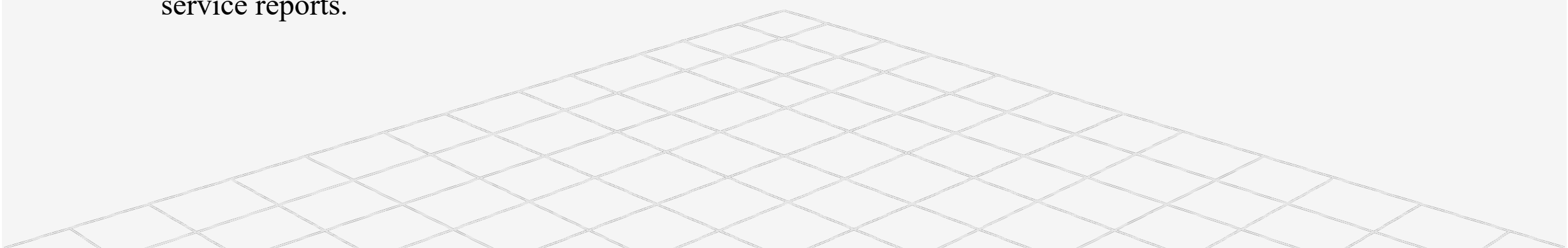


Case Service Reporting: Meeting Guidelines for WIOA and Supporting Documentation

Brittney Downing, M.S.
Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitative Services
PEQA Capstone Project 2020



Background

- Over the last several years, the Rehabilitation Service Administration has revised the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, to include the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014. Since WIOA implementation, agencies have had an increased responsibility to collect data, train staff, and provide supporting documentation on case services.
 - Some examples of reporting changes include:
 - Collecting additional data elements on program participant barriers,
 - Performance reports to help identify measurable skill gains and credentials,
 - Follow-up on program participant closures to identify wages and sustainability and required quarterly case service reports.
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Research

- The implementation of these changes are monitored through common performance measures which provide standards for each agency under WIOA.
 - ❑ This research assesses the effectiveness of INDDRS's data system, training, and business process modifications to adhere to these changes.
 - ❑ Furthermore, this research provides survey response feedback from Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors on the processes in place, training provided, as well as the impact of the WIOA changes on their daily job duties.

During this transition to implementing WIOA, particularly the challenges, it is important to remind staff among the changes that it is “processes, not people that are the subject of evaluation and the object of continuous improvement” (Leahy, Thielsen, Millington, Austin, and Fleming, 2009).

Purpose of the Study



Goal 1: To determine the challenges with implementing WIOA within the VR agency.



Goal 2: To assess effectiveness and understanding of WIOA collaboration and data requirements by field staff.



Goal 3: To determine the effectiveness of current business processes, training, and resources to collect data.

Methods

Research Design:

In order to assess the changes and challenges from WIOA, a survey was created using Qualtrics. This survey contained nine questions; with either multiple choice or true/false options, with some free field text for 'other' responses to capture both qualitative and quantitative data.

Target Population:

This survey was sent out via email to all 171 vocational rehabilitation counselors working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services; including itinerant vocational rehabilitation counselors (working lead counselors) and trainee vocational rehabilitation counselors.

Data Collection Technique:

The initial survey link was sent via email with a hyperlink and basic instructions on 3/11/2020; with a survey due date of 3/16/2020. A follow-up reminder was sent on 3/16/2020 requesting participants to complete the survey by the end of the business day.

Validation of the Study

Out of 171 surveys sent, 110 were completed, providing a response rate of 64.3%.

The survey tool link was available to Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation counselors for five days, which provided the opportunity to complete the survey throughout the workday.

The results are limited to Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Results

To Determine the Challenges with Implementing WIOA within the VR Agency MSG's, Credentials and Employment Verification


For MSGs, 33% had difficulty obtaining responses from participants, 32% noted difficulty obtaining the documentation from participants to support the MSG's, 21% had difficulty determining if a program meets the criteria, 8% no issues; and 6% "other" such as documenting 12 credit hours, completing screens.

For credentials, it was reported that 36% had difficulty obtaining responses, 33% had difficulty obtaining documentation, 18% had difficulty determining if a program met the credential criteria, 12% no issues, and 2% "other" such as difficulty obtaining details from the participant.

