

Implementation, Evaluation and Integration of Projects

TACE Consortium
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Session Objectives

- Provide Overview of Southeast TACE Pilot Projects
- Review Implementation, Evaluation and Sustainment Strategies
- Discuss Impact of Pilots
- Discuss Lessons Learned

Overview

- Since late 2009, Southeast TACE has partnered with state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to integrate innovative practices within the VR service delivery mainstream.
- Several southeast states are piloting or integrating approaches Customized Employment and Asset Development

Background:

Southeast Region

- Largest region in of counselors and CRPs
- Diverse service delivery systems
 - Almost Total Outsourcing
 - Almost Total Insourcing
- Diversity in size and resources
- Diversity in levels of partnerships

Background

- VR criticized by DD and MH agencies for lack of effectiveness in working with individuals with most significant disabilities
- Traditional models of assessment and job development ineffective with MSD population
- Some agencies dabbled in Customized Employment unsuccessfully in the past

Goal of Innovations initiative

Increase the capacity of
state agencies & their community partners
to improve employment & self-sufficiency
outcomes
for individuals with
the most significant disabilities

Premise of the Innovations initiative

- VR system has poor outcomes & limited strategies for serving individuals with the most significant disabilities even in order of selection stats.
- It takes change in systems and practice to build this capacity.
- Our experience is that isolated trainings, or mass edicts, do not work.

Premise of the Innovations initiative, cont.

- Phased strategy
 - Provides an incubator to understand & address feasibility and systems implications before taking it to scale.
 - Allows the agency to try the practice out, get their feet wet, make it their own, get buy-in.
 - Builds credibility at administrative and service delivery levels because they have experienced & influenced the process.

Hypothesis

- System change has more traction with a phased, systems approach

Description of Pilots

- Florida
 - Customized Employment – Transition
 - VR, School System, CRPs
 - Discovery Certification
 - Performance-based online credentialing process
 - Discovery – FL DBS Residential Rehabilitation Ctr
- Mississippi
 - Customized Employment – Adult
 - Integration into agency service delivery system

Description of Pilots, cont.

- Georgia
 - Customized Employment – Transition and Adult
 - Multi-partner approach
 - Discovery – Residential Rehabilitation Center
- Kentucky
 - Customized Employment – Adult
 - VR and CRPs
 - Asset Development
 - Transition

Background:

Description of Pilots, cont.

- North Carolina
 - Asset Development (Gen.)
 - Partnerships
 - VR Training
 - Discovery (alternative assessment)– Transition (Blind)

Current status of Innovations initiative

- 5 Southeast states
- 7 state agencies
- 10 projects in various stages of design or implementation, focused on...
 - Aspects of Customized Employment (8)
 - Asset Development (2)
- 5 have completed a pilot & are considering/ implementing further adoption strategies.

Planning process

- Meet with agency leadership/staff re. goals, success measures, strategy
- Develop concept paper
- Assign project manager
- Develop project scope and plan
- Identify partners/resources
- Choose pilot sites (usually 2 or 3)

Implementation Process

- Conduct performance-based training
 - Teams of VR agency staff and partners
 - Jobseekers
- Facilitate partnerships and infrastructure supports through on going technical assistance

Evaluation Purposes

- To assess the impact of the Innovations initiative on VR adoption of emerging employment practices in order to improve outcomes for jobseekers with the most significant disabilities

Evaluation Purposes

- To continuously improve the Southeast TACE Innovations approach
 - Methods
 - Process
 - Protocols/Tools
 - Resources
 - Ongoing evaluation
- To develop a resource library supporting dissemination & replication in the Southeast

Evaluation Design Principles

- Demonstrate value of Innovations approach to support adoption of emerging practices.
- Assess impact to date of individual projects and initiative as a whole.
- Directly connect results with the intervention.

