

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND
REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
RSA-IM-98-11
DATE: March 10, 1998

ADDRESSEES: STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (GENERAL)
STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (BLIND)
STATE REHABILITATION ADVISORY COUNCILS
CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PROTECTION & ADVOCACY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
PROGRAMS
REGIONAL REHABILITATION CONTINUING EDUCATION
PROGRAMS
AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
SERVICE PROGRAMS
RSA SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

SUBJECT: Dissemination of the publication entitled: Assuring an Outstanding Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program in the 21st Century Eliminating Barriers to Effective service Delivery, developed by the Twenty-Third Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI).

CONTENT: The purpose of this Information Memorandum (IM) is to transmit the enclosed publication to vocational rehabilitation (VR) professionals, advocates and other interested persons. Ms. Jeanne Munro, director of the Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, served as chairperson for the IRI prime study group that developed this publication. Ms. Jeanne Miller, director of the University of Arkansas Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP) in Region VI, served as the university coordinator.

We recommend that the IRI publication be brought to the attention of your staff responsible for, or interested in, human resource development and staff training for use in planning, implementing and assessing the effectiveness of training on this topic. It is our hope that the IRI publications are widely used by VR counselors and supervisors, human resource development

specialists, community-based rehabilitation service providers, administrators, researchers, educators and policy analysts in fulfilling the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, particularly, " ... to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society...".

An important part of RSA's mission is to provide training and technical assistance to State VR agencies on the problems facing rehabilitation service providers, and to disseminate and promote the utilization of knowledge resulting from current research. Through the IRI, high priority training needs are responded to expeditiously, and the study findings on a specific topic are quickly transposed into useful and usable training materials and publications.

Improving the skills of personnel in the Public VR program through effective training is a basic function of RSA's Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP). RSA funds the following three RSA RRCEPs to serve as prime study group coordinators for developing the three publications: the University of Arkansas; George Washington University; and, the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

The *IRI* is important to rehabilitation professionals for at least two reasons, its products and its process. The counselor, educator, administrator, researcher and trainer who participates on a prime study group contributes valuable expertise and insight to both the product and the process. Each also brings a unique geographical as well as professional orientation. This interchange of theoretical, legislative, programmatic, and pragmatic perspectives results in publications which combine an interpretation of regulations, innovative methodologies, theoretical considerations and practical applications.

While the IRI has existed since 1973, it continues a program which has existed under various names since 1947. This cooperative effort has over the years consistently produced quality training materials which are used extensively throughout the field of rehabilitation. It is hoped that the publications resulting from the 23rd IRI continue this long-standing tradition.

Additional copies of this publication may be obtained by contacting Ms. Jeanne Miller using the enclosed order form. If you have any questions or comments regarding the IRI, please call Mr. Charles Sadler, RSA IRI Coordinator at (202) 205-9286, or via email at Charles-Sadler@ed.gov.

Fredric K. Schroeder, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Enclosures

cc: NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INDEPENDENT LIVING
COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY
SYSTEMS