For obtaining employment information, 40% noted difficulty obtaining responses from participants, while 28% had difficulty obtaining documentation, 25 % had no issues, and 7% noted "other" such as difficulty if participant gets job on their own, improved ability with wages in Aware, and difficulty entering details without errors (possible plan goal-job goal match).

Results

To Determine the Challenges with Implementing WIOA within the VR Agency Follow-up on Closed Cases



For **Follow-ups on closed cases**, roughly **90% of collective responses noted difficulty contacting the participant**; either being unable to contact or locate the participant despite multiple attempts (34%), the participants phone number or address being invalid (29%), and/or the participant opting not to provide the information (28%). The margining 5% noted 'no issues' and 4% used the text field to note 'n/a or most participants not told at closure about the follow-up, making them not wanting to respond'.

Results

To Determine the Challenges with Implementing WIOA within the VR Agency Length of Time as a VRC and Overall Impact

Length of time as a VRC; the majority, 33% were between 2-4 years, 32% less than two years, 23% 5-10 years; and 13% ten years or greater.

Regarding the overall WIOA changes and impact on job duties, 39% noted no change, 28% noted a negative change, 6% noted positive change, 9% noted initially negative due to increased training, however, now experience neutral or positive change, and 18% noted 'other' comments such as: primarily that these changes took **time** away from the ability to work with open active cases, collecting the additional data was effecting the **overall joy** of the job, and that the number of cases requiring follow-up **continues** to grow.



Results:

To Determine the Effectiveness of Current Business Processes, Training, and Resources to Collect Data Applying the Training and Process Related Responses Overall



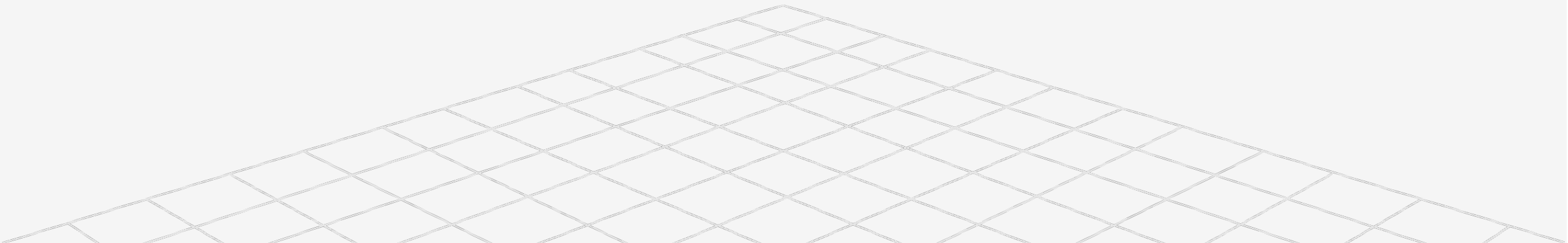
Overall Findings

- Overall findings indicated staff have difficulty with obtaining documentation, finding time to capture data elements, and receiving responses from participants after case closures needed for follow-up requirements
- Strategies to aid in resolving these challenges include:
 - Additional training on techniques and documentation needs,
 - Re-allocation of responsibilities to assist with managing time and caseloads, and
 - Future agency endeavors to seek data exchange interfaces to obtain documentation and reduce front line administrative tasks as much as possible.

Research Recommendations

Based on the capstone results, there are three primary areas that will be focused on improving based on the findings:

- (1) Assist in providing additional training to staff in the identified areas,
- (2) Explore options to reduce the time required to complete follow-up by leaning processes and allocating to a new staff role (case coordinators),
- (3) Pursue DOE and SWIS interfaces to obtain follow-up and other WIOA information to reduce burden on field staff.



