MASSACHUSETTS REHABILITATION COMMISSION AUTISM SPECTRUM PRESENTATION

**APRIL 12, 2016**

Adelaide ‘Nicky’ Osborne, Commissioner Kasper Goshgarian, Deputy Commissioner Joan Phillips, VR Assistant Commissioner

**Joshua Mendelsohn, CL Assistant Commissioner Patricia Roda, DDS Assistant Commissioner**

**MRC’S VISION & MISSION**

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) promotes equality, empowerment and independence of individuals with disabilities. These goals are achieved through enhancing and encouraging personal choice and the right to succeed in the pursuit of independence and employment in the community.

The MRC provides comprehensive services to people with disabilities that maximize their quality of life and economic self-sufficiency in the community.

**MRC Organizational Structure**

#### MRC has three divisions:

1. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
2. Community Living (CL)
3. Disability Determination Services (DDS)

MRC has:

* 24 Area VR Offices as points of service delivery.
* 3 CL Offices and CL staff located in Lawrence and Malden VR offices
* 2 MRC DDS offices located in Boston and Worcester.

**Who MRC Serves**

Vocational Rehabilitation:

* Served 23,611 consumers with significant disabilities.
* 9,143 youths actively receive services.
* There were 16,074 consumers enrolled in post secondary education and active training services.
* 3,737 consumers achieved competitive, integrated employment.
* The average hourly wage is $12.98, with an average of 27 weekly hours worked.
* The disability profile reflects: 39.8% Psychiatric Disabilities; 8.8% Substance Abuse; 11.6% Orthopedic Disabilities; 22.2% Learning Disabilities; 2.3% Developmental Disabilities; 6.7% Deaf and Hard of Hearing; 2.7% Neurological Disabilities; 1.7% Traumatic Brain Injury; and 8.5% Other Disabilities.

Community Living:

* Through a combination of its providers and staff, assisted 13,356 consumers to live in the community.

Disability Determination Services:

* Processed 88,508 new claims for SSI/SSDI.

**MRC AUTISM DEMOGRAPHICS**

* MRC served 1,704 individuals with Autism, accounting for 6% of all consumers served by the MRC during FY 2015.
	+ MRC consumers with Autism are predominately Male (84.4%) and White (92.3%).
	+ Approximately 89% of consumers with Autism served by MRC are under the age of 30.
	+ 50% of consumers with Autism have less than high school education when entering MRC’s VR program.
* A total of 184 consumers with Autism achieved successful employment outcomes, accounting for 4.9% of all total successful closures.
* Successfully employed consumers with Autism worked an average of 23 hours/week and had an average hourly wage of $11.25.
* The current data for MRC’s Community Living Division identified 115 consumers with Autism served through its Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP).
* Additionally, 37.5% out of all consumers receiving Transitional Advisory Committee (TAC) services through the Community Living Division, are individuals with Autism.
* The current proportion of consumers with Autism served by the Independent Living Centers (ILCs), is approximately 3% to 5%.

**MRC CONSUMERS WITH AUTISM SERVED BY**

**MRC DISTRICT**

Regionally, the largest proportion of MRC VR consumers with Autism as a primary or secondary disability were in the MRC’s North District (679, or 40%), followed by the South District (572, or 34%) and the West District (453, or 26 %).

**Percentage and Number of Consumers with Autism Served by MRC District**

**[VALUE], 679**

**[VALUE],**

**572 [VALUE],**

**453**

**North District South District West District**

### Percentage of Consumers with Autism Served by MRC North District – by MRC Area Office

* In the Lowell, Framingham, and Salem offices served the highest percent of consumers with Autism of offices in the North District.

**3.9%**

**6.7%**

**5.2%**

**7.4%**

**6.4%**

**5.9%**

**4.4%**

**Fitchburg Framingham Lawrence Lowell Salem Malden Somerville**

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##### Percentage of Consumers with Autism Served in the South District

**– by MRC Area Office**

* + The Downtown Boston, Taunton, Braintree, Cape and Islands offices served the highest percent of consumers with Autism of offices in the South District.

**5.5%**

**4.8%**

**3.3%**

**2.5%**

**4.6%**

**2.3%**

**3.8%**

**5.3%**

**4.1%**

**1.4%**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Downtown** | **Roxbury** | **Braintree** | **Brockton** | **Fall River** | **Cape &** | **New Bedford** | **Plymouth** | **Taunton** | **SES** |
| **Boston** |  |  |  |  | **Islands** |  |  |  |  |

##### Percentage of Consumers with Autism Served in the West District – by MRC Area Office

The Worcester, Milford, and Springfield served the highest percent of consumers with Autism of offices in the West District.

