



Finding solutions. Generating success.

December 22, 2014

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), during the 2013 legislative session, was asked to submit a report of its outreach efforts to work with community rehabilitation program providers for job placement and retention services for individuals with significant and most significant disabilities.

SF 2321 states: For purposes of optimizing the job placement of individuals with disabilities, the division shall make its best efforts to work with community rehabilitation program providers for job placement and retention services for individuals with significant disabilities and most significant disabilities. By January 15, 2014, the division shall submit a written report to the general assembly on the division's outreach efforts with community rehabilitation program providers.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services has continued efforts to establish, create and maintain partnerships with Iowa Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) in 2014. IVRS continued efforts to promote and encourage collaboration by reaching out to Community Rehabilitation Programs, external vendors and other service providers. The result of this focus has contributed positively to enhancing partnerships, in addition to expanding competitive, community employment-related options for Iowans with disabilities.

During 2014, IVRS expenditures paid to Community Rehabilitation Providers totaled \$1.810 million; this is an increase of over \$390,000 from 2013 and over \$670,000 from 2012. This also involved an increased number of authorized services and collaborative partner services.

Occupational Skill Training Programs have increased to 21 options available across the state, and our CRPs are integral to the success of these training efforts to meet the business skill gap.

Forty-three community rehabilitation extensions were approved by IVRS to increase contract costs for CRP partners by 2.0%, per their individual cost rates. Twenty-eight community partners are providing services under standard rates established for employment services.

Nine Employment Networks were established in 2014, an increase from four last year. Information about the Ticket to Work partnership between IVRS and community partners continues to be a focus for IVRS.

IVRS remains the lead agency with the Walgreens Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) Project and continues to work with CRPs to expand training opportunities to meet local business needs.

IVRS made a variety of in-service, webinar, on-site and video conference training opportunities available to CRPs throughout the year, as well as data specific to each partner. Vendor data is shared annually by IVRS with providers to stimulate conversations with partners, ensure consistent business practices, promote transparency for purchased services, and provide a statewide basis for comparisons. This year IVRS also reported specific outcomes from the Occupational Skill Training Programs being provided by the Community Rehabilitation partners.

IVRS will continue to partner and proactively respond to the demands of an ever-changing job market to fulfill our mission and effectively provide the necessary services to help individuals with disabilities achieve full integration into community employment. Towards this end, IVRS has put forth a dedicated effort to expand opportunities to collaborate, innovate and network with entities and leverage resources with community partners.

Data confirms that IVRS is continuing to expend more funds to CRP partners. Our ability to expand service options is linked to our ability to partner with CRPs.

Examples of IVRS efforts in 2014 include:

January – March 2014

- Developed a contract with Crossroads CRP in Council Bluffs.
- Amended Square One's CRP contract.
- Attended Iowa Association of Community Provider's meeting to discuss Discovery services and rates with 40+ providers.
- Sent CRPs training information about asset development.
- Communicated information to Ollie Webb CRP about becoming a provider.
- Statewide webinars were held on a monthly basis for purposes of sharing information to providers and stakeholders on employment initiatives for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Approved increase for Candeo CRP Occupational skills.
- Approved additional services for Goodwill services in Council Bluffs.
- Approved Square One as an Employment Network under Partnership Plus.
- Presentation at the Iowa State Association of Counties meeting to 50+ county representatives regarding employment initiatives.
- Meeting in Ottumwa discussing interaction between VR and local community providers.
- Approved Employment for Everyone as Employment Network under Partnership Plus.
- Participated in Money Follows the Person meeting explaining VR processes.
- VR meeting with CRP representatives from Hope Haven (Burlington and Rock Valley), Candeo, Genesis, CASS to listen, collaborate, address issues.

- Met at Disability Rights Iowa to discuss Benefit Planning partnership.
- Met with provider for Peer Support Services.

