METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Friday April 12, 2019
9 am – 11am
The Arc Minnesota
2446 University Ave West, Suite 110
St. Paul, Minnesota
Hennepin/Ramsey Conference Room

In Attendance: Angie Guenther, Georgann Rumsey, Katie Elleraas, Ann Cirelli, Rod Carlson, Diane Sjolander, Erin Paredes, Joe Cuoco, Chelsea Lorenz, John Estrem, Judi Marie Ringe, Rhonda Godfrey, Robert Morneau, Rebecca St. Martin,
Interns: Justine Lindholm, Caitlin Curtis

Guests:
Beth Grube and Linda Wolford (DHS)

Purpose Statement: The purpose of the Regional Quality Council is to promote and connect communities so people have services and supports to live a life based on their hopes and dreams. The council will work together to continually monitor and improve the quality of services and supports for people with disabilities. The council seeks to improve person centered outcomes, quality of life indicators and to drive overall systems change.

1. Introductions/What's Happening?

- The council welcomed a new member, Judi Marie Ringe
- The MRQC Project Associate has been hired
- Council Updates and Announcements:
  - Ann mentioned that Access Press came out with their April edition – reviews what is happening at the Capitol regarding people with disabilities. Currently, there are several bills addressing mental health. John mentioned that NAMI Minnesota also provides legislative updates regarding mental health advocacy. Their legislative update comes out every Sunday afternoon.
    - Link to Access Press: https://www.accesspress.org/blog/category/features/
    - Link to NAMI legislative updates: https://namimn.org/advocacy-legislation/legislative-updates/
  - Reminder for members whose term is up in 2019 to be thinking about whether they would like to stay on the council, and if not, who will take their place. The end of the current term is June 30, 2019.

2. State Quality Council (SQC) Updates

- Still onboarding new members. The RQCs presented at the last State Quality Council meeting to inform new SQC members who the RQCs are, what they do, and how the two councils can work together.

3. Results of Self-Advocate Advisory Committee Meeting Results

- We wanted to connect with the Self-Advocacy Advisory Committee to let them know who we are as a council, who we serve, and what we do, as well as learn about their experiences and how they can be involved in the council's work.

- **Results of listening session:**
    - Money – people with disabilities need money and want to be paid.
    - They wanted more opportunities to develop and learn new skills to further their careers
    - Inclusion – they want to be fully included as part of a community. This looks like: teamwork, cooperation and collaboration, good relationships with coworkers, working together.
    - What makes work meaningful/successful:
    - Barriers to jobs: transportation (getting there on time, Metro Mobility, limited options in certain areas), disclosing disability, fear, employers not being willing to give individuals a chance, lack of support from employer to accommodate disability, changes in job coaches and supervisors, inconsistent instructions for job – not set up for success
    - Employment success stories: happy work environment, on the job for over a year, around a great group of people, work is rewarding because learning new skills
    - Employment First Policy: advocates did not know what this was.
    - Resources that helped advocates find work: short term job coach, long term job coach, online resources, phone calls to friends/networking, case managers.
    - What makes a bad resource: website is not accessible – application is online, layouts are not user-friendly, hard to navigate – too many windows, personality trait questions, questions are hard to answer and unable to edit answers
    - Who has helped: ILS worker, someone who knows you and/or is close to you, job placement person

- **The council had a discussion on defining Listening Sessions versus Focus Groups. The council came up with the following:**
    - **Listening Session:** Facilitators are more passive and focused on listening. The whole community is often invited. In listening sessions, we gather the concerns, issues, strengths, challenges. Listening sessions are broader and tend to have larger audiences. Listening sessions are usually the first step in the process.
    - **Focus Group**: Facilitators are more engaged and involved, and the conversation goes 2-ways. In focus groups, we work out the concerns, issues, strengths, and challenges mentioned in listening sessions. People in the community who are coming together and hashing out details. Focus groups are the second step in the process.
    - The council discussed that moving forward, we will focus more on holding focus groups to provide more specific direction for our work.

4. Discuss Options for Future Focus Groups

Small Group discussion, Topic: Employment

The Council broke into two small groups to discuss options for facilitating future focus groups with people with disabilities as well as with parents/family members.

