CSAVR

ADVANCING DISABILITY INCLUSION & WORKFORCE INNOVATION

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

CSAVR National News Brief

September 22, 2024

CSAVR *National News Brief* is a regular series covering legislative activity, media stories, research initiatives, webinars, reports, conferences, and national advocacy activities of interest to member state VR agencies.

_____

HIGHLIGHTS:

1. **NATIONAL NEWS**
2. **CSAVR NEWS**
3. **RSA & ED UPDATE**
4. **TAC HAPPENINGS**
5. **NEW NCRTM PRODUCTS THIS MONTH**
6. **REPORTS, TRAININGS, NEWSLETTERS, AND CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES**
7. **LONG COVID UPDATE**
8. **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

_____

NATIONAL NEWS

Congratulations to all the new DIF grantees. More on this next, but first we need to celebrate that no 110 dollars were left on the table after the most recent reallotment results! Wow, you did it! Congress laid down the challenge and it was met. Thank you! Now we need to think ahead as to how we sustain this positive momentum and efficiently and effectively use the dollars to best serve our dual customers. We look forward to learning how you are doing it and more success stories.

Disability Innovation Fund Grantees come from 16 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, and they represent 13 institutions of higher education, nine nonprofits, four state agencies, and one

institution of higher education/special institution. Learn more about each grantee [here](rsa.ed.gov) [rsa.ed.gov]. We at CSAVR look forward to working with all the grantees.

September is [National Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Awareness Month](click.icptrack.com) [click.icptrack.com]. The U.S. Senate passed a resolution in 2018 to recognize the month in order to improve resources and treatments for people with spinal cord injuries (SCI).

N [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com]**ational Guide Dog Month** [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com], a time to raise awareness and celebrate the role that guide dogs play in enhancing the independence and quality of life for individuals who are blind or low vision. National Guide Dog Month also highlights the dedication of trainers, organizations, and volunteers who support the guide dog community.

Workforce Development Month [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com], a celebration that began in 2005 to highlight the critical importance of preparing individuals for success in a dynamic job market. A significant milestone in this effort is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, which has played a transformative role in modernizing workforce development across the country. Workforce Development Month serves as a reminder of the progress made and the ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive workforce where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

And in other news:

Alemany, Jacqueline, and McKenzie Beard. "**Biden Administration Moves to End Subminimum Wages for Disabled Workers** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Washington Post*.

Bending, Erin. "**Social Security Administration Announces New Streamlined SSI Application** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." Kiplinger.

Diament, Michelle. "**Feds Urge Guardrails to Protect Access to Medicaid Community-Based Services** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." Disability Scoop.

Diament, Michelle. "**Biden Administration Expands Insurance Protections for Those with IDD** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." Disability Scoop.

Johansson, Hannah Frances. "**Special Needs Trusts Bring Peace of Mind to Aging Parents of Children with Disabilities** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." CNN.

Nietzel, Michael T. "**Feds Award $251 Million to Prepare People with Disabilities for Good Jobs** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Forbes*

CSAVR NEWS

Early registration ends 9/23 and registration is still open until 10/17 for our fall conference in Seattle, WA October 19 - October 25, 2024. If you have not registered, please do so and don't miss this great event. We want to see everybody there.

In response to our Call for Proposals, we received over 30 great ones which staff just finished reviewing. It's always hard to narrow the field, but this week we will be notifying all who submitted.

Don't forget the Leadership Forum and Directors Forum. The agenda for the Leadership Forum is now available on the CSAVR website. It is another good one so do not forget to register for it. 2024. Just a reminder that registration for CSAVR does not register you for NCSAB or NCSRC. You must register with each organization separately.

NCSAB website: http://www.ncsab.org/ [ncsab.org]

NCSRC website: https://www.ncsrc.us/ [ncsrc.us]

Hotel rooms at the conference hotel are sold out. There are still rooms at the Grand Hyatt Seattle Downtown so go to the CSAVR website.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Seattle!

Congratulations to the NET Team and Kathy and Inger on a great NET Summit this past week with the support of The Careers and Business Engagement Chair Michael Mackillop and Co-Chair Toni Wolf.

