VocRehab Vermont >> **Explore VR**

The Vermont Progressive Employment Model Replication and Evaluation

Presenters:

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VR-RRTC on Demand Side Strategies

The Vocational Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (VR-RRTC) on Demand-Side Strategies is a national center for improving vocational rehabilitation (VR) responsiveness to employer needs.

- Funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) Grant # H133B120002.
- Project Partners: VR agencies in VT, NE, AL and CSAVR

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Talking points for the session

- VTPE: What exactly are we studying?
- How are we doing it?
- What have we learned so far?
- What is next?

Video clip

VTPE DEMO

VTPE: Key features

- Dual customer design
- Team approach
- Focus on high-risk or difficult to place consumers
- Emphasis on rapid engagement
- Mechanism for set-asides or training offsets or work experience pay
- Liability and workers' compensation insurance for trainees
- Data tracking tools for jobseekers and employers

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Study Design: Key features

- Learning collaborative approach for model replication

- Impact evaluation

- Process evaluation

But first -

- Define and "extract" the model
- How do you take something that developed organically in Vermont, package it up, and test it out in another state?
- Convince others to try it out (as part of a research study)

Build a Learning Collaborative

- LC as a research vehicle
  - Peer-to-Peer support
  - Wrap around training/TA
  - Tweaked from previous LCs: Embedded evaluation
- RFP process: accessible
- Research requirements: negotiable
- 4 states joined

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Impact Evaluation: Design

- Develop customized evaluation plans
- Data points: VTPE yes/no, work experience type and "dose", milestone dates
  - Link to CMS [outcome data]?
  - Link to employer data?

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Process evaluation: Design

- Fidelity visits/observations
- Ongoing site visits, phone calls, informal check-ins, LC meetings
- Semi-structured interviews near end of implementation cycle
- Qualitative effort to capture jobseeker and employer perspective (in design)

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Overall:
Flexible & dynamic study design

Ongoing impact evaluation data analysis and process evaluation (fidelity reviews) inform:

1. Research methodology & model refinement
2. Training & TA
3. Plans for future research

What have we learned so far?

Nebraska

- Parallel pre-existing philosophy to VT VR
- Rapid Engagement promoted, within context of voc eval
- All clientele potentially eligible statewide
- 4 Business Account Managers (BAM)
- All employ services in house

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Oregon (Commission for the Blind)

- Small agency (~13 VRC), rural aspect
- Primary target group, clients 2+ yrs in
- 1 BAM statewide
- CRPs assist with placement

Maine

- Transition youth Portland, Lewiston
- 1 BAM
- Selected CRPs deliver PE employ services

Florida (Division of Blind Services)

- Larger agency
- 7 districts starting with stuck cases (2 yrs +)
- 1 BAM serves 7 districts
- In house employment specialists, eventually CRPs to assist

Early observations

- VR programs vary widely in policy/ procedures that could impact model (both across agencies and within agencies)
- CRP vs inhouse employment services

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Early observations, cont.

- Team approach from earliest contact
- VRC and employment staff - handoff vs active participation
- Roles of employment specialists, VRCs, BAMs, CRPs supportive of VTPE

Early observations, cont.

- Early engagement is encouraged
- Can services be delivered prior to plan?
- Plan can be easily modified?
- What is "job readiness"?

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Early observations, cont.

- Agency position/policy regarding dual customer approaches that include employers

- Work experience compensation (set aside) and liability insurance

Future

- Moving along the continuum of innovative practices – from *Emerging→Promising→Evidence-Based* (citation: RRTC on EBP)

- NIDILRR Stages of Research

For more information

- Visit: ExploreVR.org for more resources on Progressive Employment

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