METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Friday February 12, 2021
9 am – 11am
The Arc Minnesota
2446 University Ave West, Suite 110
St. Paul, Minnesota
Zoom

Purpose Statement: The purpose of the Regional Quality Council is to connect with and promote all communities of people with disabilities so that services and supports help them 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.

In attendance: Angie Guenther, Tayler Guccione, Jeffrey Nurick, Chelsea Lorenz, Diane Sjolander, Dr. Mohamed Mourssi-Alfash, Erin Paredes, Judi Marie Ringe, Buff Hennessey, Rhonda Godfrey, Tim Sullivan, Dr. Frank Kadwell, Bradford Teslow, Rachel Garaghty, Kyle Dennis, Katie Elleraas
Intern: Maykala Owens
Guest: Brian Nolan, Arc MN Advocacy Intern

1. **Introductions/What's Happening?**
   - Mary Gaasch has stepped down from the MRQC because of a change in job duties. As a council, we can discuss what we would like to do regarding her seat when we know more about what our future looks like.
   - We are getting close to finalizing the support staff quality improvement project. The workgroup will be looking at the Hammer data today, looking for best practices and areas for improvement.
   - The employment workgroup has narrowed down its list of employers and today will be finalizing goals and approaches for their quality improvement project.
   - Next Culture of Safety Data Action Group meeting is March 24th from 9am-11am

2. **Discuss Governor Walz's Budget Proposal**
   - The Governor's budget was released January 27, and as a cost-savings measure, proposes that the appropriation for the State Quality Council be eliminated, which impacts the funding for the regional quality councils.
     - You can find the change page for this budget proposal on page 162 of the HHS section https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/documents/budget/2022-23-biennial-budget-books/governors-recommendations-january/human-services.pdf

- For reference, you can read more about Statue 256B.097 here: https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/256B.097

- Currently untouched are the Regional Centers for Excellence and Culture of Safety – they are committed to our partnership and there may be other avenues to keep this work going (data action groups).
- We have funding through our current contract, ending June 28, 2021
  - Lobbying that dollars for the RQC's come from the supplemental budget. No lobbying for funding for the SQC, instead DHS would work directly with the RQC's

    Current budget is $165,055 per RQC
- Grassroots effort to – sharing importance of our work and why funding should continue
  - Sent letter to key members on the Health and Human Services Reform Finance and Policy Committees
  - Meeting with various representatives and senators to update them on the great work we have been doing.
  - Met with DHS and their legislative staff to discuss budget proposal and steps moving forward.

    Problems with legislation- it is outdated and SQC/RQC do not have alternative licensing authority due to 245D. Discussed a possible amendment to the bill budget and work on updating the bill language for 2022.
  - **RQC Statewide Meeting on March 17th from 12:30-2pm**

    A rough agenda is below (more details to come):
    - Introductions
    - Overview of Governor Walz's budget recommendation and steps already taken by RQC staff and leadership
    - Breakout into regions for power mapping and brainstorming
    - Large group share out of strategies and next steps
  - If you have legislators who serve on the critical committees such as the Health and Human Services Reform Finance and Policy Committee, please reach out to Angie.

3. **Workgroups in Breakout Rooms**
   - **Employment**
     - **What is the purpose and goal of this project? We know we want to improve employment outcomes and experiences but what will our specific ask be for these employers?**

       Define employment more – community-based employment, making a livable wage

       We Work videos were used for public education and outreach

       Trainings – help employer train programs
       - Help employers understand best practices
       - Other orgs already developing and offering trainings (DEED)
       - Train the trainer format
       - Assess how training programs address the needs of people with disabilities – provide recommendations

       Consider hiring people with disabilities as an asset, positive, and possible
       - Learn about perceptions and experiences
       - Learn about the need, potential of these applicants

- Address "tunnel vision" – highlight skills and job preferences outside of the "3 F's" (Filing, Filth, and Food)
- Not an act of charity but a smart business decision - Have and can learn skills to address workforce shortage
  - Bigger than Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) – people who can fill a need, meet the bottom line
  - Marketing strategy to convince employers to work with us (do not have authority)

Mindful of corporate employers – already have Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies and are happy with where they are at

- Do and assessment of the effectiveness of the current policies and practices to determine where they need support
  - Consider both quantity (number of people with disabilities employed) and quality of their employment (turnover, satisfaction, etc.)
- Level of ineffectiveness within their DEI work – specifically for people with disabilities
- **Action step:** research existing DEI assessments
  - http://www.d5coalition.org/tools/dei-self-assessment-survey/
  - Address training needs of people with disabilities?

Promote legislative action

Who else has done similar work with employers? Don't want to re-create the wheel

- Partner with other orgs – who?
  - MN APSE, MN CCD, MN Disability In
- **Action step:** do research on existing work in this area
  - MN Council on Developmental Disabilities
  - University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration (ICI)
  - DEED/VRS – State Rehabilitation Council

- **What prep work needs to be done? Do we need to develop any materials before we reach out?**

Strong marketing plan to go to businesses

- Partnerships
- How does this impact you financially?
  - Tax break incentives, payroll model, maximize profit
  - Productivity – getting good employees to help meet bottom line
  - Economic gifts of diversity – impact org
- Philanthropic "boast" – social responsibility, social image
- **Action step:** do some research on other marketing efforts

Employment Action steps:

Angie - Narrow scope of employers, prioritize top 1-2 next steps through survey

Angie – outreach to see what other orgs/groups are doing around this work

Mohamed and all - do some research on other marketing efforts

- **Support Staff**
  - **Discuss best practices and improvement areas in Hammer Data.**

Best practices in recruitment and retention that were discussed:

- Flexible schedules

- Realistic job previews- Both
- Employee referral program
- Effective onboarding and training- Both
- Relationships (enjoying working with the individuals they support)
- Staff recognition

Areas for improvement in recruitment and retention that were discussed:

- Including people receiving services in the hiring process
- Mentoring program
- Tracking DSP turnover and tenure
- Person-centeredness
- Behavioral-trait interviewing
- Advancement
- Communication and relationships with coworkers and supervisors

o Tayler will prioritize the hammer recommendations and send a draft of the report to support staff workgroup by 2/17 for feedback.

4. **Large group share out**
   - Angie: A lot of the employment workgroup's discussion was around our known timeline – most of our potential projects would take longer than the duration of our current contract. Our main priority right now is connecting with employers to improve employment experience and outcomes for people with disabilities – a focus on both quantity and quality. May do this through collaboration or a targeted media campaign. Our group will vote on next steps – updates to come.
   - Tayler: Support staff workgroup walked through the Hammer data and discussed the best practices and areas for improvement. A large theme the workgroup noted was how important communication, building relationships and person-centeredness is to the recruitment and retention of quality support staff. MRQC staff will be developing a report to send to the support staff workgroup by 2/17 for feedback.
   - Kyle: Sent the de-identified report and recommendations for Living Well Disability Services to individuals at DHS. Next Wednesday, will be participating in a workgroup and sharing the work we have been doing around support staff. Hopefully will have updates at the next MRQC meeting

5. **What's Working/What's Not**

Working:
Leadership of Angie and Tayler. You both are very good at what you do.
Workgroup was very productive
Shorter introductions
Great organization
Tayler's mad Excel skills. It actually saves us time when we meet as a small group.

What is not working:
The uncertainty of our future
Nothing (3)

Next Meeting: March 12th, 2021 from 9:00 – 11:00am