

Policy Academy Meeting July 8th in Madison

Welcome and introduction of new members: Chao from WDA 8, Erin from WDA 9 and Kara from WDA 4.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act- Reauthorization of Rehabilitation Act-

- Update on WIOA
Generally updated every 5 years and this has taken nearly 10 years due to debate amongst lawmakers and states. Rehab act came under scrutiny; Attempts to improve now to move people out of sheltered environments, common standards for all VR partners across the nation, and changes in how voc rehab is approached within one stop- business technological support-partners
- Changes and what it means for VR Programs
 - Changes will also include how transition students in H.S. receive services. A portion of our budget (nationwide) will need to be devoted to transition.
 - Changes to language
 - Independent living centers are now moving to the department of health and human services, but the older/blind will still remain under a portion of RSA.
 - ILC's state plan is also changed and DHHS will choose. ILC will have to choose in Wisconsin whether or not they want DWD to remain involved in the state plan or if they want to move completely to DHHS monitoring their state plan.
 - RSA has had very strict standards, which are positive, those standards and outcomes could be altered and standards could be more relaxed if not met
 - They did not make states set aside money to train their staff.
 - Changes also made federally to say that VRC's can be hired with bachelor's degrees.
 - Will be extending SE supports from 18 months to 24 months
 - Has been put in 90 days for IPE Development rather than "timely development" and this probably will affect our use of using IPE extensions.
 - Proposal to get rid of the TACE's and move it to one business technological support. This is going to be very difficult because in the past when we have had changes in RSA they have told states to go to TACE for training and now we are looking at not having TACE at all to get our training.
 - Wisconsin will be monitored by RSA next year (around March 2015). We are doing research to determine what will be looked at this year to determine what we need to do to get ready for next year.
 - START will be a focus of DVR now as it looks like RSA is closely monitoring transition.
 - Updating MOU's with DPI to make sure that we are addressing those specifically
 - Supported employment will also be looked at closely
 - Meeting eligibility and IPE timelines
 - Our hours per week "average" are lower than other states. Ours are around 25-27 and other states are 40 hours per week.
 - Proposal to do a consumer survey to prove that it is consumer driven informed choice in work hours
 - Average hourly wage is fine.

- State plans will also have to change due to a change in our relationship with one stop shops.
- Proposal of Workgroups
 - Policy Academy may want to have subgroups so that we can make recommendations for changes to RSA and how we will meet those standards. Ex: we may have to change our tech specs to protect against conflict of interest along with our other programs.
 - Recommendations on common standards.
 - Now is the time to articulate that we have specific goals, methods, expertise processes that work in VR and that what we do is very different than "one stop shop/business models"
 - We do not want to have outcomes/measures that are too flexible with "easy outs" on why we don't have to meet our progress measures as VRC's and as a VR program.
 - Discussion on 24 months SE LTS that DVR can support.
- Identification of Next Steps
 - Suggestions on creating workgroup and then submitting our suggestions to RSA and sending those to other states and asking if they would like to sign on.
 - Volunteers: Deb Henderson-Guenther, Allison, John, Meredith, Caralee, Craig, and Deanna or a START rep.
 - Joanna will be sending out an e-mail next week to set up a meeting time.
 - Also a proposal for training on what a RSA review looks like for new staff who may be nervous about the review.

Fiscal Poster- Linda Vegoe

- Draft Fiscal Poster
 - Put it in the waiting area or have it up somewhere to explain message that DVR feels is important regarding fiscal issues
 - CAP also wanted to put some pieces in there as they get calls from consumers who have already purchased items and want to be paid back.
 - Linda is looking for feedback to find what things are confusing or what words need to be changed.
- Discussion
 - Discussion on assessments and saying that it needs to be on the IPE.
 - Proposal to include it on the back of the fiscal responsibility form
- Identification of Next Steps
 - Make bullet points steps that they have to complete.
 - Then last bullet point says "if you buy something before steps 1 & 2 have been done, DVR cannot pay you back"
 - Conversation about changing "DVR cannot pay you back" to "you will have to pay for it" or "state law doesn't allow DVR to pay you back" to avoid negative opinion toward DVR.
 - Also put an "and" between 1 & 2.
 - On the bottom say "please talk to any VR staff if you have any questions"
 - Doesn't mean that this poster can be used by VR staff to use as reason why we cannot make an exception when it is needed.
 - Use the second page in the office or as a photo copy.

- Discussion from CAP about whether or not the poster should go through DWD or go through CAP.
 - Concern that then it wouldn't be put up in the "waiting area." We discussed that in offices without DVR waiting areas that CAP would create a smaller 8X10 poster for individual offices.

LPC Licensure for Vocational Evaluators- Deb

- Discussion
 - Change now says that they could possess one of many credentials or master's degree programs, rather than the previous requirement of only having a LPC
 - From 2013-2014 we had required our service providers to have a current LPC in order to provide vocational evaluations as a service.
 - We found that there was a significant decrease in vocational evaluations as a result of this change in 2013-2014 year.
 - A workgroup was then formed and DSPS provided clarification to DVR that we could identify relevant criteria other than just LPC for vocational evaluators.

Referral Process- Deb

- Discussion
 - If someone requests an application DVR staff must still provide them an application, despite the referral process.
 - CAP has had some issues with the referral process not working online and VR staff not understanding that consumers do not have to go through the referral process or orientations if they request an application.
 - We should discuss reasons why it would be appropriate for someone to bypass the referral process
 - CAP discusses that people who are repeat consumers or who are very symptomatic it may not be appropriate for them to go through the referral process or orientation.
 - Conversation about potential of staff feeling "nervous or scared" to send out applications for fear of not following "process"
 - There is nothing in policy that states that we cannot send out applications to consumers who believe may not be appropriate for referral or orientation due to our previous relationship with that consumer or due to the consumers disability needs.
 - Discussion regarding changing "referral" to "self-referral" to not confuse people
 - Also said that we should have conversations with consumers on the phone requesting referrals/applications to see what happened in a previous case, have they already been through an orientation?, do they understand why the previous file was closed?, etc., etc.

