

Minutes – June 5, 2014

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)			
Thursday, June 5, 2014	12:30 PM – 3:30 PM	White River Craft Center 50 Randolph Avenue, Randolph, VT 05060	
Meeting called by	Adam Leonard, PR Chair at 12:30 p.m.		
Members Present	Diane Dalmasse, Anthony Williams, Ellen Vaut, Alaina Clements, Leslie Mitchell, Kerry White, Neal Meier, Patti Shane, Whitney Nichols, Samantha Brennan, and Sarah Launderville		
Members Absent	Allen Evans, Michele Hubert, and April Tuck		
SRC Liaison	James Smith, DVR Budget and Policy Manager		
SRC Coordinator	Rebekah M. Stephens		
Interpreters	n/a		
Speakers/Presenters	Brian Robertson and Michael Sears, Market Decisions and Susan Wells, VR Senior Manager		
Guests	VR Managers: Carol Leech, Leo Schiff, Mark Ciociola and Hibbard Doe		
1. Today's Agenda			
2 minutes	Adam Leonard		
Discussion	Diane Dalmasse suggested allowing additional time for the consumer satisfaction presentation. The presentation on the State Plan can be consolidated. James Smith agreed. Susan Wells is here to do State Plan presentation. SRC members agreed with allowing additional time for Market Decisions' presentation. Sarah Launderville moved to accept today's agenda with change to allow additional time for Market Decisions' presentation. Neal Meier 2 nd .		
Conclusions	Today's agenda accepted with change.		
2. Approval of Minutes – April 3, 2014 SRC Meeting			
1 minute	Adam Leonard		
Discussion	No discussion. Sarah Launderville moved to approve. Anthony Williams 2 nd .		
Conclusions	Minutes approved.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload approved minutes to www.VTSRC.org		Rebekah Stephens	6/13/2014
3. Consent Agenda			
2 minutes	Adam Leonard		
Discussion	Consent agenda includes – Approved minutes: Policy & Procedures Committee - January 9, 2014 and March 10, 2014. Steering Committee – March 10, 2014. Advocacy, Outreach & Education Committee – November 7, 2013, January 9, 2014 and March 10, 2014. Coordinator's Report. No discussion. Sarah Launderville moved to accept. Anthony Williams 2 nd .		
Conclusions	Consent agenda accepted.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
None		n/a	n/a
4. Consumer Satisfaction Survey Focus Groups Results			
1 hour 45 minutes	Brian Robertson and Michael Sears, Market Decisions		
Discussion	The 2013 Consumer Satisfaction survey showed a decline in overall consumer satisfaction. As a result, DVR requested Market Decisions conduct 4 focus groups, with the intent of “uncovering aspects of dissatisfaction among VT DVR clientele so that the division can develop an action plan to improve client satisfaction.” The focus groups were held in Rutland, St. Johnsbury, Brattleboro and Burlington. DVR consumers from all over VT were asked to participate in the 4 focus groups. The focus groups were asked questions about 4 areas: Individual Experiences, Program Expectations, Program Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction and Ideal Program and Ideas of Improvements. Communication was		

