METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL Minutes

Friday, November 14th, 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: Benjamin, Cassie, Rod (9-10), Robyn, Frank (9-10am), Diane, Mohamed, Lynn, Judi Marie,

Staff Attendees: JoAnn, Sophie, Kerri, Diana, Cortney

Meeting Overview

1. Introductions

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.
  Their next meeting is **Thursday, December 11th from 1-3pm.**
  Join zoom meeting
  https://arcminnesota.zoom.us/j/87931714598?pwd=J3UWuLFrAlr1mSVbNZFGayJ3Gwwnlx.1
- **Staffing (DSPs & PCAs) Shortage Workgroup**
  This workgroup meets separately outside of monthly council meetings. They meet on the fourth Thursday of each month from 11am-12:30pm.

Their next 2 meetings are cancelled.
They will resume meetings starting January 2026. The MRQC staff will keep you updated on their schedule.

Employment Workgroup

Human Resources Project

Goal: Collaborating with faculty from colleges and universities to create learning opportunities for their students and staff so they can become more educated about people with disabilities and their potential as future employees.

- **Normandale Presentations**
  Lynn shared about her experience presenting at Normandale Community College. They presented to teachers and staff. It was cool because attendees could log-in virtually or be in the classroom. As part of her presentation, Lynn demonstrated some of the accommodation tools she uses, such as keyboards, scissors, reachers, etc. A few of the attendees, who also had disabilities related to what she was talking about.
- **Updates**
  Inver Hills Community College and Metro State University want to meet with us. If you are interested in taking part, please let an MRQC staff know.
  - 12/2/25 from 11am-12pm, we are meeting with Jeremy from Inver Hills Community College.

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.

- **Actions taken:**
  Officially partnered with Hennepin County and Dakota County
  MRQC staff started emailing the surveys
  Help by sharing the links to the surveys and flyers posted on the MRQC employment workgroup page on the RQC website.

Transportation Workgroup

Transportation Project Ideas:

1. **Feedback for Premium on Demand**
   To learn more,
   visit https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmetroc

ouncil.org%2FTransportation%2FServices%2FMetro-Mobility-Home.aspx&data=05%7C02%7CRobin.Rohr%40hennepin.us%7Ca69ff10dcecd4d01631408ddf0add60a%7C8aefdf9f878046bf8fb74c924653a8be%7C0%7C0%7C638931351608040731%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2B%2FVFANkcqB2jq1OjW%2B%2FcSZx%2FjQtZ2UgECv6yh6SCAfY%3D&reserved=0

Basic Background

It differs from Metro Mobility because it works more like a taxi service and offers same day booking and ride services and also extended hours. There are 3 companies providing services such as ihale and Lyft. Ben explained riders pay the first $5, then the program pays the next $20. Anything more than that, the rider pay the remainder. One example of a ride is from downtown Saint Paul to the airport (close to the Mall of America). This ride costs around $5 and the amount is set.
The program offers different service support options depending on the rider's need. For example, extra support can be offered to wheelchair users and less support if riders don't need them.

There is one caveat and that is that providers can't bill directly because providers aren't enrolled as a MN healthcare provider and the reimbursement rate isn't worth it. So, it's a problem for waiver holders.

How can the MRQC help?

- Ben suggests we should help promote transportation programs and indicate who qualifies for them.
- Connect with TCAPS to update transportation flyers
- Create updated 1-page flyers or guides with links and QR codes to our transportation resources website (within the Employment Resources site)
- Share our flyers and guides with disability advocacy and disability service groups.
- Also share collab with Claire from TCAP Hennepin on the flyers.

2. **Potential participation in ICI project**

Brian Abery from ICI who is involved in this project came to our meeting and presented information about "Ready to Ride".

Basic Information

This is a 5-year project in the planning with 3 of the 5 years focused on training. It's mostly training groups of 14 students or 1to1 for students who need individual attention. It only focuses on fixed routes bus routes.

