

Weekly Focus

Kevin L. Miller
Executive Director

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The mission of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

A Personal Note from the Director

It's hard to believe that this past Tuesday marked my one year anniversary as Director of RSC. I wanted to take a moment and share with all of you a few of my thoughts regarding the past twelve months. When I accepted this position, I did so with the full commitment of undertaking a career change that would combine my advocacy for individuals with disabilities and my knowledge of state government. It has often been said that if you can find something to do that you have a passion for, you have never worked a day in your life. If this is true, this last year has not been work, but a privilege.



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I know many of the decisions that I have made have not been easily accepted; however, all of them have been made to better our agency. We will continue to be an agency that will push the envelope of progress in all aspects of our business operations. Thank you to those individuals who realize our work and how we do it makes a difference to Ohioans with disabilities.

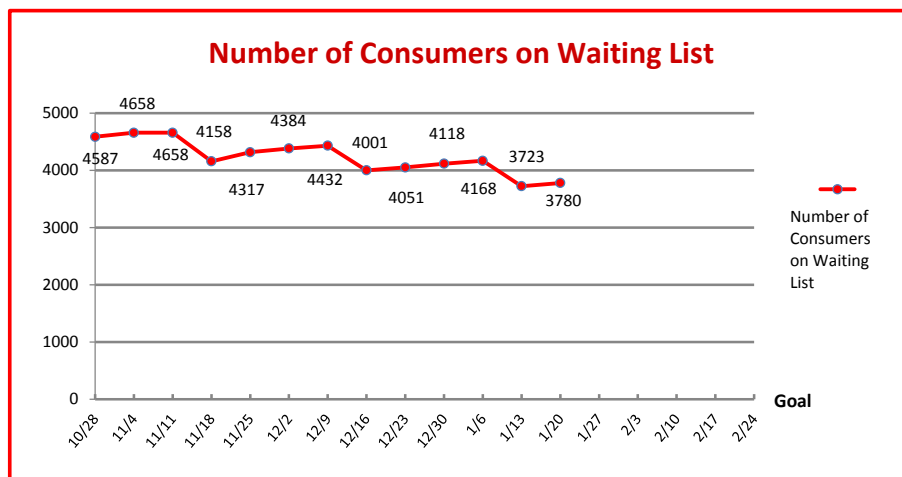
Commissioners Meet at RSC Headquarters

RSC commissioners held their first meeting of the new year at our Columbus headquarters on Wednesday. The meeting began with a moment of silence for Commissioner Frank Anderson who passed away last November.

The commissioners reappointed Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) members Nathaniel Jones, Stephen Thomas, Shonda Causey, Darlene Clinkscale, M. Vanessa Eubanks, Nelson Freed, Zach Holler, Randall Jones, Greg Powers, Donzel Shepherd and Mike Snapp. These CAC members have performed invaluable service for RSC taking on key elements of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment which will form the basis of the RSC Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) plan.

Commissioners got a detailed overview of the 2012-13 Strategic Plan and the new ActiveStrategy software system we have installed to track progress on implementing the Strategic Plan. Commissioners approved the agenda for a two day retreat they will hold February 29th and March 1st. This program will begin by having the commissioners play the role of RSC consumer and go through the VR process. This experience will be followed by an overview of the VR process from referral to case closure, with a breakdown of RSC capacity and how community partnerships are used to augment services to individuals with disabilities.

The Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment will be explored, with an explanation of the process being used and the knowledge needed to drive the RSC VR plan. Methods to strengthen the CAC will be discussed and an overview of the Social Security Disability Determination process and likely changes because of health care reform will be presented. The retreat will close with a look at emerging issues at RSC concentrating on challenges and opportunities.



RSC Searching for New Commissioners

RSC must have perfect attendance just to have a commission meeting. That's because we have four of seven commissioners, just enough for a quorum. With three seats on the Rehabilitation Services Commission to fill, we are searching for candidates for appointment to our board. Commissioners are appointed by Governor Kasich and approved by the Senate to seven year terms on the RSC board. Ohio law allows one reappointment.



There is no requirement for service more important than knowledge and concern for the RSC mission. Because you are reading this, we know you have that crucial attribute. If you or someone you know would be a good addition to the Rehabilitation Services Commission, please make this known to us by applying for consideration using the form located on the following website.

<http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Boards%20and%20Commissions%20Application%20Final.pdf>

Fee Schedule Rule Changes

As you know, RSC has contracted with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) to make recommendations to me regarding a fee schedule. After conversations with many of you, I have determined, with input from JCARR and Senator Larose, that we will place the draft rules to implement a fee schedule on the to be re-filed schedule at JCARR. We anticipate re-filing the rules once we receive the final recommendations from PCG in May 2012.

It Takes a Network

So much of the work we do at RSC is dependent upon a network of skilled partners across the state that it's important for me to meet with these service providers and understand how our shared mission can be advanced.

That's why I spent some quality time this week at the Deaf Services Center (DSC) in nearby Worthington. Executive Director John Moore took me through a program that provides interpreters on a 24-7-365 basis for hospitals, police, employers, courts and human service providers in 15 Central and Southeastern Ohio counties.



DSC is the largest provider of sign language interpreting services in Ohio, performing nearly 9,500 assignments last year. The DSC peer support & case management function helps clients access Social Security Disability Insurance where they interact with the DDD staff at RSC. DSC also assists their clients with vocational rehabilitation issues working closely with our BVR counselors.

DSC and RSC share the core value that deaf and hard of hearing people and all individuals with disabilities have the right to full access and participation in the community. It always brings extra resolve to our mission at RSC to see how hard and smart our partners like DSC are working toward the goals we share.

For more information or questions on stories in this publication please call Shirley Marchi, Community Relations Liaison, at 614.438.1477.

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