Minutes – June 5, 2014

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

<p>identified as a concern of the focus groups. The focus groups shared that “counselors were difficult to get a hold of”, accessibility to counselors, counselors not returning calls in a timely manner, “counselors overworked, having too many cases”, etc. The focus groups suggested DVR be more flexible and open to new ways of finding jobs. Of the 32 consumers that participated in the focus groups, 10 consumers had closed cases and 22 were still in the system. Overall statistics show that 40% of consumers leave DVR without a job and 60% close successfully with employment. The focus groups made several suggestions around improving “communication with counselors: establishing time frame for responding to clients, more training for counselors on communication, improving accessibility of counselors, require counselors to respond, regular follow-ups by counselors and possibly even unscheduled calls or check-ups and not leaving it up to clients to reach counselors.” The focus groups also “strongly supported the idea for counselors to provide more in-office help with things like resumes, interview prep and even finding jobs on their own.” The focus groups also suggested better ways of collecting feedback from consumers. In summary, the focus groups showed a “strong sense of appreciation among respondents for everything DVR does, however, there is a need to educate and inform clientele about the program, build and manage expectations, (address) issues with counselors, specifically communication and workload/availability and consensus across groups that DVR should implement a feedback worksheet or questionnaire.” Michael Sears shared that the focus group participants were not aware of the acronym DVR. In order to make things easier, Michael referred to DVR simply as VocRehab. Diane Dalmasse shared that VR just conducted a quick survey of the orientation program. The survey showed that consumers were mostly satisfied with the orientation process, however, were dissatisfied with the time between the orientation and their first meeting with a counselor. The issue again is access to the counselors. Most consumers were satisfied with their interpersonal relationship with their counselor but were dissatisfied with overall accessibility to their counselor. VR does not want this trend to continue. VR is committed to improving in these areas of dissatisfaction. VR contacts its consumers through face-to-face meetings, texts, emails and phone. The VR managers shared that the current case management system makes it difficult and cumbersome to keep track of when a consumer was last contacted. There is currently no reminder system to let a counselor know when it is time to contact a consumer for a general follow-up. Caseload size also effects ability to give a lot of time to any one consumer. Suggestion was made to have a focus group of counselors to ascertain their take on the communication issue. Another suggestion was made that there is plenty of information on the communication issue at this time and it is now time to identify next steps to address the areas of dissatisfaction. Leo Schiff shared that at the closure of each case VR sends a feedback letter to each consumer. Unfortunately, very rarely are the letters received back from the consumers. VR used to use a phone program called SARA which would put out a phone call to consumers after an interaction with VR. The phone call was intended to gather some quick feedback on the interaction. Michael Sears shared that consumers in the focus groups were generally favorable of VABIR. Market Decisions shared the results of a 2nd survey recently conducted “among customers as a part of the DVR counselor evaluation process.” This survey’s participants are current consumers receiving VR services. Market Decisions added additional questions to ascertain if the efforts that DVR are implementing around communication are resulting in any improvement or progress in this area. The survey showed that “90% of customers indicated it was easy to contact their vocational rehabilitation counselor.” The results of this survey showed positive progress.</p>		
Conclusions	The presentation was excellent and the focus groups provided a lot of useful feedback. VR is committed to improving in the identified areas. The PowerPoint presentation will be put on www.VTSRC.org .	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload the PowerPoint presentation to www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	6/13/2014

Minutes – June 5, 2014

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

5. State Plan: Review/Discussion of Goals & Priorities and Plan Actions – Vote of Approval		
30 minutes	Susan Wells, DVR Senior Manager	
Discussion	The State Plan public hearing is set for June 16, 2014. Once the public hearing is held the information for the State Plan is entered into the RSA database and the Secretary of AHS signs off on it. You can access the State Plan at http://vocrehab.vermont.gov/ . This year video conferences at the Rutland, Brattleboro and Newport VR offices will be used to allow additional individuals to be included in the public hearing. James Smith provided the SRC members with the “Summary of Major Findings” and “4.11 (d) Strategies to Achieve the Goals and Priorities” of the State Plan. After reviewing these findings and strategies the SRC had the following comments: Under Strategy 5: “DVR will collaborate with community rehabilitation programs to address continuous improvement strategies. – Planned Activities” - SRC members noted that the Planned Activities are very specific and it may be prudent to take a look at the language to ensure that VR will be able to achieve these goals. For example – 5 th bullet currently reads “Expand VABIR manager meetings...” Wording could be changed to read – “Support VABIR to expand...” On the last page second paragraph beginning with the language “Most of the minorities living in VT reside...” the word “ethnic” should be added before the word “minorities” for clarification purposes. Adam Leonard called for any further discussion. None. Adam called for a vote on approval of the State Plan.	
Conclusions	VR will review the “Planned Activities” language and make any necessary changes. Sarah Launderville moved to vote on approval of State Plan with changes as discussed above. Whitney Nichols 2 nd . Vote held. 11 Ayes. None opposed. State Plan unanimously approved.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
6. Order of Selection		
5 minutes	James Smith	
Discussion	2 new individuals under category 3 since April 3, 2014 SRC meeting. VR is financially able to serve these individuals. VR is requesting approval to provide services for these 2 individuals. Ellen Vaut moved to vote. Leslie Mitchell 2 nd . Sarah Launderville explained that she votes no because she would like to see the individuals with the most significant disabilities get as much financial support as possible, instead of spending the limited resources on individuals with less severe disabilities. Kerry White shared that VR has a regulatory obligation to provide services for individuals with the most severe disabilities and if counselors are given a budget then resources need to be spent on the individuals with the most severe disabilities.	
Conclusions	The vote to approve services was 9 Ayes and 2 Nays. Services approved for these two individuals.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
7. Director’s Report		
20 minutes	Diane Dalmasse	
Discussion	Good news on the WIA reauthorization – The Senate and House held a pre-conference and it looks like they are in agreement on not moving the RSA out of the Department of Education. VR is looking good budget wise. VR has cancelled the contract with S3 Technologies for not meeting contract obligations. VR is now looking at purchasing AWARE from Alliance. AWARE is an off the shelf case management system designed for specifically for VR. Maine has been using the system for quite some time. 32 VR agencies in 29 states are currently using AWARE. The system will cost \$1 million plus customizing fees. VR is “cautiously optimistic.” The launch of Motivational Interviewing has been very successful. VABIR staff have received their training. A train the trainer session is coming up in November. VR welcomes new	

