

**LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES
LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES REPORT
June, 2010**

PROGRAM PLANNING/RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

STATE PLAN

- LRS has been working on the 2011 State Plan and will be submitting it on July 1, 2010 to RSA for consideration of approval. Amendments will need to be completed after LRS is transferred to LWC & DHH.

IN SERVICE & CSPD INITIATIVES

- CSPD - Currently 59% of LRS' professional staff have the Master's Degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling or a closely related field needed to meet the CSPD federal mandate. Of the 24% remaining who are in the higher priority for re-training, there are ten staff currently pursuing a degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Due to recent budget cuts the Program Coordinator who coordinates this effort is promoting the use of federal scholarships by staff to fund their degrees and meet the goals of this initiative.
- LRS will be submitting a new 5 year training grant to the Department of Education this week. This grant is used to provide training to LRS staff to develop the necessary skills to effectively and efficiently serve individuals with disabilities and or administer various aspects of the VR program.

COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRP's)/EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

MINORITY OUTREACH

- Program Coordinator continues to maintain a relationship with the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation agency's in Louisiana.

CRPs

- LRS continues to annually monitor all CRP's. This process is initiated at the regional level by requiring providers to meet certain quality indicators

and submit documentation to verify the accuracy of reports. The CRP's are monitored at the state level through programmatic and fiscal reviews. The annual renewal process is completed via a facility site visit or a review of files. The Program Coordinator provides technical assistance as areas of remediation are identified.

DRUG COURTS

- The Drug Courts and their Work Release programs continue to be monitored.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE

- LRS continues is a participating partner with Neighborhood Place (NP). The concept of NP is to state have agencies and local organizations housed in one facility for better accessibility by consumers. Currently there are two locations in Sabine Parish (Zwolle & Many). The Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood & Learning Center located in Central City New Orleans is scheduled to open July 1, 2010.

EMPLOYMENT/SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

- LRS has renewed our contract with UNO TRAC ExCEL Program for the training of consumers to open their own businesses. The contract has been altered to match the State of Louisiana fiscal year which runs from July 1 to June 30th of the following year. The UNO contract is a three (3) year contract which runs from July 2010 through June 2013. The LRS – UNO TRAC collaboration has been most successful in assisting consumers with opening their own businesses. LRS referred a total of **55** new referrals to the UNO TRAC ExCEL Program for contract year '08 – '09. **50** clients attended UNO TRAC's Introductory Workshop. The UNO TRAC ExCEL Program successfully helped **18** consumers open businesses.
- LRS is working with the Louisiana Workforce Commission/Disability Program Navigators on the 2010 Job Fair. LRS has met with the LA Workforce Commission regarding event documentation and planning, as well as being a consultant to the Disability Program Navigators who have the Job Fair Lead for 2010. LRS Rehabilitation Development Specialist (REDS) are active in meeting with various Disability program Navigators throughout the state. Further, LRS is participating on the Job fair Planning Committee and lending expertise in assisting in bringing Job Fair 2010 to fruition.

- LRS State Office has been working closely with the VR Business Network in disseminating information to the REDS concerning positions being offered by such companies as Walgreen's, J. Lodge, Convergys, Harrah's, and the U.S. Federal Government to get consumers hired.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- The LRS SE Program Coordinator is scheduled to attend the next Workforce Council meeting on June 29, 2010 from 1pm to 3pm at the LA State Police Training Headquarters. Also, LRS' Vocational Rehab CRP Program will be moving to the Office of Workforce Development which is under the LA Workforce Commission effective July 1, 2010.
- Program Coordinator attended Shared Vision for Youth meeting on April 15, 2010 held at Louisiana Workforce Commission.

TBI/SCI TRUST FUND

- There are 9 Contracts with vendors who provide Case Management services to the TBI/SCI consumers
- Served 599 consumers from 7-1-09 to present
- Waiting list of 369
- Currently serving 554
- Program Manager continues with Site Reviews and monitoring of the Case Managers of which there are 9
- 09/10 Budget for client services (excluding contract budgets) is \$3,176,429
- As of 12-31-09, \$2,441,442 has been spent
- Preparations are underway for the TH/SCI Trust Fund move to the Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Aging & Adult Services, under Hugh Ealy, effective 7-1-10
- The average annual income from the dedicated funds is \$1.8 million
- Less money will likely be budgeted for fiscal year 2010/2011 for the program because the balance of the Trust Fund is less than in previous years because we have used it.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- **Contracts:**

This month professional staff of the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) at LA Tech complete a 36-month contract.

