outcome (they were employed for a minimum of 90 days)
- VR generally only served high school students in the year prior to graduation/exit
- There was no requirement that DVR spend a specific percentage of funds on students in transition

WIOA created a new program called Pre-Employment Transition Service which:

- Could only be provided to high school students on an IEP or 504
- Only allowed 5 required services
 - Job exploration counseling
 - Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships

- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy

Pre-ETS only services cannot result in a countable employment outcome for VR. They are considered pre-employment services.

Overview of WIOA Pre-ETS

- WIOA did not provide new funds for Pre-ETS. Instead Congress assigned 15% of the Basic VR grant to Pre-ETS
- Because WIOA prohibited VR agencies from covering administrative costs with Pre-ETS the actual cost is greater than 15% of the award
- As a result, WIOA effectively reduced funding for youth and adults in the core VR program
- As a result, DVR reassign about \$1.5 million from services for youth and adults to students
- As noted, Pre-ETS cases cannot result in an employment outcome unless the student goes on to enroll in the core VR program.

Overview of Re-Allotment

- The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) re-allots appropriated VR grant funds that other states cannot match
- Prior to 2008 re-allotment was minimal
- As a result of the 2008 great recession states drastically reduced state match to VR programs leaving over \$100 million in unmatched funds
- State like VT were able to draw down the unused funds
- Between 2008 and 2015 VR drew down between \$3 million and \$5.7 million in extra funds per year
- In 2016 re-allotment was radically reduced to \$1.4 million and by 2018 it was reduced to \$600,000

Combined Financial and Service Impact

- Combination of loss of re-allotment and reassignment of resources meant that about \$6 million total funding reduction in the core VR program serving youth and adults. This equals about 25% of the total budget.
- 14.5 FTE VR counselors were reassigned to serve high school students exclusively
- 9 FTE positions were reassigned or not filled through attrition

- Cuts were made to other services and programs funded by VR including VABIR staff, supported employment, benefits counseling and case services

See PowerPoint for figures on:

- Impact on Numbers Served Pre-ETS.
- Core VR and Age Distribution Pre-ETS and Core VR.
- VR Core Program
- Age Distribution in VR Core Program

Comments: This is tantalizing information that begs questions about “How to do more with less?” and corresponding systems changes engineered by the State in order to respond. It also shows a great amount of irresponsibility on part of the Feds without giving agencies time to prepare for the impact. If they had done this gradually and allowed states to experiment, we could have done something creative.

Sherrie said that this would be a good presentation for the Full SRC (put in Steering Committee Parking Lot for future presentation).

Marlena asked if there was some way we could provide input on this or is it too late? James said there are opportunities. For example, when The Rehab Act is reauthorized would be an opportunity to provide feedback.

Maybe the next step in this discussion is be provided the disability categories. James said we would not have a disability category for PreETS but could for others and include their connection to SSI and SSDI. Item to be added to April 4, 2019 PR Committee Agenda.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- At the April 4, 2019 meeting provide disability categories and include their connection to SSI and SSDI, James Smith, 4/4/19.

7. Other Business (Marlena Hughes):

Discussion:

Agenda Setting – April 4, 2019

- This presentation broken out by disability categories and their connection to SSI and SSDI (not available for PreETS).
- Bill Sugarman or Rich T demo some new assessment tools.
- Dashboard for VR Program intended for staff to track leading indicators.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Present proposed agenda to Marlena and James, Debra Kobus, 3/18/19.

8. Adjournment (Marlena Hughes):

Discussion:

Marlena asked for a motion to adjourn. Sherrie moved to adjourn, and it was seconded. No further discussion. Motion approved 5-0-0.

Conclusions:

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Actions Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Draft minutes uploaded to SRC website, Debra Kobus, 2/12/19.
- Draft minutes emailed to all Committee members, Debra Kobus, 2/12/19.
- Minutes Approved, Committee Members, 4/4/19.
- Approved Minutes uploaded to SRC website, Debra Kobus, 4/9/19.

Parking Lot/Forward Item

Presentation requested when data is available:

- a further breakdown of the demographics of those we serve (i.e. those receiving public benefits, etc.);
- a comparative of outcomes by group;
- Pre-ETS VR students with a state by state comparison. James said that this information was provided in the Needs Assessment a couple of years ago but Alice will include this information in her presentation.

James and Alice Porter, Open.

James will invite two or three VR counselors to come in and share successes/challenges and the story behind them. Being able to illustrate some of the challenges would be a good way to frame it (i.e. criminal history, substance abuse, housing, etc.) as it would give us some understanding where additional advocacy could be created. .

James Smith and VR Counselors, Open.

To parking lot 12/6/18 pending availability of data

- ELL Stats (% of portion of population they are serving)
- Data on certifications (people achieving outcomes)

Rose Lucenti, Open.

To Parking Lot from 12/6/18:

Review results of Employers' and Consumers Satisfaction Surveys, Debra to remind committee, April 2019.

To Parking Lot from 12/6/18:

Linking Learning to Careers Study – overview with Mathematica, Debra to remind committee, Open.

To Parking Lot from 12/6/18:

Have a VR rep that works with Corrections come in and do a presentation, Debra to remind committee, Open.

To Parking Lot from 12/6/18:

PR Committee members generate questions for Aware, Debra to remind committee, Open.