Minutes – June 5, 2014

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

staff – Alison Carmichael (VR Fiscal Analyst), Brian Guy (PEU Senior Planner) and Bart Keinath (Transition Coordinator) to the central office. VR is continuing to “pursue expanded services for individuals with traumatic brain injuries.” VR has also finished a work plan on how to train staff to pick a modality for meetings. VR is continuing to expand the use of video conferencing. This will save time and money.		
Conclusions	Diane suggests “inviting Alicia Wein to come out and speak to SRC about Motivational Interviewing, the roll out and sustainability.”	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Include presentation on Motivational Interviewing on next available SRC meeting agenda	Rebekah Stephens	TBD
8. Parking Lot		
5 minutes	-----	
Discussion	None.	
Conclusions	None.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
9. Round Table		
5 minutes	SRC Members	
Discussion	Ellen Vaut really appreciated the morning’s discussion on mental health. Anthony Williams appreciates being part of the SRC. Alaina Clements enjoyed the panel discussion this morning and the survey results. Leslie Mitchell appreciates being a member of the SRC and being part of the ideas. Adam Leonard was happy to see such a collaboration and large group today. Samantha Brennan is incredibly grateful to be part of this. She is thankful to be able to give voice to her ideas and be heard. It is very empowering. Kerry White enjoyed the meeting, the positive discussion, the morning’s panel and what the staff had to share. James Smith appreciates the opportunity to hear from the VR counselors. The panel was insightful, informative and interesting. Whitney Nichols is glad to be here in person today. Diane Dalmasse feels it is really great to have the managers join the SRC for these discussions. Sarah Launderville shared that on July 24, 2014 the ADA Celebration will be held at Lake Dunmore. Also there is a Farmer’s Field Day coming up. Sarah also thanked Adam for chairing today’s meeting. Neal Meier is very interested in learning more about Motivational Interviewing. Patti Shane is impressed with the ownership that VR is taking around the Consumer Satisfaction Survey results.	
Conclusions	Great meeting.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
10. Other Business		
5 minutes	-----	
Discussion	None.	
Conclusions	None.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
11. Adjournment		
-----	-----	
Discussion	Whitney Nichols made motion to adjourn. Anthony Williams 2 nd .	
Conclusions	Meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.	

Minutes – June 5, 2014

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft minutes respectfully submitted for approval	Rebekah Stephens	7/4/2014
Draft minutes emailed to all Committee members	Rebekah Stephens	7/4/2014
Draft minutes uploaded to www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	7/4/2014
Minutes approved	Full SRC	10/2/2014
Approved minutes uploaded to website www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	10/10/2014