- Region 10 RQC is already participating in this project, and Linda Dreisen is their project leader. They help Identify peer trainers and staff trainers. Dan will be the staff counselor, and a Region 10 council member will be a peer trainer.
- **How can the MRQC help?**
    - MRQC can help recruit riders and program participants
    - MRQC can help make recommendations about what topics to train about. For example, Lynn suggested riders should learn about their rights and how to advocate for themselves.
    - When making recommendations, we should email them to Brian and CC Kerri and Sophie.
    - Sophie was part of a research project with PCORI
    - ICI is in charge of interviewing project participants.
    - Acting Together for Change (ATC) will help recruit trainers.

3. **More Information** (courtesy of Sophie)

Ready to Ride Project

Brief Overview: The Ready to Ride project, funded by PCORI, aims to improve transportation skills for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The study compares peer support and traditional staff-led training methods on outcomes like loneliness, social participation, and transportation skills. It involves four sites: Minnesota, Philadelphia, Florida, and New England, with 325 participants aged 18-27. The project spans five years, including a preparation phase, three years of training, and a final year for sustainability. Both staff and peer supporters receive extensive training. The project emphasizes community inclusion and will recruit participants from transition programs and community organizations.

Introduction to the Ready to Ride Project

• The Ready to Ride Project is funded by PCORI, focusing on young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The full project is titled "Comparing peer support and staff-delivered transportation interventions for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities." You can access the project details on PCORI's website here: https://www.pcori.org/research-results/2024/comparing-peer-support-and-staff-delivered-transportation-interventions-young-adults-intellectual-and-developmental-disabilities-loneliness-social-participation-and-transportation-skills

• The goal is to improve personalized instruction on public transportation use, addressing limited access and community participation. The project emphasizes the importance of travel training for safe and independent transportation use.

Project Goals and Methodology

• The project aims to test two types of travel training: traditional staff-led and peer-led. The Research project highlights the need for community-based training and the benefits of peer support. The research questions focus on the effectiveness of peer support versus traditional staff training and the challenges faced by community service organizations.

• The study will be conducted in collaboration with two community organizations: Advocating Change Together (ACT) and ARC Minnesota. South East RQCs have already agreed to recruit as well as lead the training with peer support trainer in Rochester area. Linda Driessen (SE RQC Coordinator) and Lexi Dunn (Self Advocate on SE RQC) are assisting in that work.

Implementation and Participation

• The project will include 325 young adults aged 18 to 27 from four different regions: Minnesota, Philadelphia, Florida, and New England. First they complete single-IRB submission process (Temple University primary IRB) and obtain University of Minnesota approval; ensure partner organizations are included in approvals.

• The project will be conducted over five years, with the first year focused on preparation and the next three years on training and evaluation. The project will start to recruit participants in May, and the council can definitely be involved in providing feedback on recruitment materials.

• The final year will focus on sustainability and expansion of the program.

• Coordinate selection of instructor and peer supporter candidates with community service organizations (Advocating Change Together and Arc Minnesota Southeast) and confirm identified trainers in Rochester and metro sites.

• Provide intensive instructor training this spring for staff trainers and peer supporters (16–20 hours plus additional ~16 hours for peer supporters) and schedule related training logistics.

• Researchers to screen potential participants, obtain informed consent, and conduct baseline (pre-test) assessments prior to randomization.

• Participants will be randomly assigned to either peer support or staff training conditions.

• The project will recruit individuals from transition programs and the community, ensuring they meet federal criteria for intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Outcomes and Evaluation

• The project will evaluate outcomes such as transportation skills, social connectedness, community participation, and access to health services.

• The study will also assess the impact on employment, service use, and the expansion of transportation skills.

Q&A Session and Additional Details

• How will recruit people with disabilities who utilize transportation be done? The project will have collaboration with community service organizations.

• Is there an option of becoming a peer support specialist? People who participate in the peer support side of the project will have an opportunity to receive peer support training.

• Will the right legal and ethical standards be met with the research project as well as going through the IRB? the role of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the importance of informed consent is of top priority with this project and the 130 page project proposal is carefully reviewed by the IRB as well as assuring legal and ethical standards are met.

Community Involvement and Future Plans

•The project will highlight the importance of community involvement and the potential for policy changes to support public transportation for people with disabilities.