



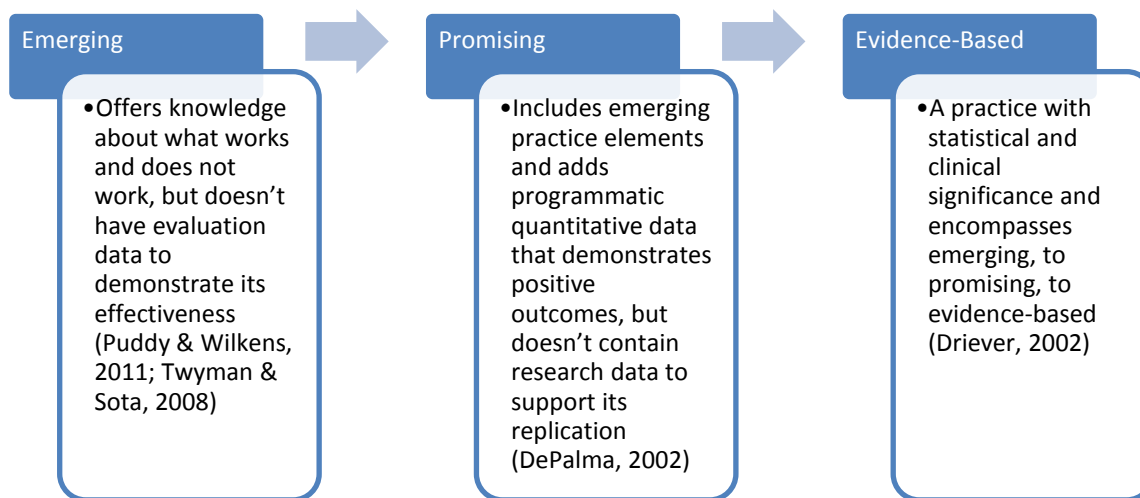
RRTC-EBP VR

Rehabilitation Research & Training Center
for Evidence Based Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation

Phase II Findings: Promising Service Delivery Practices

A purpose of this study was to discover emerging and promising vocational rehabilitation (VR) service delivery practices that help improve employment outcomes of people with disabilities who receive services from the state-federal vocational rehabilitation (VR) system. Four high performing state VR agencies (Maryland, Mississippi, Texas, and Utah) were selected for study based on annual adjusted rehabilitation rates and other indicators that demonstrated they had developed effective models of delivering services that set them apart in performance from other state agencies. In looking at these states the question was asked, **“What are specific best practices that appear to be evidence-based and transportable to other state VR agencies?”**

The RRTC recognizes that there is a continuum of innovative practices being implemented by rehabilitation counselors within the state-federal VR system. Vocational rehabilitation practices fall within the following continuum:



This summary of findings contains brief descriptions of promising service delivery practices identified across the four state agencies included in this study.

Valforce (Texas) - A local pilot initiative to outsource some non-core functions. The contracted company is named Valforce.

CRP Certification (Texas, Maryland) - Two agencies require CRPs to become credentialed and in one state the CRP can become certified as providers of Customized Self-Employment.

DARSforce (Texas) - The use of a web-based cloud technology the state agency calls “DARSforce” was launched as a tool to manage business relations and assist staff in their efforts to bring job-ready consumers and businesses together.

Embedded Training Programs (Texas) - These programs are similar to the supported employment “placement and train” model. However, these agency customers are not supported employment customers. Once the training is completed, successful participants are hired by the host company or are placed in jobs in the same industry.

Supported Job Based Training (SJBT) and Supported Employment (SE) (Utah) – These programs provide employment assistance and supports such as job placement, job coaching, job development, job retention, assistive technology, specialized job training, and individually tailored supervision. Job coaches must be certified and receive continuing education.

Choose To Work (Utah) – This a partnership program between the USOR and Utah’s Department of Workforce Services. The program is designed to increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities who may not need as intensive services as a job coach or supported job-based training (SJBT) but who have been unsuccessful in obtaining employment through traditional efforts.

Utah Defendant Offender Workforce Development Taskforce (Utah) – Under an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Justice Assistance Grant, the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) created a program in collaboration with allied agencies to provide job development and offer direct assistance to individuals with disabilities under the jurisdiction of UDC.

Career Exploration Services (Utah) – A unit within the state VR agency that provides vocational evaluation and testing for individuals accepted for services by DRS.

Work Incentive Planning and Benefits Services (Utah, Maryland) – An extremely well received promising practice is the development and implementation of fee for service is benefits counseling. One agency developed their own fee-based Benefits Counseling service, including the credentials a person must have to provide this service. In another agency, the Utah Work Incentive Planning Services (UWIPS) program was created after receiving funding in the form of grants from the Social Security Administration and the State’s Governor’s Council.

Soft Skills Training (Mississippi) - Smart Work Ethics (SWE) is a purchased soft skills training program with a standardized curriculum designed to change behavior and improve employability through an interactive training approach.

Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative (MSTC) – The agency has partnered with a non-profit organization called TransCen, Inc., as part of an RSA demonstration grant. The goal was inter-agency collaboration to result in sequential delivery of transition services.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) program (Maryland) – ABI emerged from “collaboration with other providers and other professionals across the state in order to develop a supported employment (SE) program for individuals with acquired brain injury.” When ABI clients reach a “minimum 90 days of employment, and employment is stable, then the VR agency closes their case. Immediately, the same day, the individual’s case is moved into post-employment services.”

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) (Maryland) – This model is a collaborative process with the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA), which serves individuals with significant mental health issues (Dartmouth; Johnson & Johnson). The program uses braided funding and blended services. There is a single point of entry and anyone who is eligible for services with MHA is presumed eligible for VR services.