April – June 2014

- Met at LINK to discuss potential services.
- VR participated in meeting with community providers in Employment First Transformation efforts with Office of Disability and Employment Policy Subject Matter Expert.
- Met in Iowa City with community partners to discuss Project Search.
- Traveled to Mid-Iowa Workshops in Marshalltown to discuss services.
- Conference call with Goodwill of the Heartland, and VR staff from Burlington and Cedar Rapids/Iowa City about processes, etc.
- Attended meeting in Atlantic with ICIE, DD and three providers.
- Provided video conference training to Dubuque staff and area CRP partners about service processes.
- Returned to LINK to discuss transition services.
- Approved REDI training for Marshalltown through Goodwill Central.
- Spoke to all Candeo staff at their group meeting regarding VR service delivery.
- Spoke on Community of Practice call to 40+ provider and several VR staff about services.
- Discussed services with new CRP, including Homestead, NPI, and Opportunities Unlimited.
- Coordinated three-day Benefits Planning training with Workforce Development and Department of Aging.
- Facilitated conversation between Maximus and current Employment Network partners on conference call.
- Coordinated Customized Employment training for staff and partners through TACE.
- Added NPI to CRP agreements.
- Added Life Connections to CRP agreements.
- Added Mid-Iowa Workshops to CRP agreements.

July – September 2014

- Meeting in Burlington with staff and partners for discussion on processes, etc. with ICIE.
- Scheduled for partner meeting July 11th in Sheldon, July 14th in Spencer, July 18th in Pella and July 21st with Mosaic (Osceola).
- Met as part of the Mental Health Planning Council to tour the VA facility in Marshalltown and speak to Veterans.
- Attended meeting between COC and IVRS in Pella.
- Amended contract to add services to CRP Employment for everyone in Decorah.
- Meeting with Westfork CRP staff in Des Moines to discuss service expansion.
- Helped coordinate and host a meeting at which time over 15 CRPs were represented to discuss becoming an IVRS Employment Network with federal partners from Maximus.
- Approved REDI for Progress Industries in Newton.

- Hosted a meeting between IVRS, ICIE, DHS/IME to work with case managers from across Iowa and update them on Employment First and other Iowa initiatives.
- Worked with a new CRP in Cedar Rapids (Arc) in developing Project Search.
- Attended meeting with Council Bluffs staff at Concerned CRP in Harlan to improve processes and partnerships.
- Spoke to Candeo staff in Johnston, Iowa to address issues that were impacting services delivery.
- Added Discovery to Sunshine CRP in Spencer.
- Met with staff from Fort Dodge IVRS and Opportunity Village in Des Moines to discuss possibilities for service expansion in Webster City.
- Represented IVRS at state providers meeting (IACP) in Ankeny to confirm IVRS' commitment to collaboration and express appreciation and support for employment providers in Iowa.
- Represented IVRS at APSE conference.
- Approved Project Search for Mosaic in Osceola.
- Approved Project Search for Arc in Cedar Rapids.
- Approved Occupational Skills Food Service training for Goodwill of the Heartland.
- Approved REDI for Goodwill Central in Ottumwa.
- Approved Mosaic CRP for Discovery.

