



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (888) 559-2658 Fax: (888) 524-9282

Email: [parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org](mailto:parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org) Website: [parehabilitationcouncil.org](http://parehabilitationcouncil.org)

## **OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Minutes for April 25, from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

### **Members Present (P)**

### **Not Present (NP)**

Lynn Heitz (P)  
Susan Tomasic (P)  
Twana Jones (P)  
Lorie Brew (P)

Michelle Paonessa (NP)  
Jessica Keogh (P)  
Sylenthia Dent (P)

Julia Grant Barol (NP)  
Paul Fogle (P)  
Andrew Pennington (P)

**Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present:** James Whitonis, Ralph Roach, Chris Harbert, Audrey O'Connor

**Project Staff Present:** Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

**Interpreter:** Laura Schupp

**Guests Present:** Graham Porell, Assistant Director of Data Analytics, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Amanda Baczko, Director of Learning and Community Engagement, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Lynn Heitz called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES**

***MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol to approve today's agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Susan Tomasic seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Discussion with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) regarding**

## Customer Satisfaction Survey process

- Ms. Amanda Bazcko reported that originally surveys were conducted by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) internal data collection team. Funds were solicited through reallocation dollars to apply to bring in a vendor to help the MRC revamp the process of collecting data for consumer satisfaction, broaden data collection to conduct several different surveys, and build out a survey that researched best practice for consumer experience. The transition took over a year and a half with the vendor which involved, focus groups, feedback from staff, people served, and a survey development committee comprised of data team, learning team, people served, diverse teams, and the Massachusetts State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). This process identified the themes that they wanted to ask questions around including diversity, culture responsiveness, and effective relationship building. Questions were refined with the team and a pilot of the survey was done. The survey continues to be refined on a quarterly basis. Vendor continues to collect data for MRC with their interview team that conducts phone interviews and web surveys based upon the preference of the person served. Surveys are conducted at multiple time points through services being received beginning at eligibility all the way through exiting the agency with successful or unsuccessful outcome. Vendor feeds that data to the MRC and Massachusetts SRC through an unidentified manner to maintain confidentiality. The MRC survey team and their SRC meet monthly to continue to review and provide input for the survey. Ms. Bazcko offered to provide copies of their survey, connect with vendor, and other assistance to avoid having to reinvent the wheel if that would be helpful with Pennsylvania's approach.
- Mr. Graham Porell reported prior to the transformation to the current process that surveys were done by mail and email which resulted in missing feedback from people served. Current modern approach has expanded the MRC's reach to thousands of people beyond the scope of what was possible internally. They have established a baseline and are able to identify trends on a quarter-to-quarter basis on specific questions. Questions and process continue to be refined to use the data to make changes and help improve services.
- Ms. Jessica Keogh inquired about the increase in engagement, timeline of the new process, and the cost of the new process.
- Mr. Porell reported that the new survey process was implemented about 2 years ago and they have 6 quarters of data so far. The MRC is currently getting a 20% to 25% response rate and they were getting about 10% in the past. Phone interviews have resulted in more complete answers. Ms. Bazcko reported MRC is paying a vendor \$115,000 a year which includes several activities including

creation and implementation of consumer survey, staff survey, business / employer survey, and venter survey.

- Ms. Lorie Brew inquired if there was relationship building to increase survey responses.
- Ms. Bazcko reported they use different venues for outreach and to advertise for the survey including a community forum, quarterly newsletter, and phone interviewers call customers with a script that explains purpose, value, and confidentiality of the surveys. They also have email scripts to promote engagement. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors also are provided an FAQ document and remind consumers that they may be reached by those collecting surveys and explain the value of participating to the consumers. Mr. Porell reported they added mentioning the survey as part of their eligibility process. Outreach for the surveys is also conducted with paper and electronic documents and through the Massachusetts SRC.
- Mr. Andrew Pennington inquired about the sample size of individuals that will be surveyed and what type of work are they doing with their SRC. Inquired if surveys are sectioned off by Pre Employment Transition Services, Adult Services, and other factors such as time from closing a case.
- Ms. Bazcko and Mr. Porell reported that the goal is getting about 750 responses per month and the sample size is larger than that. Their SRC helped craft the questions, identify domains, review, and develop new language, review data trends and provide outreach to the broader community.
- Ms. Bazcko explained via chat that MRC has the annual goal to conduct surveys with a minimum of 2,400 service recipients from the core stratified sample and 300 from the oversample. Data collection occurs each month and is reported quarterly. The target is to complete 200 surveys per month from the core stratified sample and an oversample target of an additional 25 surveys per month. Last fiscal year, 1577 open cases surveys were completed, 392 closed cases, totaling 1969 participants.
- Mr. Porell reported that there is not a specific survey for Transition or a specific age, but they do collect different demographics within the survey to identify age, different programs, and services. In the past there was a Transition survey with low response rates and counselor involvement helped boost the return rate. MRC is currently serving about 16,000 customers and pre COVID it was about 22,000.
- Mr. Porell and Ms. Bazcko reported that surveys are conducted through phone interviews and a web survey which are both offered to customers. They are currently developing a more accessible method through interpreters. The phone interviewers can conduct surveys in English and Spanish. They will also mail a hardcopy version if that is a more accessible approach for the customer. With these different approaches they have seen the response rates more than double.

Their vendor has also started to explore text messaging as an option for outreach or communication about MRC services. Phone interviews are also available in multiple other languages. Offered to email PaRC and OVR the most up to date versions and information on what is being collected, how the data is collected, and how the data is broken down. The data is made publicly available which is posted on the MRC website, incorporated in their Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and is in their State Plan. MRC holds quarterly meetings with their entire agency to feed back the data and lessons learned. Data is also provided to area offices so they can see specific trends and themes in their local areas. MRC Executive Team also holds monthly meetings to identify more systemic issues by utilizing the data.

- Ms. Heitz inquired if there was any pushback from VR staff when the information started being shared with District Offices. Inquired about a separate commission for the blind and if they use the same method for their surveys.
- Ms. Bazcko reported that people wanted to utilize the data to improve services and identify challenges. Data was also used to empower staff, when they received data about positive experiences, they were given the opportunity to share the name of staff and provide shout outs. Challenging feedback have been used to request more funding or decrease caseloads. It is also helpful in identifying pain points of working in hybrid format to identify preferences and advantages of working in person or remotely. Massachusetts does have a separate commission for the blind and they use a different method. They have their own SRC as well.
- Members agreed that a lot of great information was shared and that something similar should be developed in Pennsylvania to improve the survey responses. Members agreed to start discussion with OVR leadership and create an Ad Hoc Committee with members of both the Policy Committee and Transition Committee. This topic will be discussed at the May 8<sup>th</sup> Full Council meeting during the Policy Committee update.
- Ms. Heitz explained additional survey questions would need to be developed for Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) customers.
- Ms. Jessica Keogh suggested looking at in house resources before looking at a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors that may be more costly. Explained that she knew of disability owned businesses / non-profit organizations that could conduct the work of the surveys.
- Ms. Heitz inquired if there were any updates from OVR.
- Mr. James Whitonis reported that OVR met with Rehabilitation Services Administration to negotiate performance indicators and did settle on numbers that both sides were happy with. That information will be sent to PaRC staff to be forwarded to Full Council.

## **Committee Goals for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (\*if time allows)**

- In the interest of time, Ms. Heitz requested that review of Committee goals be added to the May meeting agenda.

## **Schedule next meeting**

- Members requested to poll for a meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

## **Adjourn**

***MOTION was made by Ms. Tomasic to adjourn. Mr. Pennington seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.***