**METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**
**Friday March 13th, 2020**
**9 am – 11am**
**The Arc Minnesota**
**2446 University Ave West, Suite 110**
**St. Paul, Minnesota**
**Hennepin/Ramsey Conference Room**

***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, Jeffrey Nurick, Tayler Guccione, Ann Cirelle, Paris Gatlin, Rebecca St Martin, Diane Sjolander, Katie Elleraas, Erin Parades, Judi Marie Ringe, Chelsea Lorenz, and Tim Sullivan

**Interns:** Emily Van Krevelen

1. **Introductions/What's Happening?**

**Updates and announcements**

- There were two employment focus groups held in February with a total of 10 participants. Makes 7 total employment focus groups with 65 total participants.
- Planning on holding 2 focus groups to evaluate the DB101 estimator tool in April. Still need more participants for one group. An email will be sent out in the future with the date and time for this focus group to hopefully get more people to sign up. The aim is to have five to six participants in each group.
    - Update: These focus groups are on hold due to COVID-19
- Angie and Tayler went to a job seeker panel put on by Inclusive Networking. The panel had people with disabilities who consider their work to be meaningful employment. Metro-RQC will hopefully be partnering with them in the future with and employer panel
- Have completed 16 informational interviews with employers. Will be reviewing this data next meeting as a group.

2. **Discuss Future work**

**Results from survey (in order of priority: 1 being highest, 6 being lowest):**

1. Support Staff Crisis
2. Areas outlined in annual report such as housing or transportation
3. Community engagement and collaboration
4. Support people through changes of services
5. Follow ups on Person-Centered Plans
6. Vet legislative priorities for different groups

- Majority voted to extend the meeting until noon

**Next steps, group conversation:**

- **When you think of Metro-Regional Quality Council, what word or phrase do you think of?**

  - Collaboration
  - Strategic impact
  - Helping others
  - Quality improvement (2)
  - Nobody knows who we are or what we do
  - Working together
  - Intent is different than what we do
  - Potential to make a difference
  - Systematic quality improvement

- **What surprised about the results of the survey?**
  - Not surprised
  - Pleased the council picked the staffing support crisis as the number one priority since it impacts every aspect of people's lives

- **Where were the results very clear?**
  - Priorities of the council are clear from the survey
  - The ranking helps council decide on future work

- **Any areas where you were confused?**
  - Talked about VA vs. Vetting (vetting was talked about on survey, not VA)
  - Talked about what community engagement means. Includes collaborations done internally through The Arc, possibly making small groups to specifically engage with the community, connecting intentionally with diverse groups and people that tend to fall through the cracks in the community, etc.

- **What decisions do we need to make today as a group?**
  - Start with number one (support staff crisis) and work our way through the list that was created
  - Agree on meeting time extended an hour and what our priority would be (staffing crisis)

- Deciding what small groups could take on, what the next steps are, and what Angie and Tayler need to do
- The need of a break if meetings are extended to noon.
- Support staff includes all direct service professionals

- **What changes do we need to make?**
  - Shift the perspective about support staff: Making it known as a profession, which includes increase in wages
  - Continue to focus on employment, find and analyze data found from interviews. Deciding what to do with this information (ex. Finding ways to support employers and providing them with necessary resources to continue to employ and support people with disabilities)
  - Splitting up into groups- want to ensure adequate representation in each group
    - Rebecca St Martin is taking ownership of inviting more people with disabilities to join the council.
  - Define what the council's scope is. What is in the capacity of the council and what is not. The capacity for Angie, Tayler, and interns is limited.
  - Extend meeting times to allow for time both in large group and small group
  - Working remotely in groups: there are multiple rooms that host Zoom
  - The Opportunity to impact the employment arena. Not in our scope to change the wage for support staff at legislative level (may support existing efforts).
  - Things we can control: looking into the lack of training for staff, lack of quality staff, or ways to help staff to stay in professions

