

Weekly
April 6, 2012Focus
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Executive Director

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.

Perspective Adjustment in Cincinnati

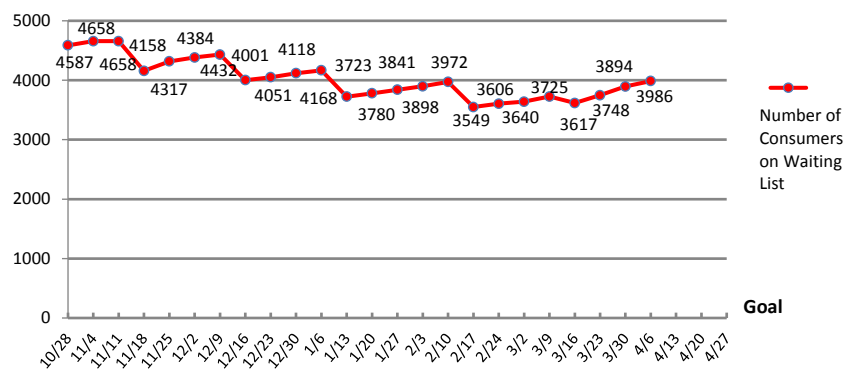
It's easy to get bogged down in all of the challenges we face at RSC and lose perspective on how we are doing at meeting our mission to ensure Ohioans with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation. An afternoon at the Easter Seals Work Resource Center in Cincinnati was a good gauge of all the progress we are making.

First, the Cincinnati site is one of five in the nation chosen by Easter Seals, for a national visit by a delegation of service providers and public officials from the Netherlands seeking best practice ideas to take back to their national program. I teamed with Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Director John Martin for a wide ranging discussion of our school to work transition programs and the new Employment First initiative signed by Governor Kasich.



A representative from the Netherlands delegation addresses the audience.

Number of Consumers on Waiting List



Director Miller and DODD Director John Martin discuss school to work programs.

Our Dutch guests have been following the employment initiatives of the U.S. Business Leadership Network and share our conclusion that meeting integrated employment goals requires a focus on meeting the business needs of employers.

Seeing how Ohio partners with employers for mission critical tasks across a wide spectrum of industries, has given our guests from the Netherlands a vision of what is possible with successful collaboration; and it has given us new perspective on how widely our challenges are shared and how valuable our best efforts are to our shared mission of creating universal opportunity regardless of disability.

Cincinnati Office Ready for Reds Opening Day

Our Executive Team spent quality time with our colleagues in the Cincinnati office, who treated us to a potluck of ballpark food in honor of the Reds opening day this week. I am pleased to report that all of this fun came after a highly productive meeting on a wide variety of topics.

AWARE: We know the system is slower than ideal, but help is on the way with additional servers to speed the service slowdowns caused by more users than the computers can quickly process. Moreover, there will be enhancements made to the system, based on Ohio RSC input, which will ultimately be developed with pro-rated funding across the alliance. Software patches are being implemented under the direction of a dedicated team from the Division of Information & Technology.



Chief of Staff Brenda Cronin provides input at the Cincinnati office.

Kaizen: Every office has made changes to the eligibility determination process as part of the Kaizen event. This is a work in progress that takes some getting used to, but Ohioans across the state are better served by the universal system that emerged from Kaizen and that's why we need to make it work.

Fee Schedule: The results of the current research comes to RSC at the end of May and then goes to the Joint Committee on Agency on Rule Review, (JCARR) for approval.



New VR Staff Training Graduates

Education: Local school spending on RSC consumers can be drawn for a Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) match if identified through RSC and education partnerships. This will not take additional dollars for the local school district but it will require flexibility, as job coaches introduced to the system through this process will have work rules that are outside the norm for other school personnel. The vision is that initial success will create a formula for statewide success.

National Council on Disability in Columbus

The new Employment First initiative is drawing enormous attention for Ohio. The National Council on Disability, a small, independent federal agency charged with advising the President, Congress, and other federal agencies regarding policies, programs, practices, and procedures that affect people with disabilities, held a luncheon at Goodwill headquarters in Columbus this week.

Our multi-agency plan to take Ohioans with disabilities from Individual Education Plan (IEP) to Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) was once again the topic of discussion. When the school to work transition goes from IEP to IPE and a young citizen with a disability is integrated into their community through a job, their level of independence rises and the costs to taxpayers falls markedly. Ohio's status as a near perfect bellwether for America has both the nation and the world watching our Employment First program.

Meeting a New Teammate

The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers (the Ohio Council) met with us at RSC headquarters this week. CEO Hubert Wirtz introduced us to new Associate Director Lori Criss. Mr. Wirtz and Ms. Criss represent 160 service providers who will be affected by the new RSC Fee Schedule. RSC is in the midst of research on how service providers establish their rates so our discussion was very timely. Moreover, the Ohio Council will be instrumental in communicating quickly and broadly the changes we make when our Fee Schedule is finalized.

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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