The operations & Personnel Committee is having their organizational meeting this Monday, 9/23, at 2 pm. All are welcome to join us for the Zoom meeting [us06web.zoom.us].

Join Zoom Meeting

RSA & ED UPDATE

On September 13th RSA shared an updated version of the Case Service Report (RSA-911) Data Dashboards including data reported for the fourth quarter of PY 2023. This workbook includes performance results for all VR agencies and seven previous quarters of RSA-911 data.

Per RSA, 57 of the 58 2024 State Plans have been reviewed and approved. Seventeen of these have been conditionally approved. RSA hope to complete the review of the last plan by the end of the month. They will then be published on the WIOA State Plan Portal.

TAC HAPPENINGS

VRTAC-QE has announced plans for its 2025 Symposium:

    i) Dates: May 21-22, 2025, preconference on May 20th

    ii) Venue: Memorial Union, 800 Langdon Street, 53706

    iii) Hotel blocks – coming soon!

QM, QE, and NTACT-C will begin their fifth and final year on their five-year grants on October 1, 2024. If you have TA needs and have not talked with them already now is probably a good time to reach out to them to get on their docket for Year 5.

VRTAC-QM has made available the VR Wellness Check which is a self-assessment tool for vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to determine their progress in achieving the gold standard practice in multiple domains related to the quality program and performance, and fiscal and resource management of the VR program. It can be completed by an individual or group of individuals in a VR program. Almost 30 agencies have started the assessment with 87 users checking in from those agencies.

NEW NCRTM PRODUCTS THIS MONTH

- **SWTCIE Practice Brief: Outreach Strategies to Engage Potential Participants and Employers** [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com] (Mathematica)

- **The Vermont Career Advancement Project: A Way for Vermonters with Disabilities to Find Meaningful High-Wage Work** [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com] (Mathematica)

- **Self-Advocacy** [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com] (Independent Futures that Work!)

- **VR Wellness Check** [ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com] (VRTAC-QM)

REPORTS, TRAINING, NEWSLETTERS AND CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

The RTC: Rural - Rural Solutions to Strengthen Disability Community Capacity [click.icptrack.com] will host a virtual panel discussion, Elevating Rural Disability Data for Policy Impact [click.icptrack.com], September 24th, 2:30 - 4 pm ET. A diverse set of panelists will discuss a range of topics on what matters for rural disability data equity, access, and inclusion. Panelists will discuss the opportunities and challenges they face using data to advocate for and understand the rural disability experience. Registration is free and required. This event is co-hosted by the Urban Institute.

The Northeast ADA Regional Center [click.icptrack.com] will host a webinar, The Intersection of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family and Medical

Leave Act (FMLA); Which Applies and When [click.icptrack.com], September 25th, 1 - 2 pm ET. Presenters will provide an overview of the ADA and FMLA in regard to leave. Presenters will share how best practices for employers have evolved, pitfalls for employers to avoid, and lessons learned through experience and observation in the field of human resources. Registration is free and required. A Spanish transcript of the webinar will be available upon request following the event.

The Southeast ADA Regional Center [click.icptrack.com] will host a webinar, Polling Place Accessibility and the ADA [click.icptrack.com], September 26th, 10 - 11 am ET. Presenters will provide an overview of how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) covers polling places and the responsibilities of state and local government facilities. Registration is free and required.

On September 26th from 1 to 2 pm ET SVRI at Stout is sponsoring a free Zoom webinar designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the diverse strategies employed by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (SVRA) in delivering services to business customers. Registration is required. One CRC credit is available.

The Temple University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Community Living and Participation of Individuals with Serious Mental Illnesses (TU Collaborative) [click.icptrack.com] will host a webinar, The Whats and Whys of Community Participation [click.icptrack.com], September 26th, 2 - 3 pm ET. Presenters will define what community participation is and why it is important for individuals who experience mental health challenges. Participants will identify basic strategies to support community participation of people with mental health conditions. Registration is free and required.

