

**Maryland State Rehabilitation Council  
Minutes  
Workforce & Technology Center  
November 8, 2017**

**Members Present:**

Jeff Moran, Chair  
Sue Schaffer  
Sue Page  
Chris Conklin  
Cindy LaBon  
Tom Laverty  
Marsha Legg  
Christy Stuart

**Members Unable to Attend:**

Katja Fort-Rhoden  
Jani Willis  
Barry Shaw  
Anil Lewis, Co-Chair  
Will Stocker

**Candidates for Membership in Attendance:**

Denise Carter-McCormick  
Tony Lawson  
Michelle Plummer

**Guests:**

Muttasim Fadl – Executive Leadership Institute (ELI)

**DORS Liaisons to Council:**

Kim Schultz, DORS Public Affairs Officer  
Jean Jackson, DORS – WTC Director  
Jody Boone, DORS – OFS Director

**Support Staff to Council:**

John Stem  
Sandy Bowser

**Introduction & Approval of Minutes: Jeff Moran**

Jeff Moran, Chair welcomed guests and members to the meeting and introductions were made. Jeff highly praised everyone who participated in the planning of a very successful Maryland Rehabilitation Association Conference that was held on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The minutes from the MSRC Executive Retreat held on August 24<sup>th</sup> were approved as written. The minutes from the MSRC Meeting held on September 13<sup>th</sup> were approved as written.

**Introduction of New OFS Director:**

Sue Page introduced Jody Boone as the new Director for the Office of Field Services. The Council welcomed Jody. Jody started with DORS in 2005 as a VR Specialist in the Germantown MSRC

office in Region VI as a general counselor; then worked with the brain injury population and moved into the business liaison position. Jody was then promoted to Statewide Staff Specialist, Business Liaison. Jody worked the last five years in the Technical Assistance Branch for the Office of Field Services. The Division is very pleased and excited to have Jody on board as the new OFS Director.

### **2017 RSA Monitoring & Technical Assistance Draft Report – John Stem**

John reviewed DORS' responses to recommendations and corrective actions identified in the monitoring, along with DORS' requests for technical assistance to address them, and RSA's responses, as appropriate. For corrective actions to improve program and fiscal performance, as well as to improve administration of the VR program, DORS must develop a corrective action plan for RSA's review and approval that includes specific steps the agency will take to complete each corrective action, the timetable for completing those steps, and the methods the agency will use to evaluate whether the corrective action has been resolved. RSA anticipates that the corrective action plan can be developed and submitted online within 45 days from the issuance of the report. DORS will report to the review team on a quarterly basis, progress on the implementation of recommendations:

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **Individuals Who Exited from the VR Program**

- DORS response – provide updated waiting list information on the website; continue to provide information regarding services available through the American Job Centers.

##### **Achievement of High Quality Employment Outcomes**

- Incentivize CRPs to provide job placement services for individuals with targeted impairments or specific barriers to employment; approve vendors of Rehabilitation Communication Services (RCS) who are proficient in ASL and who provide job placements and job coaching services for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

##### **Internal Controls**

- All counseling and supervisor staff will be trained on any new or revised documentation procedures.

##### **Individuals Under the Age of 25 Exiting the VR System**

- DORS and DDA have begun preparation to hold a focus group with DDA/DORS' providers and a plan to include possible solutions.

##### **VR Services Provided to Individuals with Disabilities under Age 25**

- DORS is exploring use of Career Index and to increase staff use of labor market information. DORS Business Services Representatives currently provide labor market information to counselors to assist with alignment of IPE goals; DORS and DLLR have already increased collaboration on joint webinars and conferences.

##### **Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Psychosocial and Psychological Disabilities Under Age 25**

- DORS and the Behavioral Health Administration will work together collaboratively when working with students and youth with disabilities.

### Individuals Who Require Job Coaching Services but Do Not Have Identified Funders for Extended Services at IPE Development

- DORS will discontinue using the term “non-supported employment job coaching” in favor of using a more universal term to describe job coaching services provided for individuals who do not require supported employment services but who, after employment placement, require short-term job supports in order to stabilize the placement and enhance job retention; DORS has sought from WINTAC technical assistance relating to documenting the “reasonable basis” for expecting extended services funding or natural supports be available when the individual is ready to transition from support funded by DORS.

### **Findings:**

#### Untimely Development of the IPE

- DORS will work with RSA to develop a corrective action plan.

#### Funding of Extended Services

- DORS will work with RSA to finalize the correction action plan. Effective June 30, 2017, DORS will discontinue the ABI Program and will no longer use Post-Employment Service plans to provide funding for extended supported employment services for adults with ABI who do not have a commitment of funding for extended supported employment services.

#### Prior Approval Requirements Not Met

- There are conflicts between the requirement for prior approval and DORS authority to include and provide services on a client IPE based on the needs of the client. Therefore, before any final policies and procedures can be implemented, DORS will need guidance from RSA on how to handle these conflicts.

#### Maintenance of Effort Deficit

- RSA will address this issue under a separate cover letter to DORS – DORS agrees.

#### Inaccurate Financial Reporting

- DORS will make the necessary corrections.

DORS has already begun to implement RSA’s recommendations.

The full Final Draft FY 2017 Monitoring Report on the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation and Support Employment Programs will be made available upon request of the MSRC Council Members.

### **Supported Employment Policy Update (Draft Report) – John Stem:**

DORS continues to work on drafting changes to the Supported Employment chapter in the Rehabilitation Services Manual (RSM) chapter 800.