**3.2% 3.4%**

**2.6%**

**3.5%**

**4.0%**

**4.2%**

**1.5%**

**Greenfield Holyoke Pittsfield Springfield Milford Sturbridge Worcester**

**MRC VR AUTISM MULTI-YEAR DATA TRENDS**

* In FY 2013, MRC VR served a total of 1,322 consumers with Autism which accounted for 4.7% of all active cases during this period.
* In FY 2014, MRC VR served 1,446 consumers with Autism, representing 5.1% of all active cases during this period, a total increase of 1% from FY 2013.
* In FY 2015, MRC VR served 1,704 consumers with Autism, constituting 6.0% of all active cases during this period.
	+ Between FY 2013 and FY 2015 the number of individuals served with Autism increased by 28%.

**Total Autism Consumers Served (FY 2013 - FY 2015)**

**1,332 1,446**

**1,704**

**FY 2013 FY 2014 FY 2015**

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The MRC VR Division has developed two programs to address the needs of MRC consumers with Autism.

* **Aspergers/Autism Network (AANE):** The program currently works with individuals, families, and professionals to improve employment outcomes for people on the Autism Spectrum by providing training on the Autism Spectrum Disorder to MRC staff and training for consumers.
* AANE LifeMAP provided coaching services to 110 individuals throughout the state, exceeding the projected number of 90. More than 25% found employment and a sizeable number received on-the-job assistance once employed.
* Additionally, AANE’s training series allowed MRC counselors to select among various types of training opportunities. AANE provided six workshops (including in September 2015) that reached more than 118 MRC staff from field offices across the state.
* AANE has successfully recruited new coaches from consumers’ communities and now employs 60 coaches, all of whom have expertise in working with consumers with the Autism.
* AANE currently serves 101 consumers through its LifeMAP program throughout the Commonwealth.
* AANE and MRC are piloting an Autism assessment instrument.
* **Northeast ARC:** The Northeast ARC provided staff trainings on Autism and summer internships and training to MRC consumers. The program was designed to enhance vocational opportunities for teens and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders, including Asperger’s Syndrome, and other related conditions.
* Northeast ARC currently provides employment supports through MRC’s Competitive Integrated Employment Services (CIES) program. Furthermore, they were recently selected through a procurement, “High School Pre-Employment Transition Service Program – Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act RFR”, to provide Pre- Employment Transition services to high school students with disabilities.
* **MRC and DDS Collaboration:** MRC and DDS are working on collaborative efforts to serve transition aged youth, including individuals with Autism.

### MRC Vocational Rehabilitation Services

###### MRC Consumers with Autism can receive the following services through VR:

* Vocational counseling, guidance
* Job Driven Training:
	+ CVS Health, Enterprise Car Rental, Advance Auto Parts, Home Depot, Allied Barton Security, G4S Securities, Lowes Improvement, Manpower TDC
* Summer Internship Programs
* On-the-Job Training (OJT)
* Assistance with Post Secondary Education
* Assistive Technology services
* Supported Employment services
* Competitive Integrated Employment Services (CIES)
* Job Placement
* Pre-Employment Transition Services (For High School Students age 16-22)
	+ Work readiness training, work-based learning experience, and job exploration.

### MRC Community Living Services

###### MRC Consumers with Autism can receive the following services through CL:

* Independent Living Centers services (ILCs)
	+ Skills training, Peer mentoring, Information and Referral services
* Community Supported Living services
* Home Care Assistance Program for Eligible Adults with Disabilities
* Turning 22 Youth Transition to Adult Human Services
* Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP)
* Transitional Internship Program (TIP)
* Assistive Technology Training and Devices
* Home and Community-Based Services (Waivers)

### Quotes from MRC’s Consumers with Autism

* "My counselor has done an extraordinary job of keeping me on my toes for jobs and while I attended HCC she helped me get my tuition waivers and kept her updated on how things went. She has also provided me with other things such as purchase orders at sears for me to get my attire for my most recent interview at Amherst college. She is amazing and she deserves recognition for the work she has done."
* "Myself and my friend are consumers who receive services through Northeast Arc- Their summer jobs program is great- the MRC funding is great."
* "I'm able to get the best resources from my counselor, on finding a place, as well as career goals. Also, they give me excellent advice on the job markets of the 21st century Example: A better fit for the job I want."
* "They had helped me get to know Ways2go for help with taking the trains. They had also helped me manage what I had to do before college."
* "I have met with a counselor often, and have also received a lot of assistance on how to get certain services; including classes, and how to get strategies keeping a position."

MRC Future Efforts

## Continue to research best practice models to serve consumers with Autism. (Customized Employment)

* Evaluate AANE and MRC assessment tool.
* Continue to explore additional collaboration with other agencies for consumers with Autism.

Questions