Contract services include: ***computer assessment, activities-of-daily-living evaluations, home and job-modification evaluations, adaptive driving and transportation evaluations, vehicle modification reports, and seating and positioning assessments for wheelchairs and wheeled mobility systems.***

The performance goals of the three-year contract have been exceeded. The *AT Coordinator has negotiated a new, multi-year contract for AT service delivery between Louisiana Tech University and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to begin July 1, 2010 and end 30 June, 2013.*

➤ **AT Partnerships:**

LRS continues to coordinate with Louisiana Assistive Technology Network (LATAN) on an expanded program, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide state-wide demonstration-learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology.

➤ **Professional Training/Education:**

LATAN has joined the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters and has participated with LRS in planning for emergency response for persons with disabilities. The AT Program Coordinator reviewed and edited the AT portion of a multi-media training that was conducted 5/15/2010 in NOLA for certifying Personal Care Attendants who wish to volunteer for shelter duty at Critical Transit Needs Shelters (CTNS) following mass evacuations due to hurricanes or other disasters. The program was multi-agency group called the Emergency Management Disability and Aging Coalition (EMDAC). Anyone interested in obtaining minutes from the meeting, or the content of this Red Cross-endorsed training should contact Jeanne Abadie at la.emdac@gmail.com

LRS and LATAN are coordinating efforts to make affordable loans available to LRS consumers for purposes of Home Modifications and other Assistive Technology as appropriate.

LRS partnered with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, 2nd Injury Board to re-write legislation enabling reimbursement for rehabilitation services provided to participants in the 2nd Injury employee insurance program. SB-639 has been approved by both the House and the Senate, and is in committee for final revisions.

PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND PROGRAM SERVICES

INDEPENDENT LIVING

- The Community and Family Support Program services have been contracted out to the Department of Health and Hospitals/Office of Aging and Adult Services effective March 1, 2010. The contract between LRS and DHH/OAAS providing the funding for this transfer was approved on April 21, 2010. Nineteen consumers continue receiving on-going services. The transition has gone smoothly and services with consumers were not interrupted.
- Effective July 1, 2010 this program will be permanently transferred to the Department of Health and Hospitals/Office of Aging and Adult Services.

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION COUNCIL

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Council held a meeting March 25-26, 2010 in Thibodaux at the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Regional Office. Howard Sanders, Director of the Office of Workforce Development, Louisiana Workforce Commission, addressed the Council regarding the potential transfer of Vocational Rehabilitation to the Louisiana Workforce Commission. In SFY 2010, the council also held meetings in Lake Charles, Lafayette, Alexandria, and Baton Rouge.
- The next scheduled meeting is July 8-9, 2010 in Shreveport, LA at the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Regional Office. The LRC meeting dates for SFY 2011 are:
 - September 9-10, 2010 in Baton Rouge, joint meeting with State Independent Living Council
 - November 4-5, 2010 in Metairie
 - January 27-28, 2011 in Baton Rouge
 - March 24-25, 2011 in Monroe
 - May 26-27, 2011 in Baton Rouge
- The Council has 25 members to date. There are no vacancies.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

- State Fiscal Year 2010 Third Quarter Performance Indicators were reported in April 2010.

- LRS Performance Indicators for State Fiscal Year 2010 were redeveloped to best reflect strong outcome based performance measures in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and Division of Administration initiative.
- If HB 1198 passes the Legislature and is signed by the Governor into law, then LRS Performance Indicators for State Fiscal Year 2011 will be integrated into Performance Indicators of the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Department of Health and Hospitals.

LEGISLATION

- House Bill 1198 proposes to transfer regulatory authority for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) from the Department of Social Service (DSS) to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH).
Programs under LRS proposed for transfer from DSS to LWC include:
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Program
 - Randolph-Sheppard Program
 - Independent Living Part B Program
 - Independent Living for Older Blind Program.Programs under LRS proposed for transfer from DSS to DHH Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) and the Office of the Secretary include:
 - Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund Program (OAAS)
 - State Personal Assistance Services Program (OAAS)
 - Community and Family Support Program (OAAS)
 - Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (OS)
- DSS made the recommendation to the Streamlining Commission to transfer these programs to LWC and DHH. The purpose was twofold; (1) to realign DSS' resources around children and families, and (2) to create efficiencies and improvements to service delivery by transferring programs to agencies that better align with their core competencies.
- This bill has passed the House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees; the House and Senate Floors; and Senate Finance Committee. It is scheduled to be heard in on the House Floor for concurrence with amendments. If passed, this transfer will take place July 1, 2010.

TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM AND DEAF SERVICES

- Revisions to Ticket to Work procedures for LRS to comply with the new regulations issued this year are in process.
- Program Coordinator participated in conference call on May 11, 2010 facilitated by MAXIMUS on Ticket to Work program.
- Program Coordinator participated on 5/26/10 in a Work Incentive Seminar webinar.

TRANSITION

- The Program Coordinator is a member of the Transition Learning Collaborative team. Regular conference calls are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Educational information and webinars are also available via internet for the exchange of information between the Region VI states. Last conference call was held June 2, 2010 and included additional stakeholders involved in the Transition process. These stakeholders will be included in quarterly calls.
- Program Coordinator continues to work with the Department of Education in developing Regional Core Teams in each of the regions. Program Coordinator attended and participated in the Lafourche Parish Transition Core Team Meeting held in Thibodeaux, June 10, 2010
- LRS and DOE are working on developing a Third Party Agreement for a Transition program to enhance Transition services across the state. Last meeting was held June 3, 2010 at LRS.

BLIND SERVICES/RANDOLPH SHEPPARD

RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD

- LRS filed for federal arbitration against the National Aeronautical and Space Administration's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans. This is due to the fact that the MAF failed to recognize the Randolph-Sheppard priority for their New Orleans property.
As per the recommendation of the U.S. Department of Education, LRS is attempting to negotiate with NASA, and the arbitration process has been temporarily paused for these negotiations; however, due to recent changes in the space program—the ending of the Shuttle program and the abolishment of the Constellation Space Program, the future of the MAF is very much in question at this point.

- LRS provided training to all Randolph-Sheppard managers on our all new Technical Assistance and Guidance Manual. It is our hope that the manual will be finalized and in use by July 1, 2010.
- The Randolph-Sheppard program is investigating the possibility of establishing locations at several new sites around the state, including:
The new Federal City in New Orleans. This location, as it is currently being discussed would not only include vending and food services, but would also include barber and dry cleaning services.

LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF (LCD)

- **Telecommunication Access Program:** Amplified and adaptive phone equipment has been purchased for the telecommunication access program; and delivered by LCD staff to the Regional Service Centers for their distribution to consumers for their personal use in their homes. These technologies allow persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or have speech impairment, to access direct telecommunication and/or relay services.
- **CapTel:** LCD staff has delivered over three hundred CapTel phones to the Regional Service Centers for distribution to consumers for their personal use.
CapTel is a new telecommunication technology designed for persons who are hard of hearing but who can use their voice for speech. Two models of CapTel phones have been purchased – one may be used with either one or two phone lines (the second line expedites the phone call) and the other may be used in conjunction with a computer monitor (via high-speed Internet service) so that when the other person speaks, the printed words show up on the computer screen.
- **Interpreting:** LCD staff continues to work with public and private agencies explaining their responsibilities of providing accommodations to persons whom are Deaf and/or hard of hearing. Interpreting services are an accommodation to communication access for Deaf and hard of hearing persons which is comparable to a wheelchair ramp as an accommodation to physical accessibility for a person in a wheelchair.

Each month, LCD staff provides advocacy and education to those organizations that refuse to provide interpreting services. LCD staff educates these organizations on their responsibilities as set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act; and advises that there are only two justified reasons for non-compliance with this legislation:

The first is if the provision of the accommodation/access to service would substantially change the very nature of the business and what it does; or if provision of the accommodation/access to service would create an 'undue financial burden' which is then determined through an audit of that institution's financial ability.

- **Interpreter Certification:** LCD continues to promote state certification of community interpreters which requires they must: be at least 18 years of age; possess a high school diploma/GED; complete application form with documentation of valid national certification; possess no felony or misdemeanor convictions for offenses which directly relate to the duties and responsibilities of an interpreter/transliterater; abide by state laws, rules and regulations; and abide by the adopted Code of Professional Conduct.