**Massachusetts State Rehabilitation Council**

**Submitted 6-24-24**

**Approved by the SRC 6-27-24**

**MRC Response on 7-31-24**

**FY25- 1**

**The recommendation is to consult with MRC and to prepare a proposal to restructure the SRC committees by merging redundant ones, establishing distinct objectives, harnessing technology, and offering training to boost productivity and impact.**

**MRC response to FY25-1 recommendation**

This recommendation aligns with recent efforts (i.e., NASHIA consultative partnership) to develop strategies to ensure the work of the Council is effective and efficient to best support the productivity and impact of the SRC.

* MRC is supportive of this recommendation.

**FY25-2**

**This recommendation is for the SRC to collaborate with MRC to identify and report best practices in communicating with MRC consumers, while considering diverse individual cultures, languages, technological proficiencies, and social contexts throughout their engagement with the agency.**

**MRC response to FY25-2 recommendation**

MRC and the SRC are aligned regarding the importance and value of cultural competence and individual technology capacities in regard to communication and engagement with individuals served by the agency. Being culturally responsive is a core value of the agency, and there are many efforts afoot in this arena including, but not limited to, culturally driven agency-branding campaigns (e.g., youth and young adults, Asian population), celebrations of cultural heritage months, multi-language translation of electronic and printed collateral, and hiring of bi-lingual staff. MRC appreciates the SRC’s continued presence on our DEIA Council.

* MRC is supportive of a more targeted version of this recommendation that would include:
  + MRC providing an overview of DEIA work across the agency to SRC members, to help educate on current efforts and identify areas of meaningful partnership with the SRC. One area that the MRC could partner with the SRC on DEIA is in the review of in-development VR training modules.

**FY25-3**

**This recommendation is for the SRC to work with the MRC to enhance engagement of Businesses and employed people with disabilities the in implementation of the Disability Employment Tax Credit.**

**MRC response to FY25-3 recommendation**

MRC has presented to the SRC on the Disability Employment Tax Credit a few times in FY24 and appreciates that the SRC continues to be invested in this important opportunity for individuals living with disabilities and their employers. For FY25 the MRC is most invested in continuing to build up the business side of the DETC, that is getting in front of employers and businesses to make sure they have awareness of this program.

* MRC is supportive of a more targeted version of this recommendation that would include further clarification of the term “enhanced engagement,” with an emphasis on supporting increased employer and business awareness of the DETC.

**FY25-4**

**This recommendation is for the SRC to work with the MRC to involve stakeholders such as self-employed people with disabilities and municipal Community/Economic Development Departments in the coming year’s efforts to analyze potential enhancements to support Job Seekers in pursuing self-employment vocational goals.**

**MRC response to FY25-4 recommendation**

The MRC appreciates the SRC’s continued interest in self-employment for the VR field. MRC’s commitment to further developing self-employment support capacity at the agency is evidenced by a FY24-funded RSA re-allotment project dedicated to developing and supporting the implementation of an Entrepreneurship/Self-Employment approach for VR individuals based on best practices. This work, headed up by Deloitte Consulting in partnership with MRC, has involved key stakeholders in the field.

* MRC is supportive of a more targeted version of this recommendation that focuses on a presentation on a future state self-employment strategy from MRC to the SRC at the completion of the Deloitte work (after October 1, 2024), followed by a discussion between the SRC and MRC regarding next steps and potential areas of support from the SRC.

**FY25-5**

**SRC will collaborate with MRC to identify and report national best practices in serving MRC consumers with Mental Health Disabilities, including differences in employment rates.**

**MRC response to the FY25-5 recommendation**

For the last several years, MRC has implemented a model of employment service delivery for Department of Mental Health Services ACCS service recipients. This model was developed in partnership with DMH and is built on best practices in mental health and employment service delivery, with awareness of pre-existing systems and supports to leverage. Our current model is still in early implementation, and as such we are not looking to modify our existing practices in this area.

* MRC is not supportive of this recommendation.
* MRC suggests presenting to the SRC current data on the partnership, employment outcomes, and the model, to increase awareness of the SRC on these MRC efforts.