Join Mathematica's Center for Studying Disability Policy and the National Academy of Social Insurance for a virtual event on **Tuesday, October 8, at 1 p.m. Eastern Time** to examine the state of SSI today, 50 years after the program's first payment, and to discuss evidence-based reforms that could strengthen the program for the next 50 years. This event will include closed captioning and accessible materials that will be posted on the event landing page [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com] before the event. Email info@matheamtica-mpr.com if you have any questions or need additional assistance.

Research from the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Employment of People who are Blind or Have Low Vision [click.icptrack.com] was highlighted in an article, Remote sighted assistance app use and thoughts about "sighted" assistance from artificial intelligence [click.icptrack.com], in the Fall 2024 issue of AccessWorld. The article covers findings from the RRTC's survey of Access Technology in the Workplace about the use of remote sighted assistance apps, including those that use

artificial intelligence. The survey found that the apps were used daily by respondents, including at work, and those who tried apps with AI were positive about its impact.

The RTC: Rural - Rural Solutions to Strengthen Disability Community Capacity [click.icptrack.com] published two resources featuring data on Veterans with disabilities in the US. The factsheet Veterans in Focus: Disability and Veterans in Rural America [click.icptrack.com] uses data from the American Community Survey to explore the intersection of Veteran status, disability, and rurality. The RTC: Rural also added data on Veterans with disabilities to its Disability Counts [click.icptrack.com] maps and dashboards. Readers can explore Veterans maps by state or generate data tables using the data lookup tool.

The Southeast ADA Regional Center [click.icptrack.com] released the latest two episodes of the ADA Live! Podcast. Episode 132, Nurse's Guide to the ADA: Understanding Responsibilities in Caring for Patients with Disabilities [click.icptrack.com], features a project from the Center for Leadership in Disabilities that educates nurses and other health professionals on providing equitable and inclusive health care services for people with disabilities. Episode 133, ADA Rule on Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps Provided by Government [click.icptrack.com], shares information and resources to learn more about the Department of Justice's rule requirements for ensuring web content and mobile apps are accessible to people with disabilities. Transcripts and show notes are available for both episodes.

LONG COVID UPDATE

Long COVID prevalence, disability, and accommodations: Analysis across demographic groups. Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, Volume 34(2), Pgs. 335-349. NARIC Accession Number: J94090.

New to the NARIC collection, this NIDILRR-funded study examined the prevalence of long COVID across different demographic groups in the United States and the extent to which workers with Long COVID-related impairments engaged in pandemic-related remote work.

Using data from the Household Pulse Survey and Current Population Survey, results indicated that women, Hispanic people, sexual and gender minorities, individuals without 4-year college degrees, and people with preexisting disabilities are more likely to have long COVID and to have activity limitations.

This study found that people with disabilities were less likely than people without disabilities to perform remote work. It is possible that people with disabilities are clustered in jobs that are not amenable to remote work. Employers may consider other

accommodations, such as shorter workdays and flexible scheduling, to hire and retain employees who are struggling with the impacts of long COVID.

[Access the full abstract and ordering information in REHABDATA [click.icptrack.com]](click.icptrack.com)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Bertilsson, Monica, Ramona Niederberger, and Angelique de Rijk. "**[Work Accommodations for Employees with Common Mental Disorders and Associated Manager-Related Determinants: A Cross-Sectional Study Among Swedish Managers](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Disability and Rehabilitation*, vol. 46, no. 18, 2024, pp. 4256–4275.

Coutu, Marie-France, Marie-José Durand, Fergal O'Hagan, Patrick Gosselin, Iuliana Nastasia, Djamal Berbiche, Marie-Élise Labrecque, et al. "**[Workers' Worries, Pain, Psychosocial Factors, and Margin of Manoeuvre, in Relation to Outcomes in a Return-to-Work Program: An Exploratory Study](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2024, pp. 568–581.

Dollinger, Mollie, Rola Ajjawi, Rachel Finneran, and Sarah O'Shea. "**[Conceptualising Responsibility and Hostility Within Work-Integrated Learning Placements for Students with Disabilities](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Disability & Society,* vol. 39, no. 9, 2024, pp. 2217–2235.

