

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

**PROGRAM PLANNING/RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

**STATE PLAN**

- LRS has revised the sections of the state plan requiring revision due to the agency's transfer to the Office of Workforce Development within the Louisiana Workforce Commission. These sections were submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration for consideration of approval.

**IN SERVICE & CSPD INITIATIVES**

- Due to travel restrictions, CSPD recruiting was completed by phone and email contacts this year. Several counselors have shown an interest in starting their Master's training. Two counselors completed their master's Degree this summer and one more is scheduled to complete his degree this quarter. LRS continues to work toward meeting the training goals of the initiative.
- Counselor Training Academy: Dates have been set for October and November to conduct the New Counselor Training Academy. There will be ten new counselors participating in this annual training.
- Deaf Services:

Five of nine counselors serving Deaf Consumers and the Program Coordinator participated in Advocacy Training sponsored by PEPNET in August. Training was held on the LSU campus. Counselors learned more about the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act and accommodation rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers.

**COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRP's)/EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT**

**MINORITY OUTREACH**

- Program Coordinator continues to maintain a relationship with the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation agencies in Louisiana. The program Coordinator attended a 1-day conference hosted by the United Houma Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Services on August 10, 2010.

## **CRPs**

- LRS continues to annually monitor 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 is a participating partner with the Neighborhood Place (NP) facilities located in Sabine Parish (Zwolle & Many).

## **EMPLOYMENT/SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

- LRS, along with the Office of Mental Health, is proposing a pilot program between Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority and LRS, whereby LRS consumers would be referred to JPHSA for placement. If successful, the pilot program could be rolled out statewide. LRS would then partner with other state agencies statewide.
- LRS is ready to participate in the October 2010 National Disability Employment Month Job Fairs that are being held in the eight (8) regions across the state. LRS is leading the charge in the Baton Rouge and Lafayette Job Fairs. The addition of the Louisiana Workforce Commission to LRS will be a significant factor in the overall success of the 2010 Job Fairs and is a win-win for LRS consumers.
- LRS is also working with the state agency Louisiana Economic Development. LRS State Office personnel recently met with Ms. Brenda Bohrer to discuss what programs LED had to offer LRS consumers. It was learned that LED has a number of programs available to consumers to assist them in the establishment of their own businesses, following the LRS consumers completion of UNO's TRAC ExCEL program.

- LRS State Office continues to work closely with the VR Business Network and distributes job leads and other information to LRS' counselors on a weekly basis.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- LRS attends and participates in the monthly Work-Pays Consortium Meetings, the monthly Louisiana Workforce Investment Council Meetings, as well as participation in the High Level Leadership Council meetings.

## **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

- **AT Services Contract Approved**

Dr. Schweitzer has negotiated a multi-year contract with the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) at Louisiana Tech University, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) to provide Engineering and/or Assistive Technology Assessments state-wide. 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 contract, a first since the LRS merger with the LWC, Office of Workforce Development, represents a 3-year commitment to provide state-of-the-art assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services to our 8 Regional offices, between 1 July, 2010 and 31 June, 2013.

- **Partnership with LATAN**

LRS continues to coordinate with Louisiana Assistive Technology Access 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.

LATAN, as a Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) has participated with LRS in planning for emergency response for persons with disabilities. LATAN, the Red Cross, Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) have conducted training to assist individuals with their personal planning for evacuations. The training is for volunteers, personal care attendants and other shelter personnel who may assist persons who require assistive technology in the Critical Transit-Needs Shelters (CTNS) and Red Cross Shelters (ARCS). Jamie Karam, of LATAN has acquired wheelchairs, shower-chairs, walkers, vision-aids and other devices to pre-

position within the CTNS facilities prior to the declaration of an emergency. The distribution of this equipment, on loan to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) will be coordinated by Kimberly Bardell.

➤ **Accessible/Affordable Housing**

LRS participates with the Department of Health and Hospital (DHH) task force to increase consumer awareness and access to “affordable-accessible” housing. The AT Program Coordinator is a member of the Capitol Area Consumer Housing Advocacy Network (CACHAN). The purpose of CACHAN is to assist persons with disabilities to exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act(1988) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990).

➤ **Boards and Commissions**

The AT Program Coordinator continues to provide review of ADA Accessibility Guidelines for new construction of business and organizations serving the public, in coordination with the State Fire Marshall’s office.

The AT Program Coordinator continues to provide review and serve as a voting board member on the Department of Labor (DOL) Second Injury Fund Board, which meets monthly. This is a program mandated by the State of Louisiana to control and reduce the costs of 2<sup>nd</sup> Injury medical insurance settlements.

**PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND PROGRAM SERVICES**

**INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- The Community and Family Support Program was transferred to the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Aging and Adult Services effective July 1, 2010.
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Program Coordinator continues to provide technical assistance as needed.

## **LOUISIANA REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Council held two regular meetings and one special meeting in the first quarter of State Fiscal Year 2011. The meeting on July 8-9, 2010 was in Shreveport and on September 9-10, 2010 the Council held a joint meeting with the Statewide Independent Living Council in Baton Rouge. A special meeting was called on August 17, 2010 in Baton Rouge to discuss the placement of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services within the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Mr. Curt Eysink, Executive Director of Louisiana Workforce Commission, and Mr. Johnny Riley, Director of the Office of Workforce Development, were in attendance.
- The next scheduled meeting is November 4-5, 2010 in Metairie, LA. The LRC meeting dates for SFY 2011 are:
  - January 27-28, 2011 in Baton Rouge
  - March 24-25, 2011 in Monroe
  - May 26-27, 2011 in Baton Rouge
- In SFY 2010, the council also held meetings in Lake Charles, Lafayette, Alexandria, and Baton Rouge.
- The Council has 25 members to date. There are no vacancies.

## **OPERATIONAL PLAN**

- State Fiscal Year 2010 Fourth Quarter Performance Indicators were reported in September 2010. LRS Performance Indicators for State Fiscal Year 2011 have been integrated into Performance Indicators of the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Department of Health and Hospitals.

## **LEGISLATION**

- House Bill 1198 was signed into ACT 939 and on July 1, 2010 the regulatory authority for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) was transferred from the Department of Social Service (DSS) to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH).  
Programs under LRS that transferred 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 that transferred 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)

### **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.

### **TRANSITION**

- The Program Coordinator is a member of the Transition Learning Collaborative team. Regular conference calls are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 July 13, 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.
- LRS and DOE are working on a Third Party Agreement for a Transition program to enhance Transition services across the state. Last Workgroup meeting was held September 23, 2010 at LRS.
- Program Coordinator attended the Transition Summit sponsored by the Louisiana Association of Principals held in Marksville, LA September 14, 2010.

### **BLIND SERVICES/RANDOLPH SHEPPARD**

#### **RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD**

- LRS is working on a new Randolph-Sheppard location at the new Federal City in New Orleans. Randolph-Sheppard staff and members of the

elected committee will be scheduling a walk through of the proposed location in the very near future. It is expected that the facility will be open in May, 2011.