



Helping People with Developmental Disabilities Reach Their Maximum Potential

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December 28, 2022

Report of National Core Indicators (NCI) Governing Board Meeting December 14, 2022 Report of Data from 2020 to 2021 In-Person Survey

General Information

Posted to Valley Mountain Regional Center Website
November 10, 2022

Information regarding the meeting was provided to the consumers, families and stakeholders December 9, 2022

Public comments made at the Governing Board Meeting

-What languages was the survey provided in for written and in home communication?
Response: The information was provided in various languages for written communication and all in-person interviews were provided in the language the person needed it.

- What was the return rate of the survey?

- Was the survey's returned reflective of the community diversity?

Response: The representative from SCDD did not have the specific data at the time of the meeting.

Review of Data

The legislature ensures a review of the well-being of individuals served as well as their access to information and choices. People served by Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) should receive quality services that lead to their success in life. Taking the time to interview the people served is important to provide feedback to VMRC to ensure people are being supported in the way they want to be supported. The ability to feel satisfied, knowledgeable, and supported by the regional center is a key to future successes. Comparing the results from the 2020/21 In

person interviews to the previous review in 2017/18 will help set a foundation for growth and support for families.

These interviews were conducted with 402 people supported by VMRC. These are people who have at least one service beyond Service Coordination. Making sure that people who receive services or do not live at home with family have choices and decision-making authority over their lives. 2020/21 brought unique challenges to the system with the global pandemic. Even though VMRC meets or exceeds the state average it is clear that the pandemic brought forward challenges in providing people we support with choice. There was a decrease from 70% of people choosing where they live to 52%. Choice in housemates, staff or daily scheduling also decreased along with the state averages. The pandemic is providing staffing stressors to an already tightly staffed vendor community. Homes closed or were not able to bring new people into the homes during much of this time. This could have had a significant impact on people feeling like they had lost some of the choices they may have had in the past. VMRC continues to develop homes that are not only HCBS "final rule" compliant but will provide people the opportunity to choose where they live and how they live. The staffing issues continue to remain a concern, but it is important to see that people have choices and the positive control of their life.

The hands and minds that are idle do not allow people to be happy and productive members of their community. People who choose to work should have those opportunities. 37% of people who were interviewed report that they are taking classes or gaining skills to get a job. This is an increase from the 33% in the 2017-18 interviews. Attendance at traditional day programs has decreased while volunteering has increased. This represents some growth in people being able to gain employment. The percentage of people we support attending traditional day program is higher than the state average. More of an effort can be developed to support more people in obtaining gainful employment. Just as important as employment is the opportunity to be included in the community and have opportunities for leisure. This is another area of life that the pandemic has had significant impact on. The state and VMRC indicate the percentage of people being in the community and doing things they like or want has been greatly reduced. VMRC exceeds the state percentages in aspects of being in the community however the results are not representative of pre-pandemic levels. Relationships with people have also decreased over the 2020/21 time frames from 74% to 69%. This could also be consistent with the isolation that many Americans experienced during the pandemic. VMRC will continue to work with people we support to gain more community integration and maintain relationships.

Services and support put into place to support someone is great but if they are unhappy then these supports may not be helpful for someone. Making sure that a person is happy with this support helps give them control and choices as well as helps them have a good life. While the pandemic had a great effect on how services delivery was completed it is still important to ensure that people have quality supports that they are happy with. Even though it was difficult to find support for people to live where they wanted VMRC saw an increase from 87% (2017/18) to 92% (2020/21) of people saying they were happy where they lived. This increase in percentage continues to be very close to the state average of 93%. People who did not like their home mostly reported they wanted to be closer to their friends or family (13%) or wanted

to be more independent (23%). This is something that can be improved upon as we assist people looking for residence or roommates. A more person-centered focus needs to be placed on matching people better. The people who attend traditional day programs seem to be happy overall. 35% of people reported they want more time at program but 48% reported that they are happy with the amount of time they already are at program. VMRC continues to try to help people who want gainful employment to receive it but people who choose to remain in traditional programs to be happy with these services. The 2020/21 survey included different questions about having more access to the community through activities like shopping, entertainment, going to restaurants/coffee shops and religious services. Of course, since people were asked to stay at home due to the pandemic all if these results indicated that people wanted to do more of these types of activities. The hope is that now that pandemic restrictions have been lifted people are getting in the community more often. It will be interesting to compare these percentages in future surveys. The most important question is if services and support help the person have a good life. In the 2017/18 survey 90% of people provided positive feedback and in 2020/21 the percentage increased to 91%. This percentage is consistent with the state average. VMRC would like to continue to strive to increase helping people we serve has a good life.

Recommendations and Plans

The information obtained from these in-person interviews is very valuable and will allow for changes to be made that will help provide better service for the people we support. The positive feedback that VMRC has received as a result of this survey shows that there has been an effort made to make sure people have a voice and choices in their life. As always this is an area where more effort can be made. VMRC continues to focus on being a person centered agency, by training new trainers and making sure that all staff participate in the trainings when they start or as needed. Training to be person centered will allow people we service to have improved choices in their life because the person-centered way of thinking focuses on providing the person served with the power to have the choices in their life.

The community continues to make clear that a focus of support needs to be employment. VMRC has made progress in helping people achieve meaningful and gainful employment, but it is still not enough. As a regional center we need to continue to focus on assisting people who want to work. Employment needs to go beyond a job as part of a traditional day program but also gainful employment. Continuing to have our employment specialist help make connections with potential employers can build resources in the community. Not everyone is ready for employment so developing some type of pre-employment training could benefit people supported in their employment journey. VMRC will continue to renew the effort to help people obtain employment and the training needed to become employed.

The pandemic has changed the world and how services and support are delivered to the people that we support. There are no longer stay at home orders in place but we also have to be aware when we are in the community. Helping support people we service to understand the changes in the post-pandemic world while supporting them to increase meaningful community

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access is key to helping integrate people into the community successfully. This time of people coming back together in the community is the perfect opportunity to help support the people we serve to really become members of the community. VMRC continues to be committed to providing the best services and support to individuals within our catchment area.