

Disability Commission Meeting

September 21, 2005



Order of Selection

- **From July 1, 2004 to July 31, 2005, there were about 780 individuals placed on the waiting list for services. 360 in Category 4 and 420 in Category 3.**
- **DRS has four categories:**
 - **1) Individuals with most significant disabilities (has a significant disability that results in serious functional limitations in three or more functional capacities).**
 - **2) Individuals with significant disabilities that results in serious functional limitations in two functional capacities.**
 - **3) Individuals with significant disabilities that result in a serious functional limitation in one functional capacity.**
 - **4) All other individuals determined eligible for the VR program.**
- **DRS has contacted the 420 in Category 3 to notify them that DRS can provide them services. The 360 in Category 4 are still on the waiting list.**
- **Historically, DRS provides “cost services” to about 1200 non-significantly disabled consumers per year. Cost of providing services to this group is about \$970 per consumer.**

PAS Update

- **173 people were served in FY 2005 using state General Funds**
- **9 people were served using Brain Injury state general Funds**
- **Average annual cost per consumer is \$14,541**
- **The program currently has 7 people on a waiting list**

State General Funds PAS	\$2,595,472
State General Funds BI PAS	80,000
Total State General Funds	\$2,675,472

- **All PAS consumers would be in or be eligible for an institutional/nursing home placement were it not for this program created by the Disability Commission.**

Better Serving Virginians with Disabilities through One Stops

Over the past few years, Virginia government has been involved in efforts to better coordinate services through our emerging One Stop System for Workforce Development Services. The success that Virginians with disabilities has had in this system has been mixed.

Recently, VEC and DRS collaborated on a proposal to the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. We are currently negotiating this award, but it will likely increase the current number of Disability Program Navigators working with the Workforce Investment Grant round IV from five FTE's to fourteen FTEs, and would expand the direct service region from 11 WIBs to all 17 of Virginia's WIBs. This proposal requests \$1,999,830 over two years and if approved, would cover all costs associated with personnel, training, communication and travel, plus funds to enhance the accessibility of one-stop centers.

The Disability Program Navigators' primary objective is to increase employment and self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities served through the Workforce Network. Disability Program Navigators ensure that One-Stop staff possess and demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and skills to assist jobseekers with disabilities to "navigate" through available programs and services. Disability Program Navigators are intended to complement, rather than duplicate, existing services, such as vocational rehabilitation and BPAOs. The Disability Program Navigators' priorities are to facilitate partner and consumer relationships, to develop one stop and partner staff knowledge and competencies, to provide assistance with employer outreach, and to enhance program and physical accessibility of the Workforce Centers.

DRS and VEC feel quite certain that these positions will significantly increase the service capacity of the One Stops relative to services to Virginians with disabilities.

Emerging Issue—Transition of Youth from School to Work

- **One of the greatest emerging issues, DRS and the other Disability Services Agencies face is the effective transition of students with disabilities from school to work. Virginia was and continues to be a leader in cooperative planning among agencies to design effective systems. In the mid 80s, Virginia received one of the planning grants that resulted in our PERT program.**
- **The Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Program, collaboratively administered by the Virginia Departments of Education and Rehabilitative Services through an interagency Management Team and operated from the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC), is a highly effective school-to-work transition initiative for eligible youth with disabilities in participating local school divisions. The program is at a crossroads in terms of the identification of an expanded funding base to meet its current and projected growth patterns and in terms of programmatic and staffing pattern changes required to more effectively serve a changing population profile.**

Student Profile

- Similarities (stable trends):
 - Average Age: 16 years, 7 months
 - Race: 60% Caucasian; 36% African American; 4% Native American/Hispanic/Other
 - English as Primary Language
- Variances (shifting trends):

Fiscal Year	Top 3 Primary Disabilities of Persons Served	Percentage of Persons Served with Multiple Disabilities
FY '00	SLD: 48.4% MR: 28.6% ED: 13.0%	1: 5.0% 2+: 48.1% 3+: 46.9%
FY '02	SLD: 46.9% MR: 29.0% ED: 11.2%	1: 29.3% 2+: 35.3% 3+: 35.4%
FY '04	SLD: 44.4% MR: 29.7% ED: 14.9%	1: 11.4% 2+: 41.9% 3+: 46.7%
FY '05 (YTD)	SLD: 36.1% MR: 29.1% ED: 18.8%	1: 4.5% 2+: 28.8% 3+: 66.8%

Summary Profile

- **Students in PERT have demonstrated significant increases in the needs for multiple services due to a shift from the primary disability being Mental Retardation from Significant Learning Disability and the increase in Emotional Disability has increased by 5% over the last five years.**
- **Current School Divisions Served: 114**
- **School Divisions not served: 22**
- **Average number of students served per year: 525**
- **Potential number who could benefit from services: 1593**
- **Reduction of number served without additional funding: 158**
- **Current funding level: \$1.6m**

Summary Profile (con't)

PERT Impact on Wage Earning Capacity

An ongoing study by DRS and DOE staff along with faculty from University of Richmond indicates that the PERT experience is a determinant factor in the difference in earning capacity of DRS clients—those with PERT versus others in control group that did not go through PERT—and this difference in earning capacity approaches \$5000 by the fourth year of work after DRS closure (the first three years usually involve some type of vocational training or post secondary education).

Life Skills Transition Program

One lesson we have learned is that one of the greatest benefits realized through PERT is the opportunity for the student to be away from home. Living and learning at WWRC in a therapeutic and facilitative environment is a critical factor to the success of this program and the students served.

WWRC is in the process of piloting a new service— Life Skills Transition Program. The continuum of transition services will include expansion of the Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Program for services to a secondary school population between 16 and 20 years of age. A recently re-designed Life Skills Transition Program targets an older secondary school population between 18 and 22 years of age.

In contrast to these more traditional rehabilitation programs, the Life Skills Transition Program incorporates a holistic approach to assist the targeted population in reaching their employment and independent living goals through the development and refinement of pre-employment behaviors and social, interpersonal, and independent living skills over an 8 week period, with classes and behavioral intervention activities available from 8 AM – 10:30 PM daily. Students participate based on individually assessed needs and interests. The targeted population for participation in the Life Skills Transition Program requires intense, comprehensive transition services by a team of dedicated staff, with disability and behavior management expertise, knowledge of adolescent and family dynamics and school-to-work transition issues.

Life Skills Transition Program (con't)

The pilot program is modeled on the highly successful PERT program, with transition resource specialists working with educators, rehabilitation counselors and family members before, during, and after the residential component of the program. The Life Skills Transition Program begins where the PERT program ends, providing therapeutic intervention defined in an individualized education plan (IEP) aimed at improving the chances of employment and independent living.

Number served without additional funding: 120

Potential number who could benefit from services: 1337

This does not necessarily include certain students in our Correctional and TANF programs, who would also benefit from such a Life Skills Transition Program.