Evaluation Workshop Meeting
8/1/07

Present: Quincy Abbot, Pat Anderson, Larry Carlson, George Ducharme, Cindy Gruman (by phone), Glendine Henry, Cathy Ludlum, Cristina Mogro-Wilson, Terry Nowalowski, Amy Porter, Julie Robison, Noreen Shugrue, Martha Porter

Personal narratives in evaluation plan

George Ducharme - Collection of personal experiences of people statewide and in local initiatives. In past he has recorded stories that promotes projects he's involved in. Is that what we want in an evaluation? Want experiences over time. Highlight barriers, also use them in other ways. Hold off on collection until George meets with Julie and Noreen to come up with tools to use. More like a personal narrative - every 6 months or so, focused on employment.

Suggestion – From calls currently getting to Connect-ability. Choose random 5 people to start – use them as a "pilot," not ones for needs assessment baseline. Baseline questions include What is your situation now? What did you call looking for?

Some people now may not be as successful. Possibly follow 5 now, then follow the 5 chosen in three years, to get entry and later data. Could use to create a 'brochure' of the person.

For people served by DMR transitioning into community, already documented trials, tribulations, successes. People followed people here need to have contact with MIG. Create one page overview – a brochure to advertise progress

George to create draft of questions - what you would want to ask when person first contacts Connect-ability. When calling in for a job – ask what have been the barriers for you to get at this on a personal level. Do it as a narrative- hoping to see the steps the person took along the way. For next call, you did this, etc. – create chronology over time of person's experiences.

Need strategic choosing to get a diverse group of people to follow – different disabilities, geographic locations, age, etc. Not completely random. Not trying to collect generalizable data because so small number. Instead use as case study examples. Add more each year.

Find out Is what we are doing helping? If need different methodology – another way to do this? One time evaluation or have longer follow up. Voluntary to be followed – then we decide who should be in each pool.

Include age, geography, disability, etc., in questions. Age is not asked for right now when call CA#, but could add age, email, etc. to current form. Could ask for phone number for geographic sample. Include ethnic background? Ask how hear about it – what would you like, get name, phone, address, disability. Expect calls to pick up with TV ad in September.

Formalize it – make it part of the evaluation plan. When we contact them, can ask if they are willing to share experiences over time. Good to set procedures at the beginning, esp. if doing quality assurance at the beginning.

Start with next round of calls? When person calls in, could ask each one, "Would you be willing to have a researcher contact you?" in order to be able to share numbers with researchers. Alternate suggestion – the person who calls them back could just say they are part of the project

- doesn't matter if that person is a researcher or not. People are grateful if you contact them to follow up on their experiences.

For 95 people who have called in so far, if they are in BRS system, may already have age, geographic data – but BRS does not have the right to share this info. Could instead use that info to choose five different disabilities, towns, etc. In next two weeks pick people so George can start.

Connect-ability number evaluation

Need QA questions to ask everyone – all 95 who have called in to number so far. Use both MIG Staff and research staff if want to do so quickly. Contact all who call in for the first 6 months. Limit it to only five questions.

Cindy and Julie to draft questions for TA, about 10 questions. Amy will then add to it – include time past before got engaged with system. Use as part of quality assurance. Now doing everyone.

What about people who get referred to other agencies, etc.? Does not matter if referred to another agency, etc., still follow up with them if came through Connect-ability number.

How about calls not through Connect-Ability number? Need to track it to evaluate effectiveness of advertising. Same for TA across state. Pat Anderson – When we provide TA, we send written evaluation within two weeks to find out was it helpful.

For QA interviews – need same time frame after initial call. One month reasonable. There are system issues, such as lag to get scheduled for orientation. So call again in 6 months.

It's past one month now for those already called in, so wait 2 months to do initial call for everyone? But two months is more like outcome data, not baseline.

MIG staff and researchers will share the calling of all 95 calls.

Get evaluation of TA from paper now – needs revision- referral pathways. Can have open-ended

Website evaluation

When first met with Mintz & Hoke they said hold off on pop-up survey – Did you find what you need? Hoping to have website meeting in September with Mintz & Hoke.

Pop up website evaluation survey with options such as very poor- poor – good – very good to rate:

- Quality of information
- Usefulness of site - Differentiate between content vs. navigating around site
- Overall ease of use
- Visual appearance
- Organization of home page

Suggestion - not pop up survey every page – at end have button asking to fill out survey about site. Pop-ups very distracting. Many people have pop-up blockers or close box if one pops up.

Other suggestions:

Was your question answered?
Site will help me – strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree
I will return to this site in future
What would you like to see added?
Would you recommend this website to a friend?
Have at bottom of each page- was this page useful?
Any suggestions you have to include on the site?

Workgroup evaluation plan template development

Use disparity of employment between people with and without disabilities. Perhaps then just go back to the major barriers of each workgroup. How did we address any of these.

Look at goals – Have we moved towards this or not? For example, transportation goal or affordable, accessible, adaptable transportation – What progress done towards this?

Template purpose to connect evaluation work and workgroup. Is there any baseline data? Workgroup has to come up with quantitative evaluation too. Need to define a question and take back to workgroup.

MIG staff meeting is Monday AM. How do these two fit together? Can report on just 3 objectives for each work group, not all. See as a whole project – what have we done.

Report on major outcomes to show impact. Also need quantitative data.

Template for workgroups would be helpful. Which one of these goals do you want to measure?

Noreen will assist workgroups to pick out the barriers they want to address. Then each workgroup needs to decide - What are the indicators that show progress with this barrier? Need to relate data collected back to barriers. Question for each workgroup to answer – Are we addressing these barriers, and How are we going to measure it?

Need to take credit for small infrastructure changes when reporting evaluation outcomes.

How communicate with other 5 committees. Have someone from each of them, transportation, transition, TA, stakeholder (Quincy or Dawn?), recruitment, come to evaluation meetings. Noreen will be going to a meeting of each workgroup to talk about evaluation and what we need from them. Talk about evaluation plan as work in progress.

Benefits planning update

Larry Carlson will put together database all people- BRS, Benefits counseling, vocational rehabilitation, etc. Benefits counseling began in 2000 – Data collection in 2002. Have DOL wage information as well. Larry will send description of data elements. Then look at VR, benefits planning, etc. – how to work synergistically

Quarterly report due yesterday (Amy)

Structured by work group themes. For evaluation, right now report as structured is focused on research products. Otherwise, do not include other information for now. In the future, evaluations will inform the reports and will include numbers.

Plan is for integration. Evaluation plan to be responsive to other accomplishments from other workgroups.

Next meeting
Wednesday, September 5th, 3:00 - 4:30.

Talk about specific issue briefs to create as products of MIG. PAS report almost done from last year's MIG report.

Send meeting notes to all members of committee until get it on website.