

Draft Minutes
SRC POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 6, 2021
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
via Zoom

Meeting called by:

Sherrie Brunelle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Members Present:

- Helena Kehne
- Sherrie Brunelle
- Rocko Gieselman, non-voting
- Sarah Sterling
- Kristen Carpentier
- Olivia Smith-Hammond
- Patricia Wehman

Members Absent:

- Calla Papademas

SRC Liaison:

- James Smith

SRC Coordinator:

- Kate Larose

Guests:

- Andrea Bacchi

Presenters:

- n/a

1) Introductions (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

Those in attendance went around the table and introduced themselves.

Conclusions:

Thanks to everyone!

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

2) Approval of Agenda (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

Sherrie asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. There were none. Sarah moved to approve the agenda and it was seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous 5-0-0

Conclusions:

Motion passes: today's agenda accepted.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

3) Open for Public Comment (Sherrie Brunelle)**Discussion:**

No one from the public was present.

Conclusions:

n/a

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

4) Approval of Minutes for March 4, 2021 (Sherrie Brunelle)**Discussion:**

Sherrie asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the [Minutes from March 4, 2021](#). Sherrie requested the following revisions be made:

- Include the two VR counselors to the self employment workgroup language
- On page 3 under RSA Feedback add, "...particularly as it relates to spending guidelines and exceptions to the guidelines."

Sarah moved to approve the minutes as revised and it was seconded. No discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 5-0-0

Conclusions:

March 4, 2021 minutes were approved [with revisions](#).

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Approved minutes uploaded to SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021

5) Update: Chapter Revisions (James Smith)**Discussion:**A. [Chapter 201](#)

James shared that revisions were made after staff attended a training to ensure that language is more inclusive of people of all gender identities. Liv shared that she was supportive of the revisions.

Rocko shared their concern about having forms in locations other than VR offices as—once someone signs and dates the form—the clock starts in terms of providing services and it’s important that a VR counselor is available to explain the program before a potential consumer signs up. James and Sherrie recommended deleting the paragraph in question. Helena agreed that having marketing materials in other locations such as community action agencies, hospitals, and schools makes sense, and that application forms should remain only at VR offices.

Sherrie referred to the guidance for people diagnosed as HIV positive. The chapter was last revised in 2009 and she wondered if the information was still up to date and if the term “Industrial Homework Services” is still relevant. James shared that this guidance is likely no longer relevant and will check on this. Rocko shared that they checked the Vermont CARES website and the language appears to be consistent.

B. [Chapter 202](#)

Sherrie said that *his/her* language has been replaced throughout the chapter with *they/their* to ensure language is gender neutral.

James shared that, with some exceptions, in the past consumers were required to be residents of Vermont. Recently RSA informed VR that residency requirements are not permissible. As a result, the policy has been updated accordingly including guidance on how counselors handle this at the local level. James shared that the State of New Hampshire had a waiting list for services at one time and New Hampshire residents reached out to VocRehab Vermont for things such as hearing aids. Kristen suggested providing clearer wording that services cannot be duplicative.

Sherrie stated that the language was updated in the substance use disorders section to be consistent with language in the current DSM.

In the case management section, Patricia asked how people would prove “period of abstinence”. Rocko shared that it is difficult to move forward with consumers if they are currently using substances as it can impact their ability to progress towards their employment goals in their plan.

Sherrie said that it is her understanding that VR cannot require people to be in treatment to receive services. Instead, she suggested that the analysis should be if someone is “too disabled to receive services”.

James shared that he strongly disagrees as it could force the counselor to close a case instead of helping them. If a consumer lost employment because of substance misuse disorder, it is quite reasonable to ask that a consumer work on the functional barriers to employment.

Kristin added that the word "abstinence" is problematic as relapse is often part of recovery. James agreed on the removal of the word abstinence as VR only cares about impacts on the job and not after hours use.

Rocko recommended integrating in AWARE language throughout the chapter in place of references to statuses.

Rocko asked if "certification of eligibility" is language that could be eliminated as it was pre-AWARE. James said that we took the stand alone form and built it into the AWARE system. Sherrie suggested the term eligibility "determination" in its place. Rocko agreed that change would help with clarification.

James, Kristin, and Rocko suggested deleting or trimming the *Determining Type and Source of Based on Impact of Disability* section.

The group recommended revisiting language in Section VII to ensure that VR is not confirming citizenship status and to be inclusive of people who may not be citizens but have authorization to work.

C. [Appendix A: Spending Guidelines](#)

RSA requested additions be made to the spending guidelines which has been integrated into the draft to ensure that there are no maximum limits. Sherrie said that spending caps would be removed throughout all policies.

Helena asked if the term "consumer" would continue to be used as it can have negative implications. Sherrie said that terms have generally been updated throughout to "person" or "applicant".

Conclusions:

- James will reach out to Vermont Department of Health.
- Sherrie will do research on an individual's right to refuse treatment.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Investigate HIV guidance language with VDH, **James Smith**, 6/4/2021
- Research the law around right to refuse treatment, **Sherrie Brunelle**, 6/4/2021

6) Vote: RSA Required Technical Corrections (Group)

Discussion:

As discussed, spending caps must be removed from all policies to be in compliance with RSA requirements. Other technical changes needed include gender neutral language.

Helena moved to authorize VR to make the required technical changes on spending caps and gender neutral language and it was seconded. No discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 6-0-0

Conclusions:

Motion carries.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

7) Update: Self-Employment (Group)

Discussion:

Tabled due to lack of time and added to the September agenda.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- n/a

8) Update: Transportation (Group)

Discussion:

Tabled due to lack of time.

Conclusions:

See above.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- n/a

9) Meaningful Meetings (Group)

Discussion:

Sherrie asked what would make committee meetings more meaningful for people.

Helena shared that she appreciates the space for group conversation.

It was requested that all materials be shared at least 30 days in advance with specific questions for feedback.

Conclusions:

n/a

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- n/a

10) Other Business (Group)

A. Agenda Setting: September 2, 2021

It was decided that the following items would be on the agenda for the September meeting:

- Vote: Chapter 201
- Vote: Chapter 202
- Vote: Spending Guidelines
- Vote: Self-Employment

The carry forward list for future meetings include:

- Transportation
- Rehab Tech Services- Invite Phil to September or November meeting?
- Ticket to Work (107)

Conclusions:

See above

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

n/a

11) Adjournment (Sherrie Brunelle)

Sherrie called the meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Draft minutes uploaded to SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021
- Draft minutes emailed to Committee members, **Kate Larose**, 5/11/2021
- Minutes approved, **Committee**, 9/2/2021
- Approved minutes uploaded to website, **Kate Larose**, 9/7/2021