

August 21, 2023 minutes

Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee

August 21, 2023, 5:30-6:30 pm EST

Meeting was held virtually.

Attendees:

- Statewide Rehabilitation Council Members: Ronaldo Fujii (Committee Chair), Inez Canada, Kevin Goodwin (Ex-Officio), Doug Mason (Ex-Officio), Christine Tosti, Sarah Wiles (Ex-Officio)
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Staff: William Noone, Graham Porell, Amy Karr
- Public: Silvie Agudelo

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Mr. Fujii, at 5:07 pm.

1. Welcome and Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves.

Ms. Agudelo, an MRC client, introduced herself. Mr. Fujii explained that the Consumer Satisfaction/Needs Assessment Committee (CSNAC) looks at MRC survey results and assesses consumers' needs.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fujii called for a motion to approve the June 2023 minutes. Mr. Fujii asked whether there were any corrections to the minutes. The June 2023 minutes were approved with no corrections.

3. Update on interview and questionnaire

Mr. Porell stated that after a rebid the current vendor was selected to continue with the survey. Mr. Porell's department receives the raw data and performs additional analysis beyond what the vendor does. The new vendor contract will include additional data analysis. On the staff day of the Explore Possibility summit in September, the findings of the staff survey will be presented to the staff.

Relaunching the consumer survey in August, and business and providers surveys will start in September.

Mr. Porell shared the fourth quarter consumer survey results. The results were consistent throughout the state. Most of the respondents had open cases. The cooperation rate was consistent with previous quarters.

The overall satisfaction rate was mostly stable. A high percentage of respondents indicated that MRC responded in a timely manner.

Ten percent of the respondents indicated they were dissatisfied. Can compare the dissatisfied to satisfied.

Mr. Porell will meet with the consultant and discuss additional breakdown. Mr. Fujii and Mr. Porell discussed potential further analyses. Would like to see if the results are related to events such as the start of new programs. Mr. Porell said there are additional data points. This was the first time using this vendor. Vocational rehabilitation (VR) satisfaction rate was higher than for community living (CL) services.

Mr. Porell is not sure about whether those who chose not to respond provided reasons, and will ask the vendor. Perhaps there should be an open ended question asking why someone chooses not to respond. Consumers have the right not to respond, but information about why would help.

There was a discussion about how much of the results is follow-up. Mr. Porell thinks the results are cross-sectional, not longitudinal. Mr. Fujii feels longitudinal results would be helpful, with a first follow-up, second follow-up, etc. The surveys are currently looking at trends over time, quarters comparison; longitudinal results may reflect consumers' journeys.

The majority of surveys were completed on phones. The survey used to be all online. Consumers were not always responding to emails, so MRC wanted to build in a process to contact those who didn't respond. Those who respond by phone may differ from those who respond online. There is a need to understand the new process with phone surveys. The vendor has experience, but phone surveys have their own biases.

In the past all consumers were given an opportunity to provide input through the survey; now just a sample of all consumers participates in the survey. It was suggested that the data for each quarter indicate the number of respondents. It was also suggested to pool the data from different quarters, to give a better understanding of the differences between satisfied and dissatisfied respondents.

Mr. Porell stated that there is a lot of data; not showing a huge trend. The largest changes were seen in the results from CL service recipients, but that sample size is much smaller than that for VR recipients. For VR the results were more consistent. The survey of CL recipients used the old system. This will be transferred to the new system, and then CL data will be more accurate.

Trends to watch :

- Forty-three percent of respondents did not know what to expect when their cases were closed. Responses to open ended questions indicated they did not understand how the process works.
- Sixty-two percent of respondents with jobs indicated they see a path for advancement.

- About 20% of respondents had at least one problem working with MRC. Frequently there were communication issues, such as consumers not knowing how often they should hear from VR. This is similar to other states. It was suggested that the SRC explore how VR can improve communication without consumers having to turn to the Client Assistance Program (CAP). Of those who reported a problem, 2/3 said MRC did not work to resolve the problem.

Perhaps there could be a small dashboard to show the average number of contacts with VR, which may help consumers understand what to expect. VR counselors clearly state what they are there for and what they do not do. Perhaps information on the MRC website may help resolve some dissatisfaction. The number dissatisfied is not small. Communication with the consumers while they receive VR services will help them know what to expect when their cases are closed.

The Policy Committee has developed fact sheets for VR consumers that discuss the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), the appeals process, and financial participation. There was a question about whether there was a fact sheet and navigating VR.

Perhaps it would be helpful if the survey asked about how many hours respondents were working and how much money they were earning. Mr. Porell said the survey used to ask about that. He thinks the survey still asks about whether respondents are still employed, but it does not ask about wage. Information about wage is a very relevant and important point.

There may be a need for a better deep dive. There should be oversampling, enough data for subgroup analysis. Mr. Porell has the raw data to do internal deep dive.

Mr. Porell said he thinks the responses to the open-ended questions are on a separate document. He can send it to Mr. Fujii, who can then send it to the full SRC. Mr. Porell stated that there is a unique response identifier to link open ended responses to the responses to other survey questions.

The SRC would like to see some of the data from the surveys of VR counselors. Mr. Noone stated they did such an analysis for the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Council, and identified areas where improvements can be made, such as employment of African American and Hispanic individuals compared to white individuals. The data was collected over several years. It would be helpful to integrate this data into discussions. Mr. Porell will work on getting this data to Mr. Fujii.

Mr. Fujii thanked Mr. Porell and Mr. Noone and stated he looks forward to seeing the data. Mr. Fujii thanked Ms. Agudelo for attending.

4. Open mic

Mr. Fujii shared his email in the chat: ronaldofujii@hotmail.com

Mr. Fujii thanked the attendees for their input and time.

The next Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee meeting is October 16th, 2023 at 5:00 PM.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Fujii called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Ms. Canada. The-meeting was adjourned at 6:07 pm.