

## Director's Report

Senate Bill #1356 – Hugh and I have been scheduled to meet with two key staffers from Senator Harkin and Senator Alexander staff next Tuesday afternoon. We anticipate expressing our profound opposition to moving RSA to the Federal Department of Labor from Education.

TBI – We are having very significant discussions with Developmental Service Division staff about opportunities to increase employment services for people with traumatic brain injuries. There may be some opportunities for reinvestment of VR funds and a federal grant opportunity.

ADAP – We have begun discussions with ADAP staff about doing a pilot project with the Recovery Centers and Treatment Providers to house an Employment Consultant in one of the Recovery Centers.

OCS – We are extending our pilot project with OCS for an additional two years. We are adding a dedicated Employment Consultant in the Chittenden and Essex county areas. Early data supports the impact of our services on employer paid child support payments.

Focus Groups – In March and April, Marketing Decisions will be doing four focus groups to gather deeper feedback from our customers on why we had a slight dip in our customer satisfaction levels.

Budget – We had good and bad news on our budget. We will bear the brunt of sequestration and our federal funding level will remain roughly the same. Until congress passes a budget we will not have the final word on funding levels and our COLA. We should be fine for this state fiscal year.

The “Dashboard” – We are seeing a decline in our overall productivity indicators. Applications are down as are rehabs. We always experience a data entry lag but we are concerned enough to take a deeper dive into the declines.

Reach Up – Reach Up will impose 60 month time limits on TANF recipients for the first time. Our VR RU counselors are concerned about the impact on our consumers and their workloads.

FOIA Requests – We have recently received two Freedom of Information Act requests from VSEA. We are complying with both. VSEA continues to question our relationship with VABIR.

Motivational Interviewing – We are launching a major, statewide initiative with all of our VR counselors to train them to use MI as a counseling tool to move people forward in their rehabilitation program. We will be doing basic and advanced training and follow audio taping.

Meeting Management: We are going to be training all staff on meeting facilitation and meeting management as well as how to decide which modality is most appropriate for any given meeting.

New Staff: We have hired Bart Keinath as the Transition Coordinator in Renee KK's unit. James and I will be doing final interviews tomorrow for a VR Fiscal Analyst. We hope to better manage the financial detail of VR and save money!