Confidentiality – Caralee and Erin

- Question on Ongoing Sharing of Information with Advocates and Family Members
- Discussion
 - There is no release for ongoing sharing of information with a family member, friend, etc.
 - Policy Analysts says that we can invite all family members to the meetings or do a conference call.
 - We can share ongoing information with a service provider and trying to coordinate or purchase services.

- Choosing a representative is a different form and requires the family member to be at every meeting and sign all important documentation
- Identification of Next Steps
 - We should look at different kinds of releases and see if we can have ongoing communication and exchange of information.
 - We could try to put something in there to say that the consumer is responsible to contact DVR in order to cease the release.
 - Look into other states and what they have been doing
 - Policy Analysts will also be sharing with legal counsel and seeing if there is a way for us to still maintain ongoing communication.
 - We could case note that the person says that they VR has permission verbally every time to discuss with a family member.
 - Discussion on services that are delayed because we can't get a consumer to come in and get a ROI

DVR Training Grant-

- Updates on New Process & VSM
 - They have contacted all of the public schools in Wisconsin and tomorrow they are doing an expert training in each WDA and they are going to include each of the public schools to also be a part of that meeting
 - August we are going to have a study hall training for all DVR staff
 - TG process has been vetted by CCP, CCC's, technical colleges
 - We then go over the working draft- step by step guide to DVR training grant processing
 - A lot of questions about Step 2- part 2: We get around prior authorization by writing the authorization case note in IRIS once we receive the DVR training grant back from FAO to document our intent to purchase
 - We should also notify FAO via e-mail even if the DVR TG amount is \$0
 - CAP brings up that a lot of consumers call regarding appeals because exception requests go into the semester because they are not resolved. In cases in which they are not resolved, we do not have a memorandum of understanding with the school that will prevent any late charges from happening.
 - Kathleen did note that in cases in which the cause is that DVR is causing the hold-up that DVR would be looking at paying any additional costs incurred by late fees.
 - We will have to review each payment issue and go through each on a case by case basis.
 - Intention is to make this payment piece much easier so that staff can focus energies on counseling with consumers to discuss financial pieces, making good schedule/class choices, etc.
 - If student has additional funds from DVR TG or Financial Aid, that are not an over award, the student is given access to those funds.
 - Schools authorize this payment differently (some have the student come pick up the check from the FAO, others electronically transfer the money, others send a check)

- Students are able to check for a payment that is in addition to covering tuition they are also able to check that in their student account electronically
 - A question is asked regarding transportation. Consensus: They will not be cut a check for \$300 and then we can say 'oh that's your transportation'
 - Students will need to create a plan to pay for books
 - Some schools have agreed to provide a voucher for students so that they can get books
 - Other schools may say that the student has to pay for the books upfront
 - Other schools may apply books to the tuition through rentals so it is already in the cost of tuition
 - We should be able to get an unofficial transcript from the school at the end of the process. Schools may request a copy of the signed TG form before they send it.
- Questions from WDA 3
 - Question regarding the census date and that if we don't get the information to the school before the census date. "In cases where we get a student off of the wait list on September 5th and they say that they are going to school, we will more than likely not be supporting them in school for that semester"
 - They could appeal that decision, but Kathleen says that they need to write a plan first and we should look at where they are at in consideration to the DVR process.
 - Conversation regarding delay of services.
 - We could potentially use a different process after the date if we are deciding to use the TG as an assessment, but this should not be the fall back in order to process TG's.
 - Census date varies from school to school
 - If we are only doing one semester, we will be having a max of \$2500.
 - We will have a different process for a private, for profit school (PO and they will have to invoice us).
 - If a consumer has not done their financial aid, then DVR will not be responsible for scrambling to do their TG by the census date.
 - There will be a checklist for counselors to check off.
- Identification of Next Steps
 - Expert Staff will be trained tomorrow and if they do not have an answer then Kathleen should be answer any additional questions.
 - Kathleen can get CAP the list of liaisons at each FAO so that they have a point of contact.
- Additional questions regarding the \$5000 amount and VRC's going over that amount and having to ask for supervisory approval. ---SLT will look at this.

Joint Cases with other VR Agencies- Deb

- Updates
 - Miscommunication that VR staff believe that you do not need to be a resident of the state to receive services and that you can't have an open file in another state; both of which are not true
- Identification of Next Steps

- We will look at this in upcoming meetings when Sandi and Kathleen are both here in order to give the update.
- Guidance piece: Provision of Services is located on the DVR web

DVR Information Center & Communication Template- Allison

- Discussion
 - Information center is going to replace the knowledgebase and the link for policy and guidance.
 - The directives and guidance pieces will be given new titles and linked in the new information center
 - The whole information center is searchable and it pulls from the information center website.
 - A review of the site. It will launch on August 1st. There will also be a study hall for it in July.
 - Also new item is A-Z options and chronological policy changes.

Additional Agenda Items and Questions from Members

WDA 5- review of Code of Conduct document

- Could be useful for consumers who need specific boundaries
- Probably wouldn't want to do move forward with Code of Conduct document for each consumer
- Some WDA's (Deepa) do proceed with a behavioral contact similar to this with consumers who have specific disabilities that require additional boundaries

WDA 3- Report Card for Consumers to make choices on job development

- Waiting to get projects in sequence so that they don't interrupt a the whole process
- Aren't sure when that will be accessible to consumers.