

Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council

Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2020 – Madison, WI

Members Present: Matt Busch, Patrick Young, Beth Swedeen, Debra Notstad, Joalyn Torgerson, Becky Hebda, Julie Burish, Jaclyn Borchardt, Deb Henderson-Guenther, Alicia Reinhard (partial day), Ramsey Lee (partial day), Darla Burton (non-voting), Julie Barker (non-voting), Delora Newton (non-voting)

Members Absent: Jason Endres, Mary Kessens, Catherine Steffke, Jodi Hanna, Tom Benziger, Antrice Brown, Ann Wales (joined remotely)

Resource Staff/Guests: Meredith Dressel, Allison Gordon, Diana Kiesling, Sarah Lincoln, Jessica Holton, Patricia Sugden, Anna Eggebrecht, Andrea Simon, Steven Corfman (DRW), Jessica Smith (UW-Whitewater), Sarah Lyngdal (ERI)

Roll Call & Announcements

- Matt Busch announced that the DVR process agenda item would be moved to 2:00PM.
- To meet quorum, a majority of current members with voting rights must be present (currently 22 voting members on WRC); 9 such members attended the full day, therefore quorum was not met. As a DWD employee, Darla Burton does not count toward quorum and is considered an Ex-Officio member.
- Per current WRC bylaws, remote participation due to weather does not count toward quorum because weather does not meet the definition of a reasonable accommodation under the ADA or Rehabilitation Act.
- Julie Burish suggested that the WRC Chair contact members who do not regularly attend and request a replacement if they are unable to attend more frequently.
- November 2019 minutes could not be approved due to lack of quorum.

Agenda Item: DVR Administrative Updates & Provider Rate Survey

Delora Newton, DVR Administrator

- Delora followed up on outstanding items from the November 2019 meeting:
 - *Kwik Trip Retail Helper Poster* - Kwik Trip requested that DVR be listed as the recruitment contact on in-store posters advertising their Retail Helper position. Kwik Trip prefers that these positions be filled with DVR consumers. DVR declined to be listed as the contact because DVR is not the employer. DVR recommended that the Store Manager contact information be listed on the poster instead and then the Store Manager could inform interested applicants about DVR. Joalyn Torgerson thanked Delora for the follow-up.
 - *Reasonable Accommodation for Meeting Attendance* - The WRC Bylaws updated in November 2019 allow members participating remotely to count toward quorum if they have requested a reasonable accommodation in advance. DWD Legal has indicated that 'reasonable accommodation' in the Bylaws refers to the meaning found under ADA and the Rehabilitation Act. Many WRC members would like to consider additional flexibility to include circumstances such as weather or temporary illness. Adding this flexibility would require a change to the Bylaws. This issue will be discussed further at a future meeting.
 - *WRC Vacancies* - Delora and the DWD Secretary's Office have outreached to the Governor's Appointments Director to discuss vacant WRC positions. The Governor's Office is aware of the vacancies and interested applicants, and will take appropriate action in the coming months.
- DVR has reached 90 percent of its program year 2019 year-to-date closure goal. DVR is optimistic that we will reach our target goal of 4,000 successful closures by June 30, 2020.

- Measurable skills gain (MSG) and credential attainment rates are expected to increase before June 30, 2020. This data will become the baseline for future negotiations with RSA. DVR has many more consumers attain MSGs and credentials than the data shows, as DVR must have specific documentation in the consumer case file in order to count them.
 - Deb Henderson-Guenther asked if MSG data could be reported by type of training (secondary education, post-secondary education, apprenticeship, etc.). DVR does not currently track that level of detail, so no such report exists.
- Delora shared information on DVR referral sources for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020. An internal review of a sample of cases revealed that many such cases are self-referrals, where the Consumer does not attend the mandatory DVR orientation or respond to calls or emails from DVR.
- DVR is on track to spend the agency's entire FFY 2019 grant amount and FFY 2020 pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) spending goal.
- Delora provided additional updates on DVR consumer employment outcomes and DVR personnel vacancies, turnover, and caseloads. DVR also offered an update on the Project SEARCH Statewide Coordinator position and plans to expand the program in Wisconsin.
- The Wisconsin PROMISE celebration hosted by DWD this month was mentioned. The purpose of the event was to share the success of the grant with state legislators, agency staff, and community partners, including a highlight video developed for the occasion. A couple pieces of legislation were a direct result of the work done in PROMISE – Family Navigator & Individual Development Accounts.
- DVR shared the result of recent offsite monitoring from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) which clarified that a DVR Consumer must be placed in Category 1 (designated for individuals with the most significant disabilities) in order to receive

