

U.S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES  
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM  
RSA-IM-02-08  
DATE: January 10, 2002

TO : STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (GENERAL)  
STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (BLIND)  
CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (CAP)  
PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS  
PROGRAM (PAIR)  
REGIONAL REHABILITATION CONTINUING EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS (RRCEPS)  
AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION  
RSA SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

SUBJECT : Measuring and comparing the performance of Community Rehabilitation  
programs: The National Results Council model.

CONTENT : The purpose of this Information Memorandum is to disseminate the work  
of the National Results Council (NRC) and its implications for State  
Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and the consumers they serve.

**The importance of measuring performance**

The Government Performance and Results Act establishes responsibility for the aggregate performance of the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) program. The Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators establish accountability for the performance of each VR Designated State Unit (DSU).

Community Rehabilitation Programs continue to be a major part of the service delivery structure in each State, with special significance for those persons with the most severe disabilities. Some VR agencies spend as much as 40% of their case service resources with these vendor agencies. However, very little information is routinely available to stakeholders - particularly VR agencies and VR consumers - on how comparatively effective these networks are in carrying out their responsibilities.

## **Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) support for the NRC**

RSA initiated support for the NRC in 1997 to address two purposes:

- To give State VR agencies a tool for monitoring performance of their CRP networks.
- To support consumers in exercising their choice options under the Rehabilitation Act through the provision of reliable performance information on vendors.

### **About the NRC**

The NRC is a non-profit organization that is devoted exclusively to measuring and comparing the performance of employment and training organizations. The NRC collects outcome data on a continuous basis from each participating program and disseminates those data in feedback reports that include state and national benchmarks. In addition, the NRC approach to performance measurement includes the capacity to assess the barriers to employment faced by persons being served in each participating CRP and across the state network of CRPs.

The NRC system has been thoroughly tested and is now installed in over 125 provider organizations across the country. Included in this activity are three state level projects in which the State VR Agency has played a major role. Those states are West Virginia, Michigan and Oklahoma. Each state “network” system is customized to the unique needs of that state. In all three states, the VR Agency has provided significant incentives to CRPs to encourage and support their participation.

The Oklahoma project is specifically focused on creating performance information to be used by consumers in selecting a vendor of supported employment services. The Michigan and West Virginia systems have been designed to provide quality performance data, including comparisons between programs, to a variety of program stakeholders. Both Michigan and West Virginia have taken advantage of the available Technical Assistance Grant program to support a portion of the activity in their respective states.

### **Conclusions**

The NRC system appears to hold great potential for State VR Agencies and for the field in general. Here are some of the ways in which the NRC approach can be of benefit.

- Quality improvement. Regular feedback on the performance of CRPs in a state system allows VR agencies to monitor results being achieved

and direct the use of their grant and case services resources to greatest advantage.

- Independent measurement. The NRC functions as an independent, third party evaluator of performance. This objectivity adds significantly to the credibility of the program impact reported.
- Consumer choice. The NRC has the capacity to generate performance-based “report cards”, an effective method for providing needed information to consumers.
- Payment systems. The NRC results reporting process can be linked to a Milestones type payment process, enhancing the performance link with the provider community.

EFFECTIVE  
DATE : Upon Issuance

INQUIRIES : If you would like more information about the National Results Council you can access their Web site:

[www.nationalresultscouncil.org](http://www.nationalresultscouncil.org).

Or contact

Bill Niederloh, President and CEO at 1-888-604-2400.

For information on RSA support for the NRC contact:

Harold Kay at 202-260-2179  
or via e-mail at [harold\\_kay@ed.gov](mailto:harold_kay@ed.gov).

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Joanne Wilson  
Commissioner

cc: CSAVR  
NCIL