

Weekly Focus

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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.

Director's Advisory Group Presents Report to Executive Team

Sweeping change, executed rapidly, inevitably creates angst for all those involved in the process. The Director's Advisory Group (DAG) from the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) made a presentation on Monday to the RSC executive team.

The VR DAG reports recommending that we go about building a culture of trust. Building is the key word, as this is not a restoration process but the manifestation of events that span the shifting priorities of three administrations. VR counselors report a perception that they are not trusted, based on administrative policy on documentation of

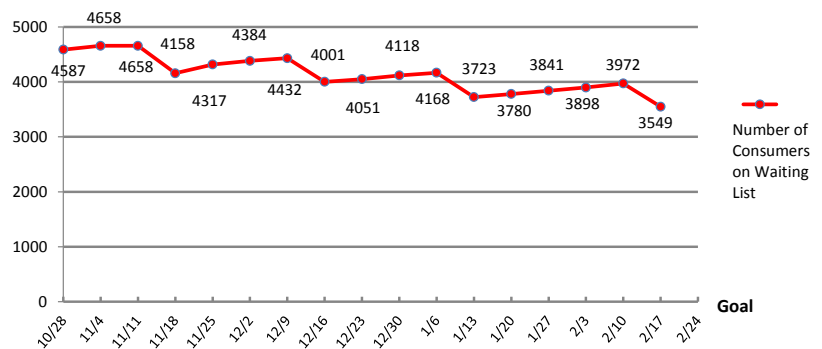


VR DAG discuss issues with executive team

time and performance. At the same time, counselors tell us they do not trust that the priorities and practices of the present will be enduring values. The pros we count on in the field say they have been through three major shifts in focus.

They say RSC needs clear communication from leadership to the counselors on why decisions are made with the understanding that it is not about liking the change, but understanding why things are done. The VR DAG concludes this will help them establish

Number of Consumers on Waiting List



priorities and clarify the expectations of VR counselors in achieving the RSC mission. The counselors request more background on the reasoning behind change, saying they perceive a negative tone in some of our announcements when no reason why is given.

The VR DAG will be back at RSC headquarters on February 29 for meetings with Deputy Directors to define benchmarks for action to address issues for mutually acceptable revisions to the action recommendations that more effectively address the underlying issues. There is nothing quick or easy about changing a culture, but this is the mission the VR DAG has set for itself. The



VR Deputy Director Susan Pugh, BVR Counselor Tammy Loader and IT Deputy Director Tim Nguyen listen to the VR DAG report

goal is to eliminate **us** and **them**, and create a culture of **we** that transforms RSC. This group clearly follows Daniel Burnham's advice to "make no small plans as they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die." This is our fondest hope for the DAG.

DDD Administrators and Managers Meet with New SSA Director

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) new Area Director for Northern Ohio, Stephen Martin, met with key Division of Disability Determination (DDD) staff this week, laying the groundwork for more collaboration with RSC on outreach and service improvements for Ohioans on Social Security Disability Insurance. We've worked with Mr. Martin in a variety of capacities over the years but this is his first visit to DDD as the Area Director for Northern Ohio. His willingness to explore ways that SSA field offices and DDD can coordinate service even better is a great way to start our new working relationship.

Fee Schedule Update

The RSC fee schedule project we have reported on extensively in the Weekly Focus is moving into the information gathering phase now. Our research partner, Public Consulting Group (PCG), will survey the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) we contract with over the week of March 12. To help our CRPs prepare for the survey, RSC & PCG will hold informational sessions to introduce CRPs to the survey and answer any questions they have. CRPs will be contacted directly with dates and times for the informal sessions which we hope to perform over the week of March 5. Between the fee schedule research and the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment now underway, RSC will soon have much more fresh data from the field to help steer future policy decisions.



DDD Administrators and Managers with SSA Area Director Stephen Martin (fifth from left in back row)

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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