supported employment services through DVR. This change goes into effect April 1, 2020. Research and coordination with DHS are ongoing to ensure a smooth transition, particularly for individuals with mental health-related disabilities receiving Individual Placement and Support (IPS) supported employment services.

- DVR provided updates on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan and DVR's WIOA Section 511 statewide interviews of individuals participating in subminimum wage employment.
- Delora updated WRC on the DVR service provider rate surveys. Nine surveys were conducted, one for each statewide service, to determine if service providers were being paid at a fair rate for each service. Feedback informed proposed rate changes, which will be finalized by June 1, 2020, and effective at the beginning of the new DVR contract cycle on July 1, 2020. WRC members will be informed when new information is available, including Service Provider Capacity Group member information and new technical specification documents (upon approval).
- Delora shared that June 2, 2020, is the celebration of 100 years of Vocational Rehabilitation in the U.S. and DVR is currently working to plan a celebration in collaboration with the Governor's Office. Google "RSA VR 100" for more information.

Agenda Item: State Fiscal Year 2019 WIOA Section 511 Interviews

Jessica Smith, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

- Jessica Smith presented data and process information related to the SFY 2019 Section 511 interview cycle.
- The WRC WIOA committee asked if the information that is collected during the interviews could be shared with DVR if the individual applies for DVR services. Jessica will discuss the possibility of developing a systematic process to make that happen with DVR.

- Currently interviewers encourage workers to share their interview materials with their supports, including DVR, but it is not a systematic process.
- For their SFY 2020 report, UW-Whitewater will include data on the movement of Wisconsin workers between 14c employers. Some 14c employers are engaging in a deliberate process to transition from sheltered to more community-based services.
- Beth Swedeen asked if there is a data collection process that ensures that individuals who move out of 14c are getting the services they need. Meredith Dressel noted that DHS (Medicaid) keeps that data, not DVR.

Working Lunch: Program Year 2019 WIOA Section 511 Interviews Josh Massey, CEO – CarePool

- CarePool is a rideshare service that Josh Massey started in the Chicago area. He moved the service to the Madison area because Dane County was offering a grant for rideshare programs to provide transportation services to individuals participating in Pre-Vocational services.
- CarePool is not statewide yet, but hoping to expand as need is identified. CarePool doesn't contract with counties to provide rides but Josh is interested in doing that, too.
- Web-based software manages CarePool rides, much like Uber/Lyft.
- Currently the CarePool App is not accessible for the Blind and Visually Impaired population, but CarePool is collaborating with the Wisconsin Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired to work out a solution. Guide dog communication training is being considered for drivers as well.
- CarePool drivers go through an onboarding process that includes an extensive background check and interview.

- The driver's profile is provided to the passenger via text message so they know what the driver looks like and when the driver will arrive. The car also has a CarePool logo on it like Uber/Lyft.
- Passengers can provide instructions to the driver that may include an exact street location or any kind of accommodations the passenger may require.
- CarePool averages 2,500 rides in Wisconsin per month and can bill DVR, MCO, IRIS, and MH services. Most services are currently billed to Family Care/IRIS.
- Often CarePool is cheaper than other forms of transportation like taxi or specialized paratransit transportation. There are some areas where CarePool doesn't have fully accessible vehicles, but Josh is working on getting those everywhere they provide services.
- CarePool is looking to collaborate with agencies that provide day services and may not use their adapted vehicles all the time. Many have been very interested in keeping their vehicles on the road as much as possible.
- Long distance rides through CarePool are an option for WRC members to participate in WRC meetings.

