



A Case Study of State VR Agency Program Management Practices

STUDY FACT SHEET

What is the purpose of the case study and how will it benefit our state VR agency and the VR field?

The Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB) is conducting case studies on state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency practices to effectively manage rehabilitation services. The study focuses particularly on strategic planning (SP), quality assurance (QA), and human resource management (HRM). The purpose of the study is to highlight effective management practices and to share this valuable information with other state VR agencies. The information obtained from this process with agencies such as yours will inform the development of a VR Program Management Model applicable to other state VR agencies. This project is funded by NIDRR and RSA.

How was our state VR agency selected?

We conducted a comprehensive nomination process for potential case study sites that included recommendations from peers, experts, the study's Advisory Board, technical assistance providers, and funders, including RSA. During this process, your agency was consistently nominated as a leader in structuring effective management practices within a state-federal VR context and was thus selected as a potential case study site.

What will our state VR agency and staff be expected to do?

If your agency agrees to participate in this research, we would like you to assign a staff member to be the main contact for your agency and to assist with retrieving relevant documents and identifying staff for interviews. We would like to conduct a multi-day (3-4 days) site visit during which we would interview administrative and managerial staff who are knowledgeable about your agency's overall program management approach and who may have more specialized knowledge in SP, QA, and HRM.

Staff targeted for interviews would include the agency director, the assistant director, the client / field services manager, the planning and QA manager, the HR manager, and any other relevant staff. Also included would be management level staff in other public agencies within your state that are related to the conduct of VR management (such as HR personnel, Management Information Systems personnel, and finance personnel) as well as other entities (such as the State Rehabilitation Council). Selected staff will be asked to participate in one face-to-face or telephone interview with a project / research staff. Interviews are expected to last between 45 and 60 minutes and will be tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewee. Interview questions will be made available to staff before the interview.

What are the risks of the case study?

There are minimal risks to all participants in this study. The interviews are not intended to be a performance measure of any indicators in your state, nor are they measures of the success or challenges of any administrators and managers. Participants will be assured that any personal data they provide in the interview will be excluded from the case study description and any other products resulting from this research.

Is agency / staff participation voluntary and will data be kept confidential?

Participation in the case studies is voluntary. Staff who participate in the interviews may skip any question they do not wish to answer or that makes them feel uncomfortable. The data obtained through the interviews will not be confidential due to interviewees' position as public employees. However, state VR agencies and their staff will have the opportunity to review and comment on the case study description before dissemination.

Contact for questions or for more information:

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Contact for questions about your rights as a study participant:

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The ICI and its partner, InfoUse, have been funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (Grant # H133A090002) to jointly establish this Center. The purpose of the RTAC on VR Program Management is to identify, test, and disseminate effective VR management practices with the goal to build a program management model for the public VR system.