**Next meeting-**

- Meeting 9:00am-12:00pm
- **To do: Analyze the data found from the informational interviews with employers**

**3. Presentation – Rebecca St. Martin**

- Sharing experience from the 2019 Age and Disabilities Odyssey conference
- Thoughts about Interactive quiz:
  - Questions that state, "I believe all…" changed how people answered the questions
  - Questions that say "should" are not promoting Person-Centered practices
  - Answering questions with anything less than "absolutely" would be considered a bias
  - Case managers at Dakota County do the same quiz to show how their biases may limit the services they offer to their clients
  - Bias are unavoidable, but can be problematic since it keeps people from opportunities and resources.
- Think about a dream you had when someone shot it down or you had the idea that you couldn't do something. Where did these ideas come from?

- Thinking about people with disabilities finding employment- thoughts “it’s going to be hard work” or “they cannot do it”
- “If you say you can’t, you won’t. If you say you can, you will.”
- Making progress: Shifting from people with disabilities cannot work to people with disabilities may be able to work

**Communication project - Olmsted office**

- Wanted to hire a photographer (paid) to take pictures of people with disabilities (volunteer).
- Rebecca asked why did the photographer not get their picture taken… Demonstrates how people do not even consider that the photographer could be a person with a disability and that people with disabilities are assumed to volunteer their time and expertise when able-bodied people would expect to be paid.

**Employment first legislation: prioritizing employment for people with disabilities**

- Rebecca described the counter-argument: Some people don’t have employment as their first priority. It is an attempt to convert people to become W-2 workers. Learning about the work experience for people with disabilities without knowing if their basic needs are met.
- Should be meeting people where they are at is a person-centered practice.
- Many barriers for people with disabilities to find and maintain employment.
- Think of people with disabilities in more powerful positions. See them as business owners, as executive directors, etc.
- Dependency: everyone experiences dependencies - People in council are dependent on an alarm clock to wake up since we are considered unable to wake up by ourselves.

**Council members were challenged to do one of the following for next meeting:**

**First Challenge:** Reflect on and tell us about a DEPENDENCY you didn’t realize you had in order to get to your job or for you to do your work. Who or what do you rely on that makes things go relatively smoothly?

**Second challenge:** People with disabilities are ALREADY stepping into ownership and employer roles. Do a little research to find a business or non-profit operated by a person with disabilities in Minnesota -- where they are the owner or leader of that entity. And then tell us about them and what they are doing!

## 5. What’s Working/What’s Not Working

**Working:**

- Zoom was easy to use
- Staying home the best option given the current situation (2)
- I really liked the way the meeting went (2)
- Angie did a great job (2)
- Everyone’s patience (2)

- This meeting was SO MUCH EASIER ALL AROUND to hear people. I can hear everyone SO CLEARLY when they dial in remotely!!! This was the best, easiest meeting yet.

**Not Working**

- Hard to hear some members
- Learning curve to remote conversations / have to get used to it (5)
- Support staff conversation dismissed too readily
- Members need to be more prepared before the meeting
- Concerned with how much power county representatives seem to have in the meeting to control to decide what we do. Feeling like the voices of people with disabilities is not being heard

**Suggestions for Next Meeting:**

- Sharing videos to see body language, help with conversations (2)
- When asking questions- it might help if we take a minute to submit an idea that we can discuss.
- There is a Zoom option to have the leader put us into smaller meetings, and then we can regroup again
- We have not fully explored what we could do to research the kind of LOSSES people with disabilities have in hiring and in turnover. This can be both QUALIFIED and QUANTIFIED. No one else is doing this work that I know of.
- We should be changing our direction in lieu of the COVID-19 virus -- to QUALITY prevention and mitigation -- for people utilizing state disability services?
- Reminder to all to mute themselves when not talking to avoid distractions like dogs, children…

## Next Meeting: April 10th, 2020 from 9:00 – Noon