

COUNSELOR COMMITTEE

October 27th, 2014

Introductions completed.

Meeting dates:

Set to use the videoconference over the noon hour – central time, on Mondays to accommodate staff's time. Staff would like to meet in person as we develop as a group and work on projects. As a result, January videoconference will be set for January only. With the WIOA guidance also coming out in January a determination of the counselor committee focus may be determined at the next meeting.

Ideas for the Counselor group include:

Sharing best practices, staffing cases, bring topic to the group to get assistance in addressing the agencies need for staff feedback & addressing WIOA changes. Using group to discuss the difficult cases through e-mail.

Motivational Interviewing:

Staff shared current practices to include – entering in TASK note the stage of change the client is believed to be in. Discussed how labeling the stage makes it difficult. Feel MI Training 1/month or quarterly is helpful. Some teams are using their staff meetings to include this training. New staff have reported that they feel that the training on Motivational Interviewing has been helpful.

Placement Program Director & 3 Regional Marketing Staff:

Good communication with the teams needs to be maintained for this to work well.

IDEA - Systems Change Grant:

Possibly provide training for staff & job coaches for the increase in OJE's.

Concern that not all Job Placement Staff are providing direct placement services. Job Placement Specialist may be providing JSS, resume, cover letters & job openings, but not contacting employers directly. May need role definition of staff.

Need a place and train model

Teams are having difficulty getting OJE's set up and having access to job coaches.

Do not feel prepared for the amount of OJE's that are going to be needed.

Placement needs some hands on training for their job functions and also accountability standards. Client always comes back to the counselor and is responsible for moving the case through the system, so the Counselors have ownership in the case – Do other team members feel that ownership?

We need to maintain good communication between team members to provide quality services. Sub-team meetings are helpful to some teams to enhance communication.

About half the teams are actually transferring the team contact to the Job Placement Specialist, so caseload is not a true reflection of actual clients working with.

Training:

Discussed improving training for counselors through mentors for Counselors, shadowing other offices &/or guidelines for training. New Counselors need more than just shadowing client's meetings, need to see the case management activities too. On-going Counselor training may also be a need, especially when a staff's job duties change. Staff do not like video training, as there is little sharing and more of a lecture format.

Next action:

January will be video conference to discuss our focus. Group prefers to meet in person.