

Agenda
March 13-14, 2008
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Country Inn and Suites
5333 North 27th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska

1. StrengthFinder's Training (34.CFR 361.18)

Frank

Janet Drudik and Cindy Wagner provided training on StrengthFinders to the AA's and OD's. It can be a wonderful resource for individuals for staff and for the agency. There are 34 strengths and after you take the assessment they identify your top five. Like that everyone has different strengths. Teams can use it if they wish. Feels that it will take root in the teams and throughout the agency. After the emerging leaders went through this training some of them went back to their teams and wanted to restructure their jobs. While it is important to have job duties that reflect their strength the jobs they were hired for and the duties those jobs entail must be done even if it's not their strength.

We are going to pilot it with a couple of staff to try with selected consumers. The details of how that will work have not been worked out yet. Janet had asked for volunteers to work on this project.

If any team wants to do the Strengthfinders assessment contact Janet and she will see that the books get ordered. The book we will use for consumers is the one we will order for the staff and costs about \$13, StrengthFinders 2.0.

2. TBI Pilots (34.CFR 361.24)

Keri Bennett

Employment Pilots – one in Goodwill has had staffing issues. The director left last summer. Kim Buschkoetter has assumed those duties along with the other programs she is responsible for. Lost a couple of good coaches also but have hired two new ones. Recently they have received a couple of referrals from Quality Living and Madonna so will be a chance to see how seamless the transition will be and hope that will result in referrals to VR. Frank has agreed to a fourth year of funding.

DSN has offices in Lincoln, GI and Kearney. Roger Stortenbecker has stepped away from the VR grant, Carla Sorensen has taken over that responsibility.

Brain Book Pilot: received funding from the Infrastructure grant and the TBI Advisory Council and it will be piloted with Goodwill-GI, DSN, and Center for Independent Living. The training will be over the Internet in a webinar format. Offering it to agencies to audit for free so they have an idea of what the Brain Book is and if they have consumers who could benefit from the Brain Book. We will be recording all the sessions including the informational session that will be on Tuesday, March 18 and will be available for VR staff on VRIS.

Keri continues to work with staff offering guidance as they work with consumers with TBI.

LB738 TBI registry bill looks like it has a good chance to pass. This bill adds to the current registry that HHSS maintains. They will now send a packet of information to the individual within 30 days once they receive the registry information. Had a legislative day last week at the Capitol and about 60 attended.

3. CAP Report (34 CFR 361.24)

Vicki

Each member of leadership received a copy of the CAP report by e-mail. There were no additional comments or questions.

4. Placement Committee Update (34 CFR 361.48)

Jim, Jon

Jon gave a report on the activities of the Employment Committee. Discussed the Marketing Plan and why changes are being made. According to the survey that the committee sent to staff it appeared that many were uncertain how to develop the Marketing Plan from the instructions that were sent. They have clarified the reasons behind the Marketing Report and how to develop each of the components on the Marketing Plan. Trying to give a combination of approaches to consumers to help them get a job. We are also going to be looking for new employers.

September 10-11, 2008 will be the Employment Conference. Erin Riley from Cincinnati Hospital will be the key speaker. Placement staff will be invited along with other key members of the teams. Representatives from 10 hospitals will be there.

Looking at the Employer accounts and thinking about developing mentoring opportunities with our two year community college students.

5. Should we require minimum number of hours (34 CFR 361.56)

Don Crouch

Discussed the report that had been sent to Leadership staff regarding consumers working 11 hours or less a week. Iowa does not take a successful outcome on consumers working that few hours a week. Should be adopting a similar practice? The concern is for consumers who that is the maximum number they can work as if we don't take a successful outcome we may be more reluctant to work with them. We do need to be clear with consumers who we work with who can work more but choose not to that our goal is to help them maximize their capacity and it may be more hours than they wish to work. We won't be changing our policy.

6. Referral sources

Jack would prefer that if a consumer was in the TR program, was closed and then came back, and we open a new case that we indicate the referral source as secondary school.

What about a partner code? To identify consumers with the partner they are working with, could be something for QII.

7. Parking in Lincoln State Parking Lots

Margy

Margy shared that the State Office East parking garage which our special use permits allow us to park in is being patrolled by the Nebraska State Patrol now. They are enforcing the parking rules much more strictly. Each office has one special use permit that includes the hang tag and card to swipe in the machine at the gate and both must be used together. Staff driving a personal car or a state car must use the special use permit. Cars must be parked within the lines and if on the ends of a row there is a line at the back of the space that cars must be short enough to park inside. They will give tickets for each infraction and after three tickets in one year they will be kicked out of the garage for 1 year. It has happened to several staff in the Department and at the last new staff training session two different staff members were called by the State Patrol to move their cars, one has parked in the wrong parking garage and one had a car that couldn't fit in the lines.

8. Data Center Update

Dan

Implementation of a new e-mail server and services is almost complete. Allows us to access e-mail from any computer with Internet access. He will be developing a tech note on how to access e-mail via the web. Will begin enforcement of password standards that the state CIO (state IT people) require, eight characters alpha/numeric combination. Change passwords every 90 days. Will begin in April-May. Working towards a system for VR where you have one password and it would get you into all your programs, but not there yet.

