

Weekly Focus

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Executive Director

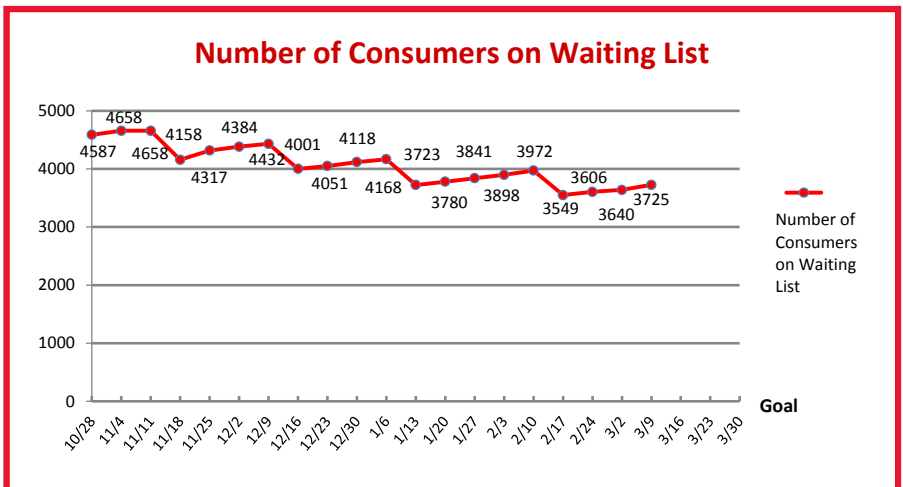
March 9, 2012

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.

Executive Staff Hits the Road

There's really no better way to bring the information contained in all the reports that cross our desks at RSC into sharp, human, focus, than to get in the field and visit our partners. This week the entire leadership team at RSC spent a day touring and talking with two Centers for Independent Living (CIL).

We spent half a day at the urban Tri-County Independent Living Center in Akron and the other half at the Society for Equal Access in the rural Tuscarawas County. The issues that form a barrier to independence for individuals with disabilities are very similar in both locations.



Housing, Health Care & Hunger: The CILs serve a clientele that is usually living on fixed incomes that are very often stretched beyond the breaking point by the expense of housing and health care. The result is a new problem for the Tri-County Independent Living Center where counselors now need to know how their



Meeting with the Tri-County Independent Living Center in Akron

Transportation: In Akron or New Philadelphia, transportation is an enduring obstacle to employment, health care and participation in the community for people with disabilities. The Society for Equal Access showed us a sophisticated fleet management and maintenance system to keep the wheels turning on their vans that average more than 300,000 miles of service, transporting consumers to jobs or medical appointments from 6 am to 10 pm every weekday, with medical runs continuing during the weekend.



Discussing issues at the Society for Equal Access in New Philadelphia

clients can access the food banks to fill the gap. Another innovative program used by both CILs loans expensive but essential medical equipment to clients who would

otherwise face a crisis. Tri-County Housing Coordinator Tami Gaugler told us how the medical loan closet has attracted corporate support from Bed Bath & Beyond.



http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=gev_52D6_PE

Peer Support & Transition: Both CILs we visited do a great job at creating community as a strategy for independent living. The peer support programs enable the CIL consumers to assist each other and build knowledgeable self-advocates for an independent but inclusive society for individuals with disabilities. Each CIL shows high skill at the major transition points in the lives of their consumers, with active programs to assist young people going from school to work and for older folks moving from a nursing home into an independent living situation.

Fee Schedule Update

Our Community Rehabilitation Partners (CRP) should be on the lookout next week for a very important survey on the RSC Fee Schedule development project. The survey will come from Public Consulting Group (PCG) and follows four informational sessions held over two days this week to finalize the survey.

CRPs will have until March 23 to complete the survey. The high importance of the CRP input is underscored by PCG's 800 telephone number and email account for CRP questions on the survey or to report any difficulties in answering survey questions.

Toll-Free Support Line: 1-866-912-2971

Email Address: ohvocrehab@pcgus.com

It is crucial that we get the feedback and information available from as many of our CRPs as possible to ensure Ohio is aligned properly to serve individuals with a disability. We are hopeful that our community partners will take the time to complete the survey and make sure we have their input in this strategic initiative for RSC.

July 9 Now a Day to Remember

Governor Kasich signed Senate Bill 247 into law this morning, designating July 9 as Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Day in Ohio. The bill, sponsored by Senator Troy Balderson of Zanesville, recognizes that Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is a growing problem because of accidents, our military engagements and simply because we now understand the physical issues better because of advances in neuromedical technology. Formally declaring a day for TBI awareness is meant to build public knowledge of the medical significance, programs for prevention and support for victims of traumatic brain injury.

Fond Farewell to Kevin and Bocar

The first face most visitors to RSC headquarters see is the Receptionist. Since January 3, 2011, our morning Receptionist has been Kevin Spayd and our afternoon Receptionist has been Bocar Dieng. As these are intermittent employment positions, the hours are capped at 1,000, which Kevin and Bocar have now reached, so today is their last day at RSC.



Bocar Dieng and Kevin Spayd

Kevin and Bocar provided assistance to the Director's Office, Executive Team and Central Office staff with many projects. Both Kevin and Bocar have new job prospects lined up and are in the final stages of taking the skills they've picked up at RSC to new employers. Their many friends gathered for a farewell pizza party over the noon hour to thank Bocar and Kevin for the good work they did while at RSC and to wish them the best of luck in future endeavors.

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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