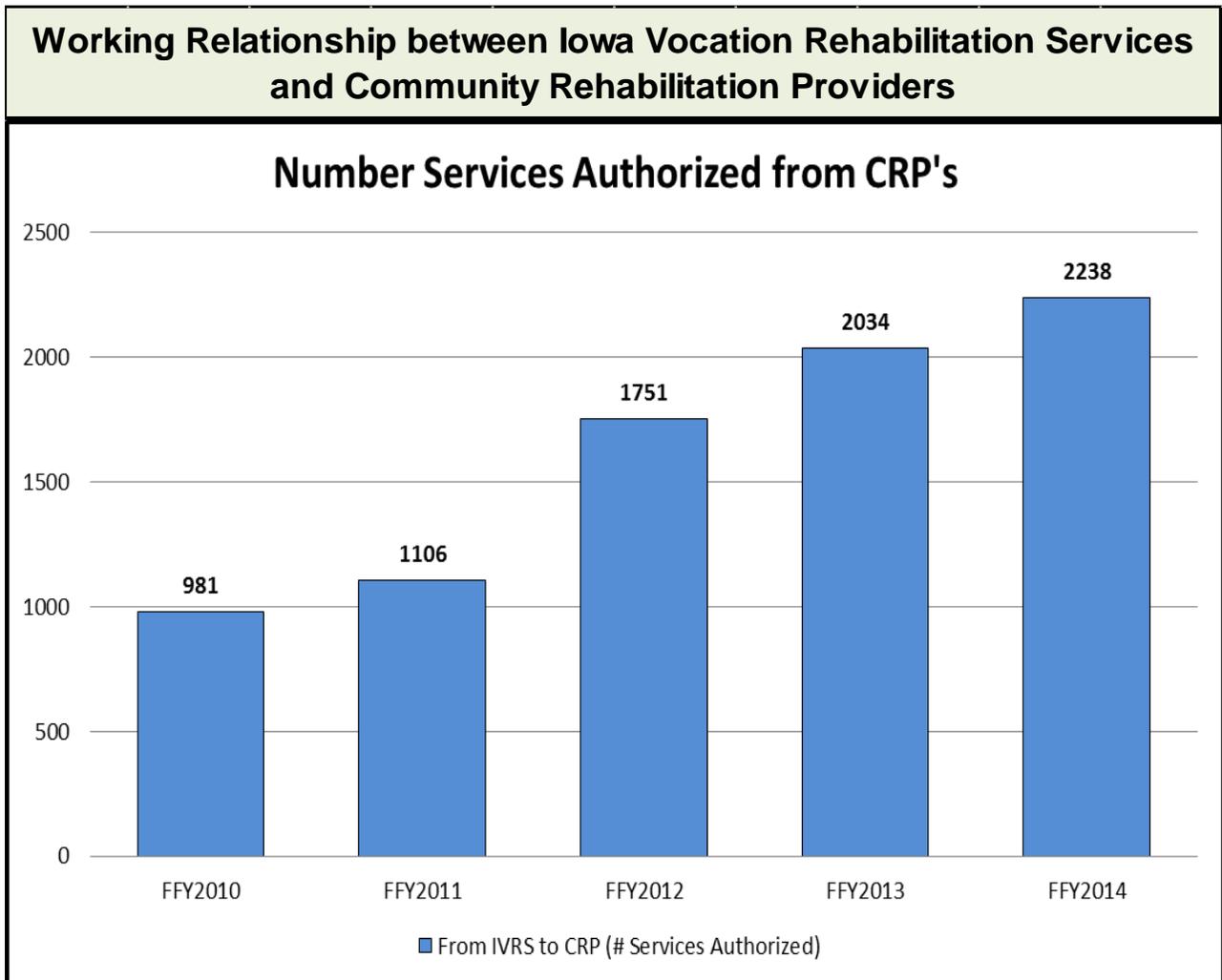
October – December 2014

- Approval pending approval for Goodwill Central's proposed REDI training in Indianola.
- Submitted federal request for Technical Assistance to support employment services and CRP transformation in Iowa. Received approval for additional Employment First Technical Assistance, in which our Community Providers are directly involved and collaborating.
- Office visits scheduled between IVRS and Community partners related to service delivery, roles, expectations, were scheduled for:
 - November 4th Dubuque
 - November 5th Sioux City
 - November 10th Council Bluffs
 - November 14th Mason City
 - November 17th Atlantic
 - November 24th Iowa City
 - November 25th Davenport
 - December 4th Polk
 - December 8th Waterloo
 - December 15th Ft. Dodge
 - December 17th Ames
 - December 18th Ottumwa

