

Evaluation Workgroup Meeting – Summary **9/5/07**

Present: Quincy Abbot, Larry Carlson, George Ducharme, Kerri Fradette, Glendine Henry, Cathy Ludlum, Cristina Mogro-Wilson, Terry Nowakowski, Amy Porter, Martha Porter, Julie Robison, Noreen Shugrue

Location of meeting changed

Beginning October 3rd, meetings will be at the A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Disabilities in Farmington (Exchange Office Park, 270 Farmington Ave., Suite 183). This will allow people to be conferenced in by phone. Thanks to Cristina for offering use of the Center for this meeting. Evaluation Workshop meets the first Wednesday of every month, 3:00 – 4:30.

MIG workgroup representation

Each workgroup to have a representative at evaluation workgroup meeting. Currently have representatives for transportation technical assistance. To be added:

Stake holder education – Kerri Fradette

Transition – Patti Clay

Recruitment and hiring – Currently Quincy. Suggestion that Regina Stankaitus also com represent this workgroup

Include all Steering Committee members and representatives in meeting reminder email.

Evaluation process following call to Connect-Ability number

1. Intake – From every caller, get basic information obtained when call CA#. Possibly include age, disabilities, ethnicity, contact info (email, phone, address), if family member or other proxy, how heard of CA#. Add reason for call (caller's question), and response/information from CA.
2. Quality Assurance – Brief telephone evaluation of technical assistance and information offered when called CA#. Ask everyone who has called in so far; purposeful sample after that.
3. Personal narrative – In-depth, in-person, longitudinal interviews with small number of people – 5 to start.

Intake

For evaluation purposes, suggest to record at intake:

1. What the person called in for (what person said he/she wanted or what question he/she asked)
2. What person answering the CA line gave them – what information, referral to which program, etc.
3. What the person really needed help with, from CA person's point of view.

Quality assurance of technical assistance

Draft evaluation questions handed out. Amy to edit. Add 3 questions moved from personal narrative interview to help determine broader needs:

What did you ask for when you called the CA#? (What was your initial question?)

What did you receive?

Was it helpful?

Discussion concerning purpose of TA evaluation. Was defined as evaluation of CA# call only. Suggestion to then do follow up calls to evaluate the future series of events (Did this information lead to a next step? How did that work out for you?). This would help evaluate infrastructure of current state systems/programs. Currently will limit it to just a QA evaluation of person's CA# call. Timing = 1 month after call to CA#. Suggestion to see how 211 evaluates their calls or current evaluation process of Husky program. Decided to send this evaluation and questions regarding purpose, how to evaluate future events, etc., back to Technical Assistance workgroup to discuss at next TA meeting.

Personal narrative (George)

Purpose – to include personal employment experiences of people over time. In-depth conversations with small number of people (5 to start) to record their process and experiences regarding employment, positive and negative. Call every 6 months. Use purposeful sample to interview diverse group of people who called in to the Connect-Ability number (region, disability, age?). Out of 5 initial interviews, include 1-2 with family member/proxy present (Amy to check proportion of family members calling in to CA#).

Interview questions from George discussed (Pathways to Success: The stories of real people and employment). Move last 3 questions to QA interview. George to revise and send to Julie. Purposely broad questions to be used as guide; suggested to use checklist to make sure all areas covered. Tape interviews. Timeframe for discussion will be since call to CA#. Include in introduction how received contact information.

IRB (Institutional Review Board) issues discussed. All evaluation procedures and instruments, and any revisions, must be approved by UConn IRB (through Julie/Noreen). Deemed exempt because of Federal grant status; this may change with revisions to plan/instruments. IRB may ask George to complete online UCHC research training. We will still use consent form to get permission from person for personal narrative interview (George to draft). Offer opportunity to participate and obtain consent (including how information will be used) when doing brief quality assurance follow-up interview following their CA# call.

Website evaluation

Draft of question for pop-up website survey handed out (attached). Julie asked that everyone read and email comments/suggestions to her (jrobison@uchc.edu). What questions to drop to shorten it to 5 questions.

Workgroup evaluation plans

Evaluation plan template is still in process. Noreen went to meetings of 4 workgroups; each will send an evaluation plan to her. Template will be developed from evaluation plans of workgroups. Evaluations can help keep workgroups on target.

Benefits planning update

Larry developed combined dataset of all who had BRS services or Benefits counseling (BPAO dataset) since January 2002. Dataset has 11,000 people (1 record per client). Some received services from both programs. He has linked each record to any information from:

DOL information – 7 years of wage records
Medicaid benefits – 7 years of Medicaid eligibility (disability is coded by benefits specialist)
SSA – SSDI, SSI, and work incentive information.

Data and data dictionary/codes sent to UConn. Question – What do we want to do with it?
Main goal was to determine the impact of benefits counseling and vocational rehabilitation counseling. To see if better outcomes overall BC vs. VR; people who had BC 1st then VR; people having VR 1st then BC. Cindy will also work on this analysis. This may help look at sustainability of benefits counseling as well.

Publications update

Planned papers from needs assessment include one on employers and one from the focus groups. Still working on PCA report from original MIG data. Original question was to see if there are people eligible for PCA services who are not getting them. Julie asked for suggestions of journals in which to publish. Suggestions from group: Disability and work journal (George to look up title); Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (formally Journal of AAMR); Journal of Rehabilitation – more academic, includes both vocational rehab and disability. Issue briefs planned as well - here's what we found, etc.

Miscellaneous

MIG RATS (MIG Research Assistance to States) website is now online – www.mig-rats.org

Next meeting

Wednesday, October 3rd, 3:00 - 4:30 at the Center for Excellence in Disabilities, Exchange Office Park, 270 Farmington Ave., Suite 183, Farmington.