Evaluation Design

- Targets
 - Outputs
 - Trainings conducted, numbers trained
 - Meetings facilitated
 - Models/Curricula/Reports produced
 - Impact
 - Change in attitude/behavior, i.e., awareness/understanding/utilization of the practice
 - Systems changes, e.g., partnerships and infrastructure measures to operationalize the practice

Evaluation Design

- Targets
 - Return on investment: Start-up & operational costs, value-added
 - Customer satisfaction: Agency/Partner assessment of the project experience & the quality of TACE services
 - Jobseeker outcomes
 - Completed profiles
 - Job placements

Evaluation Design

- Project Status
 - Completed the pilot or training phase (at least), and
 - Taken or are considering measures to ramp up
- Types of data
 - Quantitative (trainings conducted, # participants, active practitioners, etc.)
 - Qualitative (partnerships & infrastructure, attitudes & behavior)

Evaluation Design

- Data sources
 - Reports & other documentation (communications, products, etc.)
 - Southeast TACE team (staff & consultants involved in development of the initiative, design and execution of projects, etc.)
 - Agency leadership
 - Project leads & participants (incl. jobseekers and their families)

Documentation of findings

- Individual project reports for local teams to use in further implementation.
- Aggregate discussion document for focus group to share experiences and identify cross-cutting themes/recommendations.
- White paper for broader dissemination.

Impact: Policy/Regulation

- CE/Discovery defined/endorsed as discrete services in policy/regulation (KY, MS, GA)
- CE/Discovery included in VR 3-year plan (FL DVR)
- Fee code changes
 - Formal code changes for CE & Discovery (MS)
 - Draft code for Customized Supported Employment (GA)
 - Fee codes to purchase CE services during pilot (FL, KY)
- Long term supports
 - FL: DD agencies
 - GA: MOUs between GVRA and DD, MH
 - KY: HCBS waiver – require referral to VR

Impact

- **Internal Capacity-building**
 - Creation/Modification of staff positions to support CE
 - Creating mentor/support teams
- **Provider/Partner Capacity-building**
 - Outreach/Funding strategies to train/develop a pool of VR-approved CRPs (GA)
 - Communities of practice (FL, MS, GA)
 - Mentoring strategies (MS, FL-DVR, KY)
 - University-based training or credentialing program in progress (GA, FL-DVR, KY)

Impact

- **Strengthened Partnerships**

- School Districts (early collaboration for youth in transition)
- Employment First
- DD and MH agencies
- Joint outreach & tracking strategies
- Shared recognition that CE is a cross-system continuum of services requiring collaboration
- Reduced 'finger pointing'

Impact

- **Awareness of CE as an option:**
Leaders, staff, partners, advocates, jobseekers/families are increasingly aware of (even requesting) CE or Discovery as a credible option for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Impact, cont.

- **Understanding of CE as a change in practice:** Leaders, staff, partners...
 - Understand their common interest in CE on a cross-systems continuum.
 - Appreciate the difference between CE and traditional practice, and are able to design/ implement systems changes accordingly.
 - Are willing/able to open/re-open cases, make referrals, purchase services, agree on process & expected outcomes.
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Impact, cont.

- **Utilization of CE by VR systems practitioners:** As a result of the above, ...
 - VR counselors now have alternatives for working with jobseekers with the most significant disabilities.
 - Increased numbers of practitioners have the skills and willingness to invite referrals, apply CE/Discovery techniques with greater fidelity and achieve improved employment outcomes.

Sustainment Strategy

- Establish process/protocols for ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement
- Form a Community of Practice
- Connect with agencies outside the region
- Provide on-going technical assistance
- Provide guidance in adapting the practice to fit local needs and circumstances.

Sustainment Strategy

- Provide guidance in adapting the practice to fit local needs and circumstances.
- Incorporate a mentoring/coaching component for ongoing support.
- Identify supplemental resources to finance project activities and ongoing operations.
- Develop a leadership program providing CE information for administrators.



Integration Scale

- Policy Development
- Training/Continuing Improvement Supports
- Resource Commitment
- Outcome reporting
- Leadership Commitment
- External Partner Commitment
- Staff Commitment

Challenges

- Reinforcing that pilot is about serving a population for whom VR traditionally has not had a successful strategy
- Building capacity will take time/effort and will be a departure from business as usual.
- Consistently engaging leadership & management commitment sufficient to support and sustain a project (even through personnel changes).

Challenges

- Project planning to create the environment for a successful pilot
 - Time commitments
 - Key milestones
 - VR & partner roles
- Articulating success measures directly connected to project activities, and the terms/triggers for moving from one phase of implementation to another.

Challenges

- Communicating expectations to stakeholders and participants.
- Prioritizing resources for project management and face-to-face training and technical assistance.
- Scheduling training to minimize conflicts and maximize continuity.

Questions



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