- **Family members**
    - **Goals – What do we want to learn from these focus groups?** Find out what work and meaningful work look like to this group, best practices that support finding and maintaining meaningful work, barriers faced in finding and maintaining meaningful work – others?
        - Careful listening around fears
        - Listen/work to understand
        - Issue list/concerns of family members – acknowledge family members' expertise and ensure that they feel valued
    - **How do we reach this audience -** How do we reach people who need help but don't know how to get it, AND, how do we reach those people when we do not know who they are?
        - Connect with established groups with organizations or agencies

        - Provide readily available materials at locations almost everyone goes to such as doctor's offices, dentist offices, schools
        - Setting up meetings to occur just after people get off of work

- **Persons with disabilities**
    - **Goals – What do we want to learn from these focus groups?** Find out what work and meaningful work look like to this group, best practices that support finding and maintaining meaningful work, barriers faced in finding and maintaining meaningful work – others?
        - Would like to know if individuals are currently searching, are they aware of or using supports
        - Careful wording, sensitivity in questions – "What kind of problems do you want to solve?" "What do you want to get out of it?"
        - Do they have concerns about employment? Ex: transportation, benefits
        - What kinds of supports in a company would be helpful to you? What type of work culture do you look for?
        - What would make you feel included in a workplace?
        - Awareness of businesses that people with disabilities have tried to seek employment from/success stories/bad experiences – who and what they look like?
    - **How do we reach our intended audiences?** Do you know of anyone in your network that would be interested in participating?
        - Reaching out to programs being used, such as DT&H programs
        - Support planners, case managers, service providers, social workers
        - Use the connections of MRQC members

- **How do we connect with employers?**
    - Dakota County Employment Innovation – importance of going to service providers and providing education on how to reach out to companies about hiring people with disabilities.
    - Rod Carlson – mentioned that 3M had reached out. They asked if Living Well Disability Services had individuals interested in employment and how they could reach out to people with disabilities. Rod provided with resources on where/who to reach out to. Rod will send out information for the 3M contact.

5. Informed Choice Toolkit Session

Beth Grube and Linda Wolford from DHS gave a short presentation on the Informed Choice Toolkit, got council member feedback, and had time for Q and A

- Beth Grube is a benefits planning coordinator to help individuals understand their benefits when they go to work.
- Linda Wolford is an inter-agency coordinator. Linda works on the workforce shortage issues currently impacting our communities.

- The Informed Choice Toolkit was created in response to the Olmstead Act to help support planners ensure and document that people with disabilities are receiving informed choice.
- The current primary audience for the Informed Choice Toolkit is for people who work with people with disabilities, current feedback that the tool is not plain language. DHS would like to revamp revise the Toolkit to make it more user-friendly and plain language. Housing is also being added.
- DisabilityHubMN.org > Hub Partners > Work toolkit (on left-hand side) > Policy and Practice > Informed Choice (on right-hand side)
    - Implementation guide – guides support planners through the process of ensuring informed choice and gives background on policies, roles, etc.

        - Employment First, Person-Centered Planning, and Informed Choice
        - Framework and best practices
            - Meeting people where they are
            - Ensuring informed choice
            - Documentation
        - Implementation steps
            - 1. Engage and discover
            - 2. Plan
    - Holding Engaging Conversations about Work: provides questions for support planners to answer themselves before having conversations about work with the people they support.
        - On a continuum - how to have discussions about work when people are at different stages of engaging in employment
    - Work Experience Guide – provides examples of types of work experiences to help people understand their options
    - "Build Your Dream" – Building a budget to help people plan for their futures
- Housing Benefits 101 – https://mn.hb101.org and Disability Benefits 101 – https://mn.db101.org
    - My Vault – store tools, documents, build contact list, share information (for both DB101 and HB101)
    - Benefits lookup – get a report from MN of benefits person has

Feedback:

- Want someone to prove that I am not going to lose my benefits, waiver, SSI if I get a job
- Best practice for case managers/support planners to walk through DB101 with people they support if able, or connect to person who can walk them through it (Disability Hub, benefit coaches – Center for Independent Living)
- Type of benefits influence work incentives – importance of benefits planning and ensuring individuals have a clear picture of what this will look like. Can use benefits lookup on DB101
- Consider other family member's benefits and not just the person with the disability
- Ensuring that support planners have the resources they need and/or know how to get the information
- Disability-specific job site? There will not be a site that list job openings specific to only people with disabilities. Instead, utilize resources such as Vocational Rehab, employment providers/services to help with job searching.
- App format – relevant information is easily accessible with links to more detailed information
- Can only use toolkit if person has access to a computer/Wi-Fi
- YouTube videos – short videos with visuals
- Interactive quiz to help people navigate site/next steps instead of searching through entire site for information

Connect700 – available for people who want a state job, non-competitive interviews, must be certified eligible for program

6. What's Working/What's Not

- **Working**:
    - Technology/video conference went much better
    - Breaking into smaller groups to discuss topics
    - Name tags
    - Sticking to the agenda
    - Interaction with group

        - Being heard
        - Good content
        - Bringing in DHS for feedback
        - Starting to unpack the complicated aspects of employment – good start
    - **Not Working:**
        - Sometimes it seems like there's no defined plan of what we're doing in terms of steps to a final product
        - Small groups and DHS presentation may have been too much for 1 meeting
        - More time for DHS
        - I still think we need to come at it from both ends – employer-potential employee

Next Meeting – May 10th, 2019, 9am-11am