METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 10, 2025 from 9-11am

The Regional Quality Councils shall:
1. Support efforts and initiatives that drive overall systems and social change to promote inclusion of people who have disabilities in the state of Minnesota
2. Improve person-centered outcomes in disability services; and
3. Identify or enhance quality of life indicators for people who have disabilities.

Meeting Attendance

Attendees: Robin, Mohamed, Christina, Yue, Wu, Cassie, Judy Marie, Daironne, Lynn

Staff Attendees: JoAnn, Sophie, Caption, Kerri

Meeting Overview

1. **Introductions**
2. **Updates**
   - **Housing Workgroup Update (JoAnn)**

     Current actions:
     - Meet with The Arc MN housing services staff to discuss further housing ideas and improving the Housing Resources website.
     - Supporting legislative agenda item to stop landlord Source of Income discrimination of housing applicants.
3. **Break Time**
4. **Workgroups**
   - **Culture of Safety Workgroup**

     This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet the first Thursday of each month from 9-11am. To find out more about Culture of Safety and its purpose, go to the Culture of Safety website on DHS.

     Toni, the facilitator created a doodle poll that outlined some Thursday options throughout the month- **First Thursdays 9a-11a, Second Thursdays I can be flexible with 12-2, 1-3, or 1:30-3:30p, or Fourth Thursdays 9a-11a**. Please use the link and vote on all

of the options that work. Once the vote is in, we will move forward and schedule for February 2025 and beyond.

When a date and time is chosen, JoAnn will create a new MRQC Culture of Safety monthly zoom invitation for 2025 once we decide on an ideal day and time.

- **Staffing (DSPs & PCAs) Shortage Workgroup (Kerri)**
  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet the fourth Thursday of each month from 11am-12:30pm.
  The next meeting is **Thursday, January 23rd from 11am-12:30pm.**
  Join Zoom Meeting
  https://arcminnesota.zoom.us/j/87154192462?pwd=aDE2YnBUcVR1S2dvc0NzOUpFWCt5dz09
  Meeting ID: 871 5419 2462
  Passcode: 266371

Other Things to Share & Reminders

- **The platform for virtual meetings and events will change in March 2025 from Zoom to Microsoft Teams.**

Employment Workgroup

Ideas for 2025:

1. **Subminimum wage phase out progress-**
   The Arc MN is working on this. According to the Arc MN's Gene Martinez, Before January 17, 2025 an opportunity exists to advocate for phasing out Section 14c Subminimum Wage certificates at the federal level by responding to a request for comments from the U.S. Department of Labor.
   How to write and submit a comment: https://arcminnesota.org/how-to-write-a-comment-to-dol/
2. **Providing support to employment service providers-**
   - ✓ Robin mentioned Hennepin, Washington and Scott Counties have started a mini workgroup to strategize ways to engage more providers into providing quality employment services. For example, helping providers get more training, such as custom employment and culturally specific services. Many providers listed as being 245D licensed are also listed as providing employment services. However, they don't know how to provide employment services. The workgroup haven't made much progress yet since they just began. But the goal is to identify ideas on how to support more employment providers.
   - ✓ Robin will gives us more ideas on how the MRQC can help after she attends the next mini workgroup meeting

- **Survey providers to find out what supports they need-**
  - ✓ Email providers and ask them to attend an MRQC meeting. The providers can tell us what to include in the survey and help us come up with questions. Like for example: What are the challenges?
    Questions to propose:

How are services going to change due to subminimum wage changes? How are they going to help pwds find jobs when subminimum wage ends? How is transportation going to be impacted by changes? Will providers still provide transport? Many minimum and subminimum wage jobs are entry level, how will providers shift to provide job opportunities that require higher skills? How will they accommodate for varying job schedules that fall outside traditional work hours? What about natural supports? How do we get HR more involved? Who will provide funding for services, VRS, waivers? What about long-term supports?

- ✓ Email providers such as:
  - Workability- Lynn has connections, contacting Luana Ball lball@workabilities.org
  - MCIL-
  - Lifeworks- since they currently offer both subminimum and minimum wage employment service job opportunities, it would be nice to learn about both types.

- **How are part-time workers and day program attendees accounted for in employment data?**
  - ✓ Many pwds who used to earn subminimum wage either don't work, attend day programs, or work in the community for minimum wage part-time. For those working part-time, they often attend day programs also. But day programs don't offer that work component pwds used to get with subminimum wage. If subminimum goes away, how will providers fill in for the work component lacking in day programs? Are pwds who work part-time and those who attend day programs being accounted for in employment data statistics? If so, how are they being accounted for? There are varying types and levels and types of employment and it isn't an all or none situation.
- **How waiver employment services are funded currently-**
  - ✓ Waiver funded services offers 3 levels of employment support.
    Employment exploration- help pwds decide if they want to work and what would that look like
    Find employment- help pwds get a job (resumes, interviews, etc.,)
    Ongoing support- help mediate (talk to supervisors, provide accommodations, etc.)
  - ✓ Barriers within waiver services- getting paid daily rate isn't feasible due to varying work schedules. The schedules and times people work can vary a lot and aren't very compatible with providers. Providers don't get paid when the people they support aren't working.
- **Contact those who know more about employment-**
  - ✓ Contact Cole Sorensen – he is knowledgeable in all things employment related like data and information about providers.
  - ✓ Reach out to Jeff Daiker from Scott County (jdaiker@co.scott.mn.us). He is heavily involved in increasing employment supports. He supports the idea of a tiered rate system for providers who are under waiver services
  - ✓ Connect with Amelia S. who is already a council member.

Current Employment Project Ideas:

3. **Make an appearance on "Job Match Makers" (click on blue link) podcast**
   Sophie and Daironne have volunteered to attend on Friday, February 28 from 10am-11:30pm.
   Additional meetings will be scheduled for the volunteers to discuss it further.
   Kerri will check with Stacy from DHS to get approval.
   The podcast will take place at the Kaposia office in Little Canada.
   The recording booth has room for 2 guest speakers. Not hybrid but in person.
   Outline:
   - ✓ Intro of guest speaker
   - ✓ Guest speaker's background
   - ✓ How their life relates to employment and disability
   - ✓ Advise for listeners
4. **Create Action Alert- support ERAF continuation**
   Add this to employment workgroup page
   The Employment Reimbursement Accommodation Fund pilot program is ending in July 2025. If we want to see it continue, we can take action to show support for its continuation.
   Some ideas mentioned:
   - ✓ Connect with ERAF coordinator and ask what the status of ERAF is currently
   - ✓ Share ERAF information with Kerri, perhaps other councils want to help
   - ✓ Share ERAF information with Gene and Tina

Transportation Workgroup

Attendance: Lynn, Mohamed, Daironne, Yue Wu, Christina, Judi Marie, Cassie

Transportation Project Ideas:

- Create Action Alert: Showing support for continuation of the Free Fare Pilot program
- Create a transportation workgroup page on the MRQC website.
  Containing tools to make it easier for advocates to show support for the causes they want enacted to their legislators.
  - ✓ letter template and post on our new workgroup page.
  - ✓ Create a link to legislative map so advocates can find their reps
  - ✓ Ask referrals they can support this if they wish and give them tools.
  - ✓ Providing testimonies, stories, writing support letters to law makers during active session.
- **Schedule TCAP meeting in January**
  Sophie will be communicating with the TCAP people to determine when a good time would best work for them to present. It will likely be sometime in January or February. Then, Sophie will send out a doodle poll to ask MRQC folks to solidify a date. Sophie hopes the presentation can be recorded in case people can't make it.