### **Supported Employment Policy revisions required by WIOA:**

- The extension of the time frame for the provision of supported employment services from 18 to 24 months.
- The requirement that supported employment must be in competitive integrated employment or, if not in competitive integrated employment, in an integrated setting in which the individual is working toward competitive integrated employment on a short-term basis.
- The requirement that supported employment funds and/or VR program funds be available for providing extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities for a period of time not to exceed four years, or until such time that a youth reaches the age of 25 and no longer meets the definition of “youth with a disability,” whichever occurs first.

### **DORS Response:**

- DORS will discontinue using the term “non-supported employment job coaching” in favor of using a more universal term to describe job coaching services provided for individuals who do not require supported employment services but who, after employment placement, require short-term job supports in order to stabilize the placement and enhance job retention.
- DORS has sought technical assistance from WINTAC related to documenting, at the time of IPE development, the “reasonable basis” for expecting extended services funding or natural supports to be available when the individual is ready to transition from support funded by DORS.
- DORS agrees and will work with RSA to finalize the corrective action plan.

### **DORS Supported Employment Policy Update Timeline & Things Still to Come:**

- Review RSA recommendations and draft supported employment policy changes with WINTAC.
- Joined the WINTAC Supported Employment Community of Practice.
- Policy Review Committee meeting scheduled review SE changes – 11/16
- Provide Regional Training on Updates in January for staff and CRPs
- Implement changes February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Clarify how to document “reasonable expectation”.
- Clarify “natural supports”.
- Set rates for job coaching provided for youth extended services.
- Formal request technical assistance regarding how to develop a sustainable model for provision of customized employment.
- Counselor goal adjustment

A Policy Review Committee meeting is scheduled next week, MSRC members are encouraged to attend, to discuss the Supported Employment changes, get the counselors feedback, questions, and clarifications. Staff training will be conducted before the Policy changes are implemented.

**Legislative Event – February:**

MSDE/DORS employees will not attend the Legislative Event again in 2018 as MSDE Administration wants to continue to ensure a consistent message is conveyed. Discussion was held on how to proceed with the SRC Legislative Event/Meeting in February. Should the SRC Meeting and Legislative Appointments be scheduled in Annapolis for the same day; should Legislative Meetings be scheduled only with the SRC Meeting to take place on a later date? It was decided that an email will be forwarded to the SRC Council members in the near future to determine how many non-MSDE/DORS staff are interested in meeting with their legislators before a final decision is made.

**Chairperson Report – Jeff Moran:**

Review Committee Structure – Discussion was held on the current Committee structure – to possibly combine, eliminate, restructure, etc. (example - combine Public Relations & Membership Committee).

**SRC Committee Background:**

The SRC Council sets-up committees identified in bylaws, work plans, and annual reports. SRCs may also elect to change their committee structure for various reasons, such as unequal distribution of work for the committees, too many committees for staffing purposes, or too few committees leading to less participation by members.

Each Council member is expected to participate on a committee.

A committee structure allows members to break the work of the SRC into smaller and focused segments. This approach allows the committee to address issues in depth. The number of committees an SRC might form varies.

**Maryland State Rehabilitation Council By-Laws – Committees:**

**Participation**

- Council member participation on committees. In addition to attendance at regular Council meetings, each Council member is responsible for working on at least one Council committee or task force throughout the year. Individuals with a particular expertise who are not Council members may be asked to contribute to or participate on committees as determined by each committee. The Council Chairperson shall serve as an ex officio member of each committee.
- Ad hoc committee members. Individuals in the community who are interested in the activities of the Council may participate as ad hoc committee members with the approval of the Council chairperson. The Council chairperson shall assure that a variety of views are represented by ad hoc members. Ad hoc members may vote in committee on recommendations to be brought to the full Council for approval.

**Current Committee Structure:**

- Employment/Career Development, Vacancy
- Public Relations and Quality Assurance – Jeff Moran, Chair
- Membership – Anil Lewis, Co-Chair
- Blindness and Vision Services – Sue Schaffer, Chair
- Policy and Planning – Tom Laverty, Chair

It was decided to review the current Committees, their duties, and current members to change the SRC By-Laws; make recommendations for changes, and draft a new proposal to be brought to the Committee for approval.

**Committee Reports:**

Employment/Career Development – Michael Whitehill had his last meeting with the committee in October. Michael expressed his desire to continue working with this group as an ad hoc member.

Public Relations and Quality Assurance – the next meeting is scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup> via teleconference.

Membership – Four potential members have completed the online application and are awaiting approval from the governor’s office.

- Rene Averitt-Sanzone
- Tony Lawson
- Michelle Plummer
- Denise Carter-McCormick

Blindness & Vision Services – the committee consists of 14 members; meetings for 2018 were scheduled; discussion was held on the OBVS Satisfaction Survey, the ILOB Grant, and things that are going on in the blind community. The next meeting will be held January 31, 2018.

Policy & Planning Meeting – discussion was held on the Supported Employment changes and how DORS is going to adjust.

**Director’s Report – Sue Page**

As of March 2017, the DORS Wait List was a little over 4,000 consumers. In April, staff began contacting consumers by email blasts, phone calls, and letters to individuals whose cases did not have any activity in a year to determine whether or not they were still interested in receiving DORS’ services. Approximately 2,000 individuals either no longer needed DORS services or did not respond to these multiple modes of communication and as a result the Open pending caseload was reduced. As of the end of August the Wait List was at 2,693.

For the first time since March 2015, consumers were taken off the Wait List and moved to Open Pending. As of today, the Wait List is 2,571. DORS will continue to roll-off consumers at the end of November and December. In January DORS will reassess the workload and Wait List, then plan for the next roll-off.

**Filling Vacant Positions:**

DORS Counselor and Supervisor vacant positions are now exempt from the State Hiring Freeze process.

DORS Planning Meeting Summary:

Really good Planning Meeting – good input and participation, good format , breakout sessions for each department. Staff are working on the final edits to the Draft Plan.

**Adjournment**