Agency Response

- ❖ (1) Additional Training Provided along with quick reference sheets
 - ❖ One-hour webinar provided to assist
 - ❖ Guidance reference sheets created to assist in understanding MSG, Credentials, Closure Follow-up and documentation requirements

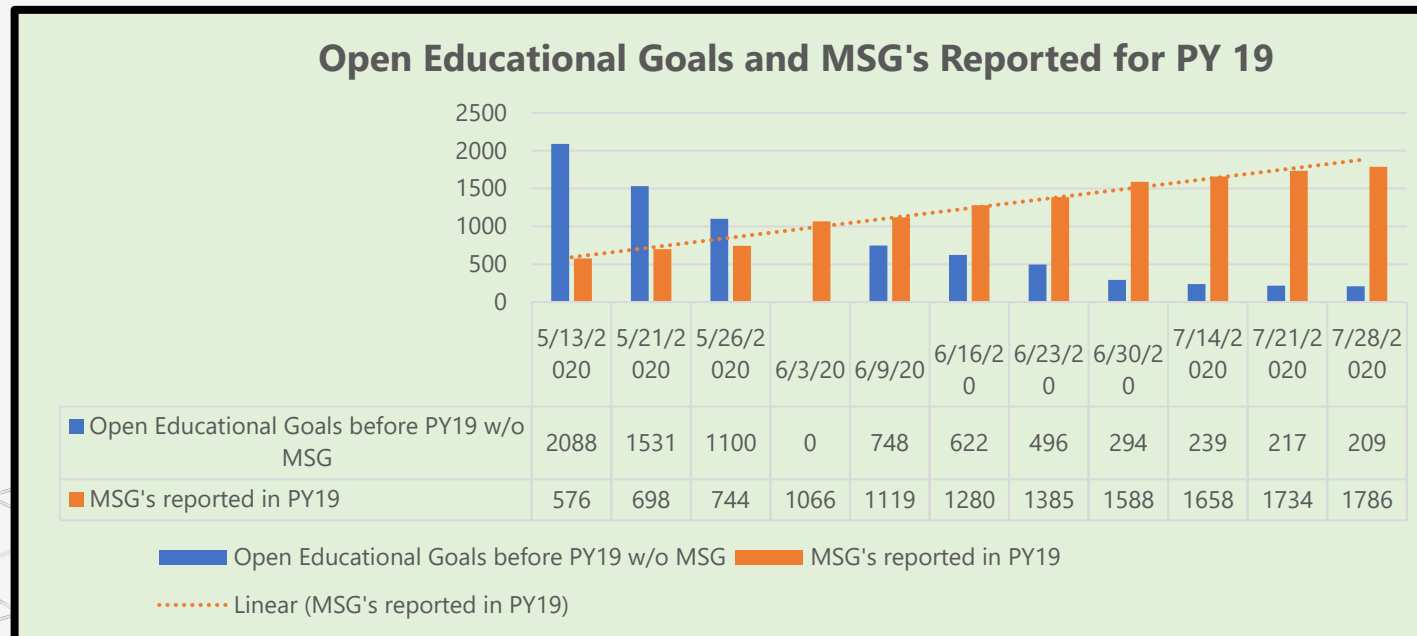
- ❖ (2) Re-allocated tasks to other roles to assist
 - ❖ WIOA follow-up calls and letters. Uploaded a WIOA follow-up letter into the system for mass generation.
 - ❖ Utilized case coordinators and secretary roles to assist with closure follow-ups

- ❖ (3) Pursued interfaces to obtain wage and potential education information to reduce workload on field staff.
 - ❖ Finalizing SWIS agreement Information
 - ❖ Pursuing Data Sharing Agreement with Management Performance Hub (MPH)

Agency Response (continued)

❖ Reviewed Current Data for Baseline

- ❖ Assessed open educational goals in the new case management system and identified goals that were open longer than one year with no MSG reported in the last performance year and or at all.
- ❖ Identified due to data entry prior to additional data elements and system changes, data needed to be reviewed and updated as appropriate. (Some educational goals were open since 2002 during date of application) counting as the denominator to the performance measure.
- ❖ Developed a project with region manager support, weekly providing excel spreadsheets of open educational goals greater than one year with no MSG for review. This included a breakdown by region, area office, and caseload. Monitored weekly for six weeks.



Contact Information

Brittney Downing, M.S., LCAC

Associate Director of Administrative Services

Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitative Services

Email: Brittney.Downing@fssa.in.gov

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/brittnydowning

