West Central Regional Quality Council
Funded by the Minnesota State Legislature

Notes December 19th, 2023, 1:30 pm

The Regional Quality Council will:

1. Support efforts and initiatives that drive overall systems and social change to promote inclusion of people who have disabilities in Minnesota
2. Improve person-centered outcomes in disability services
3. Identify or enhance quality of life for people who have disabilities

West Central Regional Quality Council Notes

Present: Jason, Michele, Molly, Chad, Mike, Angela, Sherri, Phyllis, Hollie, Jill

RQC Staff: Donna, Katie, Kerri, JoAnn

Guests: Ray McCoy and Lindsey Hanson talking about ERAF

Minutes from past meetings.

1) **Welcome/Introductions.**
Icebreaker question: Favorite holiday food (10 minutes)

2. Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF), McCoy, Ray (DEED) https://mn.gov/deed/business/financing-business/eraf/ (20 Minutes)

Reasonable Accommodations Reimbursement for businesses in MN

- Business less than 500 employees and make no more than $5,000,000/year. Located IN Minnesota.
- Each business can receive up to $30,000/fiscal year.
  - $250-$1500/employee up to $30,000 for the business.
- Examples: Assistive technology, captioning services, job coaching, lifting aids, and low vision aids…
- Steps are fairly easy and quick. Not a lot of red tape to this program.
- Spread the word about this opportunity. They can talk to other organizations, businesses…
- Business can call and talk to them before applying if there are questions about if something would be covered.
- eraf.deed@state.mn.us
  Phone: 651-539-2390 (1-833-391-8050)
  Program Coordinator: Ray.McCoy@state.mn.us

3. **Council of Safety Data Action Group (DAG)** (2 minutes)

   a. Production/efficiency was talked about

   b. If you'd like to join the Council of Safety group, email Donna

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4. **Staff Shortage Workgroup**– Kerri (2 minutes)
    a. Reviewed The Gathering Info.
        i. DSP pay is #1 concern
        ii. DSP and PCA are different. Looking at ways to better explain this to legislators.
    b. PCA rate won't bring up DSP and it actually might pull from people who are DSPs into changing to be PCAs.
5. **Meeting with Legislators**
    a. Keeler, Hicks and Curran met at CCRI discussing different issues concerning people with disabilities and providers of services.
        i. Wages for DSP was brought up
        ii. Disconnect between providers and DHS
        iii. Moorhead being unique in that we are a border city so we need to watch what ND/Fargo does with rates they pay.
        iv. The legislators have a few bills they are working on and have a great background and understanding about issues concerning people with disabilities.
6. **Considerations for 2024** (5 minutes)
    a. Meeting days-Seem to work for most
    b. Virtual or hybrid? Tentative plan for an April hybrid meeting if weather cooperates.
    c. Council membership-Looking for members that are outside of the Moorhead area. Especially Self-advocates with disabilities and family members. Council member outside of Moorhead-please think of a couple of people we could ask to attend or tell people about the council and encourage them to join.
7. **Workgroups -** Full council brainstorm
    a. Employment (30 minutes)

i. MRQC is looking at making a website with employment resources all in 1 spot. .
   1. Worker's rights
   2. Benefits info
   3. Transportation
   4. Employment Services

ii. Hearts of Glass documentary https://heartsofglassfilm.com/
   1. Documentary on hiring people with disabilities for a variety of jobs alongside people without disabilities.
   2. PLEASE try and connect with possible participants. We are open to businesses, parents of people with disabilities, college classes.

      a. Our purpose is to show people that people with disabilities can do a variety of jobs. This video shows many aspects of the business: retail, gardening, answering phones. Shows the struggles as well as what goes right.

      b. The video also is a great example of a large start-up business. This might help bring in some business students.

      c. Video can be watched on their own time and we are looking to do an in-person viewing of the panel after. The panel will have employees from the business in the video as well as local people.

iii. Reverse Job Fair-people with disabilities have a table and can showcase their skills. Businesses can walk around and talk to each candidate looking for a job to see if they'd fit their business.
   1. 15-20 individuals that are looking for jobs
   2. Will need a location
   3. Will want to reach out to businesses that are currently hiring.
   4. We are looking at spring

b. Transition to Adulthood (30 minutes)

i. Looking at providing training/webinar for financial aspects and other things for transitioning to adulthood. Can partner with Metro RQC, as they are looking at the same things
   1. Taxes, financial planning, trusts, Able accounts
   2. The Vault
   3. More Indepth informed decision making

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4. Social Security Rep Payee
    a. Maybe do a series

ii. Transition Check list is being translated
    1. Spanish
    2. Somali
    3. Kurdish

iii. Donna has been working with MDE and other organizations on "transfer of rights" info that is on the IEP. Parents are confused about what this means. Many feel they have to get guardianship or they'll have no say in their child's education. This is not true.

iv. "Self-Direction Connection" was a conference in Mankato that had many Self direction sessions. Should we try and replicate that in our region?
    1. https://www.harrymeyeringcenter.org/home/selfdirection/
    2. We'd want to connect with the person that ran that conference as well as each County in our region. Possibly some local providers?
    3. Jill and Phyllis went to this and they said it was fantastic.

8. **Action Steps**
    a. Tell businesses about the ERAF
    b. Reach out to professors you know or businesses you know that would possibly want to watch the film Hearts of Glass. They can email DonnaAtherton@arcminnesota.org or katiecragg@arcminnesota.org
    c. Think of new council members especially those outside of the Moorhead area

9. **Next Meetings** (2 minutes)
    a. Need Co-chairs – facilitate & help set agenda for meetings & workgroups
        - **Next Meetings:**
            - **January 8th, 1-3. Culture of Safety Data Action Group**
            - **January 16th, 1:30 - WRQC meeting** (3rd Tuesday of each month)
            - **January 25th, 11-12:30 Statewide Workforce Shortage Meeting**