OSX Leopard upgrades are tentatively scheduled for May and June but waiting for some technical updates from Apple that wasn't included in the most recent updates. We don't know when the next update from Apple will come up. Training on OSX Leopard will be included with each of the teams.

State surplus people have implemented a new bar code system so Dan, Tibor and Laura will be coming around to put a new sticker on computers and furniture. The scanner that is used with this system will upload information directly to NIS. Dan will continue to use the bar code system he began using this year so many pieces of equipment will have two bar code stickers, the State one and a VR one.

File to file sharing is available for staff to use with the tech note sent out and now posted to VRIS. This was established in order to assist staff in sharing confidential client information instead of using e-mail.

9. Confidentiality of Information over Internet

Dan, Pat

Shared new updated policy. The update includes additional exceptions that have been agreed to. A manual chapter will be issued.

10. Billing procedures for ATP

King, Cathy

The biggest change is that once VR receives the recommendation, VR will authorize to ATP for the VR portion of costs. ATP will then be responsible for authorizing for services and will pay the bills and then once they have paid all the bills for that specific consumer they will let VR know what has been paid on that consumer and our accounting staff will enter those invoices in QUEST. It is like the procedure we do with State OJT's. ATP will have access to our 110 money in order to pay the bills based on the authorization that VR sent to ATP. Tentatively this new process will go into effect in April but all the details haven't been worked out yet.

Jack asked people to pick up a notebook of Transition Guide for Educators; there are about two hard copies per team.

11. Successful Outcomes for MH agreements

King

Currently there can be a discrepancy between when the MH providers take and record a successful outcome and when VR takes a successful outcome. However, next year that will not be the case. Providers will not be able to take an outcome until VR does.

How frequently can providers take a successful outcome on the same consumer? Every 2 years? Decided that the AA will work with providers to determine on what makes sense and then next year look at the date to see if there are a lot of returnees.

This year agreements were opened up to non-SMPI. Some of the agreement providers aren't coming up with non-SMPI consumers. For some of the providers their services are geared towards only SMPI and can't get non-SMPI consumers to seek services from them. We decided not to push the current providers/agreements to find non-SMPI consumers. Next year the agreement instructions will be changed so that the non-SMPI 25% will no longer be part of the requirements.

What if provider gets more outcomes than their goal? Could they get additional money? Not this year. Next year the proposal will say that at the end of the year if some providers haven't made their goal and some have made more than their goal that we would fund 10% over their goal up to the money that is left. If all providers made their goal then there wouldn't be any money left to fund any of the providers who may have gone over their goal. All the money identified for the cost of all the provider agreements is the pot of money we have to work with. If one provider didn't make goal then the left over money from that agreement could be available for providers who make over their goal.

12. Goal Alignment

Frank

ASQ training that AA's and Program Directors took in December focused on goals and how to identify them and track progress. There are periodic conference calls with the feds, the trainers and the states who participated to report on the training and implementation.

Two things that came out of the training were Goal Alignment and Consumer Surveys.

Goal Alignment – during the training it became evident that staff are often confused about the goals of the agency, that SRC has had several different goals, RSA identifies goals for us, Dept of Ed has goals for us, and this results in fragmented messages to staff.

This resulted in the goal Alignment document. Discussed the time line that was developed and how it will be shared with staff. Margy and Frank have collected goals that they have heard from staff since October 1. Came up with 9 goals. Each team will have to identify their implementation and tracking of each of the 9 goals, with the exception of #3 new partnerships, as that will be one per area. How will each team measure the goal? They will have to identify how that will be done. Frank will develop some additional information regarding the criteria for partnerships.

13. Update on Rule 72

Pat

Had the public hearing and no one except CAP attended. Last week it went to the Board so now it goes on to the Attorney Generals office. Will be looking at what changes we have to make to QUEST. Decided that training will need to be done with each office/team on the changes in Rule 72.

14. Update on Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

King

Employment Planning Discussion survey is being piloted in Columbus. One issue that has come up is that Employment Planning can take several meetings before completed and when waiting until the end of the process consumers can't respond easily to things that happened in the beginning. Looking at breaking it out into pieces.

Looking at developing a survey for consumers who are receiving services. Another issue is that as we develop more surveys we don't want to make the same consumer complete every survey.

Issue: at the SRC the issue of how individuals who are deaf complete the survey. In some instances the deaf specialist had to interpret for the consumer which is not appropriate. Working with the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on how to resolve this. One idea is to have a video of an interpreter signing the questions.

15. Update on Employment Warranty

Pat, King

Meeting with Easter Seals tomorrow, the outsource monitoring will be done out of the Easter Seals Lincoln office. They have hired two part time individuals; one was a previous VR consumer. The contract started Feb 1 but issues surrounding hiring, software, and hardware issues delayed the implementation.

Good progress is being made on overdue EW Monitoring follow up contact due. The goal is to have each teams cleaned up before they are turned over the Outsource Monitor.

16. New Staff Training Committee

Larry

Surveyed new staff in the last several months. They asked for guidance on writing task notes and more information on increased living costs. They also asked for information on how to identify who to go to on the team or otherwise to ask questions. As a result the committee developed the “Your Team Connections” document. This document will be used with each new staff and can be kept in their Training Portfolio notebook. The document has major areas listed with a box for the AA/OD to identify who is the “go to” person for that area.