

**Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT)  
August 2-3, 2018  
Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center  
Auditorium  
4800 North Lamar Austin TX 78756**

**Present:**

Neva Fairchild, Chair Carrollton  
Troy Myree, Vice Chair, Houston  
Matt Berend, Abilene  
Amanda Bowdoin, Forney  
Jim Brocato, Beaumont  
Michael Ebbeler Jr., Austin  
JoAnne Fluke, Abilene  
Cheryl A Fuller, Austin  
Crystal George, Argyle  
Bobbie Hodges, Fort Worth  
Paul Hunt, Austin  
Lisa Maciejewski-West, San Angelo  
Susie May, Austin  
Rodrick Robinson, McKinney  
Karen Stanfill Houston  
Crystal Stark, College Station

**Absent:**

Crystal Stark, College Station

**TWC Reps:**

Belinda Salazar, Adam Leonard, Geoffrey Miller, Carline Geiger, Christy Lerke, Jeff Kaufmann, David Norman, Tammy Martin, James Ferris, Brian Owens, Jami John, W.J. Scott, Debbie Carlson, Michelle McCall

**Guest:**

Robin Orlowski (Disability Chamber Council), Ashley Fry SILC, Sandra Breitengross Bitter TXSILC, Christina Bryant TIBH, Sheryl Hunt, Keisha Rowe HHSC, Laurie Pryor HHSC, Kaki Leyens TWIC

**Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Neva Fairchild, Chair.

## **Committee Meetings**

The following committees met with their members: Policy, Procedures and Personnel Development; Membership and Education; and Consumer Satisfaction and Needs Assessment.

## **State Plan Overview and Reporting, Cheryl A. Fuller, TWC VR Division Director and Carline Geiger, Deputy Division Director of Program, Policy & Support**

Carline gave an update to the timeline for the Modified Combined State Plan. The Plan was approved by the Governor and was submitted to the Department of Labor and Department of Education on June 30th. No additional information was requested on the VR portion of the plan.

Introductions were made by Cheryl Fuller, Carline Geiger, and all new RCT Members.

## **Public Comment**

Sheryl Hunt gave a public comment. She explained her personal experience with TWC VR and Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center. She expressed concern that it took four months after her first visit with her counselor to have a written individual plan. She also voiced concerns that she was told she had to be blindfolded during a part of the Criss Cole tour. She told them that she could not be blindfolded and gave her reasons why. By June 21, 2018, Ms. Hunt provided all the physicals, examinations, and doctor's reports that were required by Criss Cole. As of August 2, 2018, she still had not been accepted for services at Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center.

Ms. Hunt was referred to speak with Carline Geiger before she left to discuss these concerns.

Troy Myree and Neva Fairchild reminded the new RCT members after listening to Ms. Hunt's comment, that the RCT does not resolve individual

issues. The RCT can help individuals get connected to the right person to help resolve any issues. RCT is here to advise TWC VR with the overall process and policies that may be stumbling blocks to the timely provision of services in multiple situations.

## **VR Division Director's Report Cheryl A. Fuller, TWC VR Division Director**

- The full VR Division Director's Report was provided in the meeting binder.
- Ms. Fuller provided an overview of the five major goals for the VR Division for fiscal year 2019. The five goals are: 1) Pursue structural alignment and efficiency in the combined VR division; 2) Provide quality preemployment transition services to more students; 3) Deliver customer engagement that leads to results; 4) Demonstrate stewardship of both resources and responsibilities; and 5) Embrace quality continuous improvement through Rapid Process Improvement to redesign the VR service delivery system.
- Additional priorities for VR in FY 2019 include increasing VR customer access to registered apprenticeship training, streamlining the forms and standards associated with supported employment, job placement and work experience, and reviewing and revising VR policies and standards for services to customers with brain injury.

## **RCT Membership Appointments Discussion**

- Lisa Godwin, RCT Coordinator welcomed the new RCT Members and reminded everyone that the RCT Membership is on rolling terms and that recruitment needs to continue.
- An overview of the RCT Binder was also conducted.

## **Guest Speaker, Debbie Carlson, TWC Work-In-Texas**

- Ms. Carlson provided the RCT with suggestions to help people navigate through the Work-In-Texas site.

- There are people to help you to connect with employers. Go to a Workforce Solutions office and speak to someone who can help you.
- Widen your search for example if you indicate that you want a salary of \$50,000 per year, you will not be matched with anything under that amount. Therefore, you may miss a perfect job that is offering \$49,950.
- Shifts are another stumbling block. If you put you will only work day shifts and a job states that there may be days or evening your search will not match.
- Location is another if you put you want to work within 25 miles of Austin you will not match jobs in Salado.
- There is a function called compare yourself to this job posting. If you find a job that you didn't match, you can click on this function and it will tell you why you didn't match. Then you can choose to change your options.
- The current Work-In-Texas system is 14 years old. TWC is currently working on a new system and hopes to have it live in July of 2019.