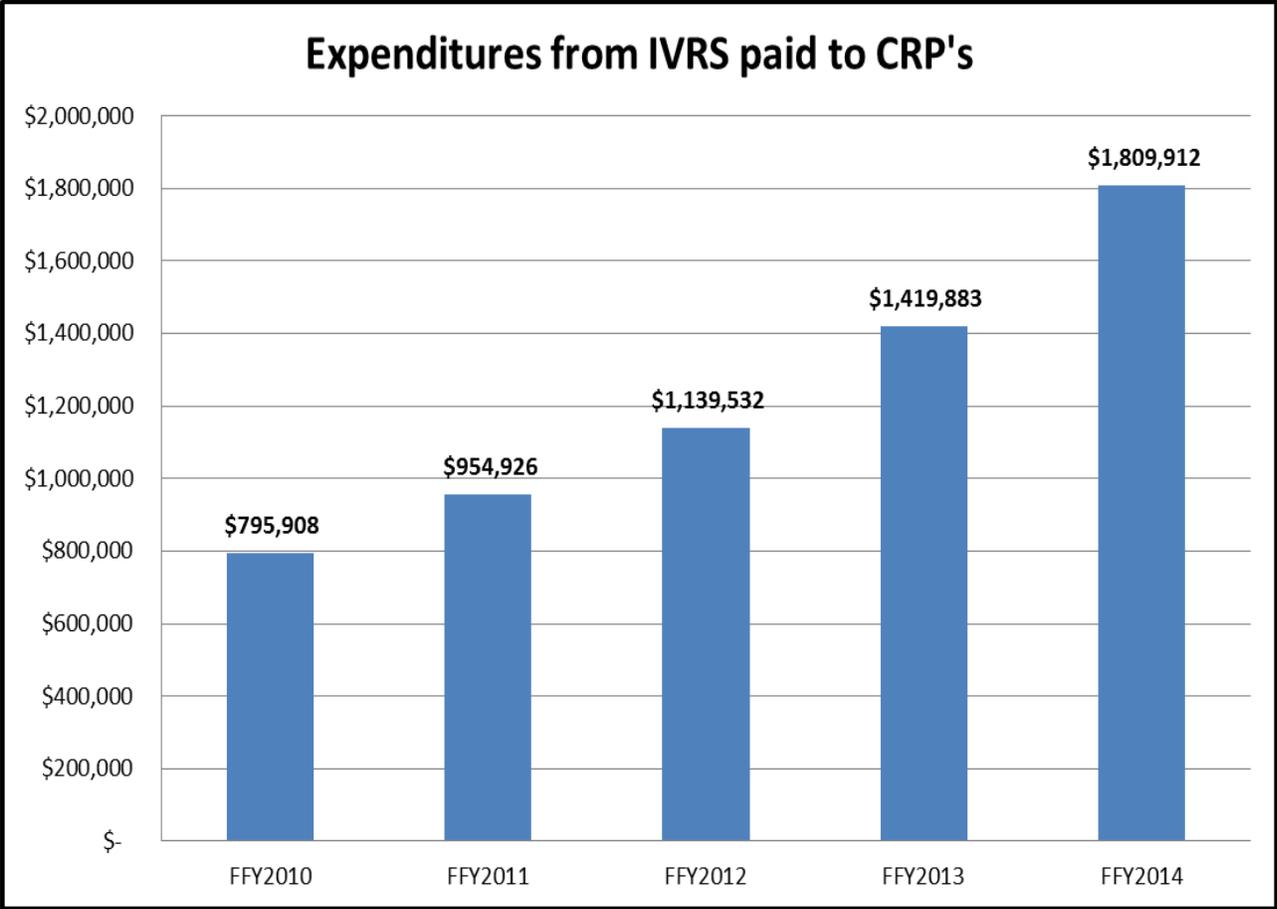
This provides for face-face discussion on collaborative efforts occurring between the state agency and our community providers.

- Hosted a meeting with IVRS Benefit Planning members to welcome an addition of two new benefit planning cadre staff.
- Facilitated a meeting between case management staff with partners.

- Addressed over 50 CRP members of the Iowa Association of Community Providers meeting to review procedural information and recognize the increased IVRS partnerships which have expanded options for people with disabilities.
- Reviewed services to increase options for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing with a community partner that IVRS is exploring with Hands-Up Communication for Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and Waterloo.
- Submitted Request for Proposal for CRP partners to respond to that will increase their involvement in Iowa schools.



The above graph reflects the number of services authorized from the Community Rehabilitation Provider.



The above graph presents the dollar amounts IVRS has expended for services purchased through our Community Rehabilitation Providers during the past five years.

Respectfully Submitted,

David L. Mitchell
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 IVRS Administrator