Hansen, Anders, Ole Steen Mortensen, Reuben Escorpizo, Karen Søgaard, Jens Søndergaard, Berit Schiøttz-Christensen, and Henrik Hein Lauridsen. "**[Assessing Work Functioning in Patients with Persistent Low Back Pain: Exploring the Structural Validity of the Work Rehabilitation Questionnaire](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2024, pp. 669–682.

Hensing, Gunnel, Cornelia van Diepen, Maria Boström, and Monica Bertilsson. "**[Validity of the Capacity to Work Index: Development of an Instrument to Measure Work Capacity in Relation to Depression and Anxiety in the General Working Population](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2024, pp. 618–629.

Lettinga, Hanneke A.M., Sandra H. van Oostrom, Hendrika P. Zijlstra, Johannes R. Anema, and Karin I. Proper. "**[RESTART: A Stepped-Care Approach to Facilitate Return to Work for Employees with Psychological Distress: Design of a Randomized Controlled Trial](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *BMC Public Health*, vol. 24, no. 2288, 2024.

Ponzio, Michela, Jessica Podda, Elena Pignattelli, Anna Verri, Benedetta Persechino, Bruno Kusznir Vitturi, Paolo Bandiera, et al. "**[Work Difficulties in People with Multiple](links.news.mathematica-mpr.com)**

Sclerosis [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2024, pp. 606–617.

Alyousef, Yousef S., Megan H. Ross, Venerina Johnston, and Michelle D. Smith. “**Experiences of Working with Lower Limb Osteoarthritis: A Qualitative Study** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2024, pp. 683–692.

Bloom, Nicholas, Gordon B. Dahl, and Dan-Olaf Rooth. “**Work from Home and Disability Employment** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” National Bureau of Economic Research, 2024.

Chan, Fong, Kanako Iwanaga, Timothy N. Tansey, Nicole Ditchman, Paul Wehman, Jia Rung Wu, and Xiangli Chen. “**Assessing Evidence-Based Disability Inclusion Policy and Practices to Promote Employment of People with Disabilities in the Workplace: Scale Development and Validation** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 2024.

Dollinger, Mollie, Rola Ajjawi, Rachel Finneran, and Sarah O'Shea. “**Conceptualising Responsibility and Hostility Within Work-Integrated Learning Placements for Students with Disabilities** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Disability & Society*, vol. 39, no. 9, 2024, pp. 2217–2235.

Etscheidt, Susan Larson, David Hernandez-Saca, and Catherine Kramarczuk Voulgarides. “**Monitoring the Transition Requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A Critique and a Proposal to Expand the Performance Indicators** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2024, pp. 128–139.

Fassier, Jean-Baptiste, Laure Guittard, Béatrice Fervers, Sabrina Rouat, Philippe Sarnin, Julien Carretier, Guillaume Broc, et al. “**Using Intervention Mapping to Facilitate and Sustain Return-to Work After Breast Cancer: Protocol for the FASTRACS Multicentre Randomized Controlled Trial** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *BMC Cancer*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2024.

Galbraith, Craig S. “**A Note on Using the Workability Index (WAI) to Predict Future Earnings Capacity Losses in Moderate to Severe Partial Disability Cases** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 2024.

Handberg, Charlotte, Helle Munkholm, and Ann-Lisbeth Højberg. “**Perspectives of Young People with Neuromuscular Diseases Regarding Their Choice of Educational Programs and Possibilities to Complete Program Requirements** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com].” *Global Qualitative Nursing Research*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2024.

Kanwar, Kunal, Curtis E. Margo, and Dustin D. French. "**Self-Reported Visual Disability and Unemployment: Findings from the National Health Interview Survey** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Ophthalmic Epidemiology*, vol. 31, no. 5, 2024, pp. 488–490.

Šiška, Jan, Julie Beadle-Brown, Renáta Tichá, Roger Stancliffe, Brian Abery, and Šárka Káňová. "**Advances and Gaps in Policy, Practice, and Research in Transition for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Across Four Countries** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2024.

Tarantino, Marco, and Jared Reyes. "**Experiences of Legally Blind Individuals at Different Stages of the Employment Cycle as These Relate to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act** [links.news.mathematica-mpr.com]." *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2024, pp. 97–105.