

Montana VR Strategic Plan for FY 2008-2010

Revised February 2009

1. Successfully assist people with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.

- Continue to meet the standards and indicators, our federal report card.
- Continue achieving high consumer satisfaction feedback by meeting or exceeding 85% on consumer survey question #10, "In an overall general sense, how satisfied are you with the services you received?"
- Refine our methods to identify unserved and underserved populations and how to serve them. Evaluate methods over the next three years on developing ways to measure unserved and underserved.
- Increase the percentage of rehabilitated consumers who have health insurance at closure. The 2008 percentage of rehabs with health insurance through their employment was 25.3%. The 2008 percentage of rehabs with any kind of health insurance (including Medicaid and Medicare) was 72.5%.
- Provide more access regarding new and emerging technologies by providing training at statewide events such as the annual All Staff meeting. Sources of training could be PLUK and the Rural Institute.

2. Assure that consistent, high quality transition services are made available statewide

- Continue identifying and communicating with students with disabilities in schools.
- Continue updating and maintaining VR liaisons with schools and the school contact list for transitions.
- Continue relationships with OPI, PLUK, and MYLF.
- Continue to explore video conferencing for transition services.
- ▶ Create a strategy for improved access in schools.
- Develop urban and rural models of transition services.
- Serve 20 high school students through MYLF.
- Coordinate annually with disability services offices at university level (regional level).

3. Build awareness and understanding of VR services

- Educate legislators, consumers, and the general public on VR services by sending out quarterly updates through the Friends of Rehab email list and by exploring TV and radio ads.
- ▶ Invite at least one business in each region to do a presentation at a staff meeting.

4. Develop opportunities for better jobs and on-the-job supports for people who are working.

- Train staff on post-BA eligibility and educational opportunities.

5. Enhance VR services specifically for people with mental illness, brain injuries, and learning disorders

- ▶ Using data we collected through focus forums and through our statistical reports, enhance services to consumers with mental illness, brain injuries and learning disorders.

6. Collaborate with other appropriate agencies and 121s to enhance outcomes for consumers.

- Stay informed with what is going on with independent living and Montana Transportation Partnerships regarding transportation.
- ▶ Work with 121 projects to determine needs and alignment with VR. Personally contact the 121s and urban Indian programs and ask for input regarding their needs.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to the 121s and urban Indian programs when requested.
- Convene the CRP liaison group via telephone conference call four times per year to discuss CRP issues and possible solutions.
- Continue participation in local Mental Health advisory councils.
- Invite other agencies (such as Job Service, Mental Health, DD, OPI) to present at a VR Council meeting.
- Strengthen networking between VR and other agencies. In 2009, work with Veterans Administration and Brain Injury.
- ▶ Arrange for workforce presentations describing employment trends, living wage and benefits (what's hot and what's not) once a year in each region.

7. Continue attention to in-service training and meeting CSPD qualifications.

- Continue to provide in-service training to staff so they continue to be qualified.
- Develop specific training on VR public law and policy for counselors.
- Provide conflict and mediation training for MVR staff including mediation techniques when a counselor has to say no. Also provide training on how to deal with consumers who are in crisis.
- Continue good succession planning program and prepare for upcoming retirements of senior management.
- Continue cultural awareness activities including having a VR Council meeting on a Reservation, sending a counselor to CANAR. Look at the needs of urban Native Americans who do not live on a reservation.
- Explore video conferencing for training.

8. Expand our staff recruitment effort

- Analyze and determine optimal staffing needs considering job placement, transitions, travel, and number of cases.

- Enhance recruitment through expanding internships through Futures, participating in career fairs and making contacts with universities regarding employment opportunities. (Brigitte)

More investigation and resources needed (reviewed annually)

- Provide more financial support for Business Enterprise Program.
- Develop a video on orientation for vocational goal development to help consumers understand their role. Watch the consumer satisfaction survey to monitor trends on concerns with goal development.
- Continue development of new materials for consumers. Find websites to help consumers focus on the VR process, including interest/vocational inventories. Refer this strategy to the Futures application package group.
- Develop more “natural support” for consumers requiring extended support.
- Team up with private associations like NAMI to educate the public.

Note: Tasks marked with a triangle bullet are included in the regional plans.