Agenda Item: WRC Committee Reports

- WIOA Committee (Beth Swedeen)
 - Becky Hebda, Julie Burish, Julie Barker, and Sarah Lincoln from DVR attended the meeting. Steven Corfman of DRW attended as a member of the public.
 - The committee looked at documents that Jessica Smith discussed in today's 511 interview presentation and discussed what the WIOA Committee should work on moving forward.
 - The group decided to focus future committee efforts on DVR service coordination with schools for partnership and collaboration.

- Executive Committee (Matt Busch)
 - The committee reviewed the process on how to create agendas for the full council and Executive Committee meetings. The group looked at standing vs. requested agenda items and time allotted. The group also reviewed OOS changes that were covered in the DVR Administrator's Update.
 - The WRC Executive Committee will meet by phone the second Thursdays in March and April from 2:30-3:30PM. Becky Hebda will lead a review of previous minutes from the last 18 months for requested agenda/action items.
 - The committee discussed Chair/Vice-Chair/At-Large Member nominating committee that could possibly serve other duties such as council recruitment. The group also discussed the ADA and accommodations for WRC attendance.
 - Becky shared the committee's goal to improve outreach to employers and discussions they had about ways to achieve that goal, including working with DVR's Policy Initiatives Advisor and engaging business partners to speak with other businesses about their successes and best practices in employing people with disabilities.

Public Comment

- Public comment received from Steven Corfman of Disability Rights Wisconsin regarding his suggestion that DVR could use different landing pages for online referrals/applications from different sources – self-referral, 14c, MCO, family/friend, etc.
- Becky Hebda asked Mr. Corfman to give overview of his program. Mr. Corfman stated that the program he oversees is called Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS). The program is funded to help navigate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, including helping individuals apply for DVR. The grant funding is solely for those

receiving Social Security benefits. An example of a service provided is assistance if an individual is denied a job coach at work.

Agenda Item: Client Assistance Program (CAP) Quarterly Report

Deb Henderson-Guenther, CAP Director

- Deb shared that individuals have come to CAP related to the following: case closure, counselor change, existing business, hearing aids, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) goal, tools and supplies, Order of Selection (OOS), post-secondary funding for individuals with intellectual disabilities, private college vs. in-state training, self-employment, transportation, and assistive technology.
- Deb noted a slight increase in customer service-related calls across three different areas, but a decrease in complaints overall. Currently CAP has 23 cases, but usually has between 30 and 40 cases.
- Theresa Hippert, CAP Advocate, left her position, so a recruitment announcement is forthcoming.
- Deb is advocating for enhancements to the CAP database system and is working on the CAP website to house all CAP materials.
- Becky Hebda asked Deb to share the contact information of the appropriate DATCAP personnel with council members so they can advocate for more support as it relates to CAP recruitment.
- Jaclyn Borchardt suggested that sharing the Annual CAP 227 Report with WRC should be a yearly agenda item each May.

Agenda Item: Role of the Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Deb Henderson-Guenther, CAP Director

- CAP is a federally funded program to help people with disabilities in accessing, understanding, and navigating DVR. CAP advises and informs applicants; provides advocacy and representation; and offers information. CAP also provides referral, technical assistance, advocacy, and dispute resolution services related to Independent Learning Centers (ILCs), DVR, and Native American VR programs.

- CAP provides information and referral under the Rehab Act of 1973; WIOA; Title I of ADA; WIOA – Title IV; WIOA – Title IV Section 511.
- CAP can explain consumer rights and Deb is working on a document to help explain what consumer rights include.
- Deb reviewed negotiation, administrative review, formal appeal/procedure/impartial hearings, and legal services (judicial actions). CAP is required to work with consumers to review the hierarchy of the appeals process.
- Issues that CAP can assist with include eligibility, OOS, denial of services, change of counselor requests, case closures, delay in services, poor communication, and understanding policies and procedures. Beth Swedeen suggested this list be posted on the CAP website.
- Meredith shared that Deb also serves on DVR's Policy Academy to serve as a voice for consumers. Julie Barker shared that she has consulted with CAP for assistance on how to reword something for consumers/guardians who might be struggling.
- Systemic Advocacy – Deb serving on Policy Academy is considered state and local policy planning under the Act. Deb identifies problems and trends and makes recommendations for changes.
- CAP is located within the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) as designated by the Governor.
- CAP meets with DVR leadership regularly. Beth Swedeen would like to hear more about the discussions between CAP and DVR at their meetings and possible resolutions.

