



Minnesota Region 10 Quality Assurance Commission

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Value
Of
Individual
Choices and
Experiences

Progress Report Fall 2007

The **Region 10 Stakeholders** are a group of people from the eleven counties in Region 10 Minnesota who volunteer their time. They meet three times per year and work to improve the support system for individuals with developmental disabilities and brain injuries. Stakeholders are people who receive support services, family members, conservators, advocates, interested citizens, support providers, educators, county representatives and state representatives. There is NO election process. Anyone who wants to attend the Stakeholder meetings is welcome to attend. If you would like more information on the Stakeholder Meetings, you can contact Dan Zimmer at (507) 287-2032 or 1-888-732-8520.

October 4th Stakeholder Meeting, RAMADA INN, 1 – 3:30 PM

Back in 1995, our Region 10 Stakeholders formed and began discussing together issues centered on people with disabilities and their needs, wants and dreams. From this effort, Region 10 Quality Assurance and our process of **VOICE** sprang forth. I am sure that when they started to meet they had no idea where the discussion would lead to. Now on October 4th this same group is looking to tackle another huge issue – our funding system!

Speakers Alex Bartolic, the new Director at DHS and Anne Henry, from the Disability Law Center and will be on hand to talk about “What are the Barriers and Rules in the funding system that are getting in the way of people with disabilities getting what they need?” Hear real stories about real people and see how these barriers and rules affect them.

Then, WE, the Stakeholders will reform our small work groups called ‘pods’. Bring your thoughts, ideas and plans to improve this system. Who knows what we can do this time!

DHS News

This summer we have experienced changes at DHS. We sadly said goodbye to Rebecca Godfrey. In her short stay at DHS she was very active and supportive of our efforts. She became highly involved in our Commission Meetings, facilitated the State Legislative QA Panel (see our website for the final report) and was dusting off our 1115 waiver! We will miss her.

But there have been good changes as well at DHS! Alex Bartolic has come in as a new Director. Jason Flint has been brought on as our new DHS QA support. In a brief time, both have shown great support for **VOICE** and Region 10 Quality Assurance. There is a feeling of cooperation, affirmation of basic beliefs, and desire to work together. We will continue to build on these feelings by showing them the value of **VOICE** as well as supporting them with their new DHS efforts.

QA Commission News

This summer we welcomed new Commission Members into our group - Donna Garratt (parent), Hulet Sherry (self advocate), Judy Wandling (provider), and Linda Driessen (provider). We know that they each bring different strengths, knowledge and dedication to our group. We look forward to working together with them these next years.

We also elected new leadership.

Chair - Kurt Rutzen (self advocate)

Vice Chair – Jennifer Bagne-Walsh (county)

Treasurer - Harry Nevling (parent)

Secretary - Barbara Zoelle Johnson (county)

Committee Work

Expansion Committee – Have been meeting through conference calls with the three expansion pilot projects in our state – Region 1 QA, Region 9 QA and Wright/Sherburne QA. These meetings have generally been a means for these areas to update us on their progress, share barriers and frustrations that they are encountering and problem solve. Some highlights from the summer include:

Mary Fenske needed to step down as the main point person for Wright/Sherburne. They recently appointed Lorraine Skordah to take Mary's place.

Arc Greater Twin Cities has begun to join our discussions and are looking at viable means to bring **VOICE** to the Twin Cities.

Each three expansion areas have QATs, are facilitating **VOICE** reviews, and are continuing in the development of stakeholder groups. At the same time they are facing tough barriers of lack of county support, **VOICE** reviews being completed in a timely manner and gaining provider supported QATs.

Our next meeting will be held in Duluth MN during the October Arc MN Conference. Those not in Duluth will still be able to connect to the meeting via conference call.

VOICE Assessment and Review Committee – VAR has been very busy on two current efforts. First it is breaking down the barriers list that is generated through **VOICE** Reviews. Individual barriers have been placed in a larger categories and VAR is examining and discussing options we can take to eliminate or reduce these barriers. Sometimes these ideas might be forwarded to another QA committee such as the Education Committee or Legislative Committee. Other times it can be moved broadly to the county, Arc SE MN or our Region 10 Stakeholders. We forwarded onto the Region 10 Stakeholder Steering Committee the increasing issue of funding barriers for people and are pleased to see that the next meeting in October is focused on that (see above!). As VAR goes forward with their completion of the Barriers Report, we look forward to new efforts developed to attack them.

The second project of VAR is a Region 10 survey of quality circle members. It has been some time since the last survey was done to determine how effect **VOICE** has been for people. We are confident that we will be able to start the survey in the beginning of 2008. We hope to gain understanding of how everyone feels **VOICE** is doing, what can be improved and how do we compare from the 2002 survey.

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