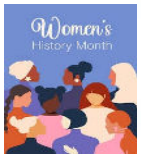

METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 13th, 2026, from 9-10am

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: Cassie, Becky Rother, Judi Marie, Lynn, Amelia D, Mohamed, Diane, Frank

Staff Attendees: JoAnn, Sophie, Kerri

Meeting Overview

1.Introduction

2. Workgroups Updates

- **Culture of Safety Workgroup**
  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet on the second Thursday of each month from 1-3pm.
  The next meeting is Friday, March 20th from 11am-1pm.
- **Staffing Shortage Workgroup (Big Group)**
  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet on the fourth Thursday of each month from 11am-12:30pm.
  The next meeting is Thursday, March 26th from 11am-12:30pm.
  Released a teaser video and first 3 videos, posted on the RQC YouTube channel

To watch the videos, visit https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzjP45LzMKwiF0MRNzzjoMW3LWWuvv78P

- **Staffing (DSPs & PCAs) Shortage Workgroup (Small Group)**
  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet every Thursday to make progress on short videos aimed at helping DSPs advocate for their needs. The videos will cover topics such as: What does advocacy mean? How to connect with your legislators? How to tell your story? etc.
  If you wish to join, contact an MRQC staff member.
  The next meeting is Thursday, March 19th from 9-10am

Employment Workgroup

Employment Services Survey Project

Goal: Survey Employment Services providers and employees to find out what barriers they face when providing services to people with disabilities.

One of the many barriers faced by providers and DSPs was transportation services and the inability to bill for it under Medical Assistance. To gain a better understanding, Cassie referred us to Sharla (supervisor of fiscal policy of disability services of DHS) who explained the process providers are supposed to go through in order to bill for transportation services provision. It is a process that specifies rate%s for each service. With this new information, perhaps there is a disconnect/miscommunication between providers and the information they need to know to bill for services or perhaps the rate$% amounts are not enough? Since we don't know, one idea is to ask providers to explain in more detail the barriers they face. It was suggested we should connect with MOHR on this issue.

Ideas:

- Reach out to provider agencies to ask them to give more specifics about the barriers they face.
  Agencies such as MSS, Kaposia, Rise, Opportunity Partners, etc.
  Schedule individual meetings with each agency
- Come up with a list of questions by looking back on the answers submitted by agencies and asking them to explain further
- **Questions to ask Provider Agencies?**

Transportation Workgroup

Transportation Resources Flyers

- Created flyers and QR for transportation resources site
  Ideas
- Connect with TCAPS to update transportation flyers
- Share our flyers and guides with disability advocacy and disability service groups.
- Also share collab with Claire from TCAP Hennepin on the flyers.

Collab with ICI and their "Ready to Ride" project

The MRQC maintains communication with Brian Abery from the UofM's ICI about how the MRQC can help ICI with their project. The project is a collaboration with other Universities. Besides the MRQC, Region 10 RQC is also partnering with ICI on this project along with ACT (Advocating Change Together).

How can the MRQC help?

Collect recommendations about transportation from people with disabilities to add to their training curriculum materials.

Method of collecting recommendations:

- Ask (email) referrals with lived experiences to offer recommendations
- Reach out to Transition Programs
  Goal: Coordinate listening sessions to ask recommendations from students
  School Districts interested:
  - School district 197 (West Saint Paul)
  - School district 622 (North Saint Paul)
  - Minneapolis Public Schools (maybe)

  Next steps:

  - Create list of questions to ask students

Sample Questions

1. How you get to places you need and want to go in the community? And what are the different types of public transportation you use? (examples: list types of transportation- bus, car, uber, taxi, family members who drive, scooters, bikes)
2. What are your fears and or hesitancies about using public transportation? (examples: safety, getting lost, cost, navigating routes, etc.)

3. What opportunities do you miss because of not having the kind of transportation you need? (examples: watching movies with friends, going to work, attending church, visiting friends and family, shopping, etc.)
4. What do you feel is a barrier or missing in public transportation?
   (example: costs, service hours, route options, customer service, lack of experience, no one to teach me how to use it, accessibility and use of equipment, safety)
5. What type of support/training would help you feel more confident in using public transportation?

Additional Questions

1. Can I get to where I want to go when I want to go and be able to return?
(example: going shopping at Target and returning home)

2. Is the ride on time?
(I you want to attend a movie and need to be there at a certain time not too early or too late)

3. What transportation options do you know about currently?

4. Do you want to drive and if so how to get assessed for it?
(a waiver can help pay for assessments)
If you aren't able to drive, what do you want to happen that would fulfill your driving needs?

Approach to asking questions

- Visit classrooms
  - form focus groups of 6 students each
    focus groups can foster organic conversations based on people's responses
  - recruit volunteers to facilitate focus groups
  - ICI and RQC staff can help facilitate focus groups
- Get approval from schools about this approach
- Write a letter to parents explaining the approach
- Translate questions and letter to parents into different languages so it be accessible to non-English readers
- Money is needed to translate documents, but Brain knows some translation services that can give us a major discount
  We might have 3k to spend on projects that we can use in the next 6 months
- Email the council asking if they are okay with spending money translating documents

- The information we get from the focus groups will be made into 1pagers so they can be given to parents, and whoever else
- We can use the information we get from the focus groups for:
  - ICI usage
  - Informing transit services about what pwds need
  - Educating legislators about transit services

Additional ideas and questions to think about

- How to reach more people so we can gather more answers?
- How to reach the right people to ask questions?
- Perhaps our target is people who are
  - Aren't aware/experienced/educated about public transportation
  - hesitant to use public transportation
  - face barriers to accessing public transportation

  which likely would be young people but not necessarily

- Becky can use the questions and ask them to the people Rise serve
- If you live in the suburbs, most public transport just go downtown or downtown hubs and transfer stations, not from suburb to suburb or if it does, it's extremely difficult and requires many transfers (example: going from Plymouth to Maple Grove)
- Courage Kenny and Health Partners do driving assessments and also makes adaptations to cars
- https://www.allinahealth.org/-/media/allina-health/files/business-units/courage-kenny-rehabilitation-institute/programs-and-services/ckri-dat-brochure.pdf
- Diane offered a contact- Kathy Woods, OTR/L, CDRS, LDI Supervisor supporting:
  - Driver assessment and training | Allina Health
  - Vocational Services | Equal Employment Opportunities | Allina Health
  - Extended Employment | Equal Employment Opportunities | Allina Health
  - Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Services (part of Allina Health)
  - Phone: 612-775-2829 • Fax: 612-262-6737 • Kathy.Woods@allina.com
    Mail Route:78404 • 3915 Golden Valley Road • Minneapolis, MN 55422
    Driver assessment and training | Allina Health