Agenda Item: Vocational Rehabilitation Process

Meredith Dressel, DVR Deputy Administrator

- Meredith shared that in the past, OOS waitlists were due to insufficient finances, and then due to personnel/resource issues.

- By law, eligibility for DVR services cannot be based on an individual's service needs, but OOS can be reviewed and updated.
- Over the last year, the percentage of the total DVR caseload in OOS category 1 increased from 30 to roughly 50 percent. The percentage of individuals receiving SSI/SSDI also increased.
- If all categories were closed, OOS category 1 individuals would be served first by application date, then once the category 1 waitlist was empty, category 2 individuals would start being served (earliest application date first).
- Not necessarily everyone that receives a DVR service has an IPE. They may receive assessment services or vocational evaluations. The law doesn't allow for multiple, simultaneous job goals.
- The requirement to use 15 percent of DVR's federal allotment for Pre-ETS is equal to about 20 percent of DVR's case service dollars.
- UW is looking at youth data to analyze the percentage of high school students dropping out of DVR; the average age of dropping off is around 19 years old. The goal is to receive the UW youth analysis report by end of March. DVR will present/discuss findings at May WRC meeting if possible.
- DVR has been working with national technical assistance for peer mentoring programs for a while. DVR will plan to present on this program at WRC.
- DVR is waiting for official guidance from RSA on how long post-employment services may be offered after case closure.

Agenda Item: Election of At-Large Executive Committee Member

- This agenda item will be moved to the May meeting due to lack of quorum.

Action Items

- DVR will contact the Governor's office to let them know that GLITC has replaced Mollie Lonetti. Deb Henderson-Guenther has agreed to reach out to GLITC to ask for information about her replacement.
- As part of the WIOA Committee's 2020 plan, Alicia Reinhard will reach out to MPS to work to strengthen their relationship with DVR.
- DVR will post the members of the Service Provider Capacity Group on the DVR website so service providers can see who represents them on that group. The weblink will be shared with WRC.
- DVR will alert WRC members when the new technical specifications are posted for public input.
- The 511 Interviews PowerPoint will be shared electronically with WRC members.
- Jessica Smith from UW-Whitewater will talk with DVR about the possibility of developing a systematic process to share the information that is collected during the interviews with DVR if the interviewee applies for DVR services.
- Becky Hebda will lead a review of WRC minutes from the last 18 months to identify any action items that have not been acted on yet.
- Becky asked Deb to share contact information of her supervisor or appropriate personnel at DATCAP with council members so they can advocate for more support as it relates to the CAP position recruitment.
- Jaclyn Borchardt suggested that sharing the annual CAP 227 report with WRC should be a standing agenda item each May.
- Beth Swedeen suggested that Deb include the list of examples of issues that CAP can assist with on CAP's website. Beth would also like to hear about the discussions at meetings between CAP and DVR and possible resolutions.

- DVR's goal is to receive the UW youth analysis report by end of March. DVR will present findings at May WRC meeting if possible.
- DVR has been working with national technical assistance for peer mentoring programs for a while, and will plan to present on this program at WRC in the future.
- WRC suggests reviewing the Supported Employment Outcome-Based Model at a future meeting.
- Becky asked for more clarification on quorum as questions continue to arise. Matt Busch and Deb will work together to contact those members that haven't been attending and mention that they will be reaching out to Governor's office regarding replacements, if needed.
- Matt would like to follow-up on adding WRC council member email addresses to the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) email list.
- Deb requested the Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) data broken down by the type of training consumers are participating in.
- WRC requested that the DVR referral/application data be shared in a chart format that would more easily show data trends.
- Beth proposed looking to see if RSA has training for rehab councils and their roles.
- WRC will consider having Matt provide an overview presentation over lunch at a future meeting regarding NCSRC resources on State Plan development.
- Deb suggested offering interested council members an orientation on the Wednesday night before Thursday's full council meeting – Executive Committee will work on a proposal and bring the idea back to the full council.

Adjourn