**Guest Speaker, Keisha Rowe, Director Office of Independence Services, Health, Developmental and Independence Services and Laurie Pryor, ILS Program Manager, HHSC ILS Programs**

- A PowerPoint presentation was presented and included in the meeting binder.
- Ms. Rowe presented the organizational charts for the ILS Program.
- Ms. Pryor explained what ILS is, who the ILS program serves, and the processes for approval and funding.

## **Provider Report, James Farris TWC Division of Operational Insight (DOI)**

- The RCT requested DOI to focus in on subset from the previous report. To get a clearer look at providers. During this meeting we are going to focus on hospital providers, Orientation and Mobility (O&M) providers and assistive technology.
- A PowerPoint presentation and spreadsheet were presented and provided electronically after the meeting.
- Geoffrey Miller and James Ferris gave an overview of the information that was gathered on O&M and technology training and answered questions.

## **Performance Update, Adam Leonard, TWC, Director of Division of Operational Insight**

Adam provided a PowerPoint presentation that was handed out at the meeting. He gave a snapshot of where TWC VR is after the third quarter this year.

## **Liaison Reports**

Reports were provided to the council members prior to the meeting and are included in the meeting binder.

- TWIC, Neva Fairchild
- CAP, Karen Stanfill
- PRN, JoAnne Fluke No Report
- TEA, Susan May
- SILC, Jim Brocato No written report

## **RCT Committee Reports**

- Consumer Satisfaction Committee, Troy Myree, Chair
  - Troy Myree gave an overview of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and how it ties into the Combined

State Plan. He also emphasized the importance of the committee members to attend the town hall meetings.

- David Norman went over the report that was included in the meeting packet.
- Education & Membership, Susie May, Chair
  - Susie May questioned where state employees, such as teachers, can be members of the RCT. Neva suggested she check with Gaby at the Governor's office.
  - New Member Orientation will be held October 31 noon-4:00.
  - **The committee is going to review the RCT Orientation Manual and update it before the October 31<sup>st</sup> New Member Orientation.**
- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development, Karen Stanfill, Chair
  - The TWC VR counselor vacancies and retention of staff were discussed. Progress is being made in filling and retaining these positions. Karen reminded the council that they will receive emails with the vacancies and they should share these postings in the hope of helping TWC VR fill these positions.
  - A motion passed in the May meeting, that the RCT requests that TWC and HHSC develop an MOU or a process by which job openings at TWC for counselor and other VR related jobs be posted/shared with HHSC. It was discussed and RCT was informed that this would probably not happen. So we decided to take a different approach. TWS-VRS sends to the RCT the counselor vacancies and we are asked to share them with our contacts and list.
  - The committee also talked about covering vacant caseloads. It has been shared that some counselors are covering up to four vacant caseloads. To confirm this, the RCT has asked Tammy Martin to provide a report from the regions on how they are converging caseloads from vacant positions. Then the RCT can make recommendations to the process.

- There were no new policies to review. We talked about informed choice and looked at the policy and manual for a description. There is not a good description so we would like to consider an update on what informed choice is.
- We didn't have an official update on training, but we do know that the calendar is set for agency counselor and staff training.
- IHO decisions. There were no comments from the committee for the IHO decisions.

## **Council Business Old**

Review the To Do List

## **Council Business New**

- Approve May minutes, Paul Hunt made a motion to approve the February Minutes, Troy Myree seconded. All approved, May Minutes approved.
- Elections for RCT Chair and Vice Chair. One nomination for Chair and one nomination for Vice Chair were received prior to the meeting. The floor was opened for additional nominations so that we could move to ballot. None being received Susan May asked for a motion to have Neva Fairchild, Chair and Paul Hunt, Vice Chair voted in by acclamation. Troy Myree made the motion, JoAnne Fluke seconded, all in favor and no one opposed.
- In the past the RCT had prepared a strategic plan. This plan has not been updated since January 2012. Neva Fairchild opened the floor for discussion to determine if the RCT wanted to continue to have a strategic plan. The topic was discussed and it was decided to not continue to produce a strategic plan and the RCT has clearly stated federal mandates as to what the council is to do.

## **Budget Report, Lisa Godwin TWC, RCT Coordinator**

The RCT budget is on track and with the member vacancies there are funds available if need for registrations, travel, supplies etc. Now is the time to make those purchases.

## **Adjourn**