

The VR Program Evaluation Network

Disability Statistics Research and
Training Center

State of the Science

April 23, 2012

The Summit Group

**A Quality Assurance
Community of Practice**

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**Program Planning and Evaluation Specialist
Utah Office of Rehabilitation**

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

◆ The Domain

- An identity defined by shared interest or concern
- Membership implies commitment
- Shared competence

◆ The Community

- Engage in activities and transactions (doing, learning)
- Building relationships

◆ The Practice

- Shared repertoire of experiences, stories, tools, etc.
(Etienne Wenger, 2006)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Network focused
- Safe Place
- Diversity, not hierarchy
- Innovation not compliance
- Full engagement
 - Expert
 - Consumer
- Share and Adapt
- Project focus
- Peripheral vs. Core members
 - Need some truly committed
 - Need a process to bring people in
- Home base

WHAT IS THE SUMMIT GROUP?

- It is a national community of practice group of 257 members
- Group members are committed to strive for excellence in all that they do
- The group exists to inform and improve VR program performance using quality assurance systems
- The focus is on the education and development of state Vocational Rehabilitation Program Evaluators

4 PURPOSES OF THE SUMMIT GROUP

1. To provide educational opportunities from recognized experts in program evaluation
2. To create interstate collaborative networks & work teams committed to improvement
3. To give technical and professional support to evaluators from other state evaluators
4. To realize that improving quality assurance systems is a powerful form of advocacy for people with disabilities

HOW THE SUMMIT GROUP BEGAN

- Before June 2007, Don Uchida and Scott Sabella (Region VIII) discussed issues with quality assurance.
- In June, when I started, Kyle Walker encouraged me to contact other state Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluators
- I called and held teleconference calls where we would mutually share practices and tools

WHAT WE DISCOVERED

After speaking with 11 states the following themes appeared:

- to create new tools, evaluators looked to their predecessor or internal agency, not other state VR Program Evaluators for input,
- almost no one could identify training programs or internet resources related to their responsibilities,
- and all states agreed that they would come to a Summit on these topics in September 2008.

UTAH'S CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY TRANSFORMATION

The SRC wanted:

- Separate surveys for 26 and 28 closures
- To ask more specific questions useful for program planning
- To seek out a way to increase the response rate beyond 29%
- To learn more about satisfaction and services

THE SUMMIT GROUP'S CONTRIBUTION

- Drafts were sent through the email listserv
- Suggestions on methodology and wording
- Idea of using a non monetary incentive
- Recommendation and calculation of new sample size

COMPARATIVE RESPONSE RATES

BEFORE

FY 2008 – 28%

FY 2009 – 28%

FY 2010 – 31%

AFTER JULY 2010

FY 2011 – 36%

**HIGHEST OVERALL
QUARTERLY RESPONSE
43%**

Program Management – Iowa

Jeff Haight

Resource Manager

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

First Summit held in Utah

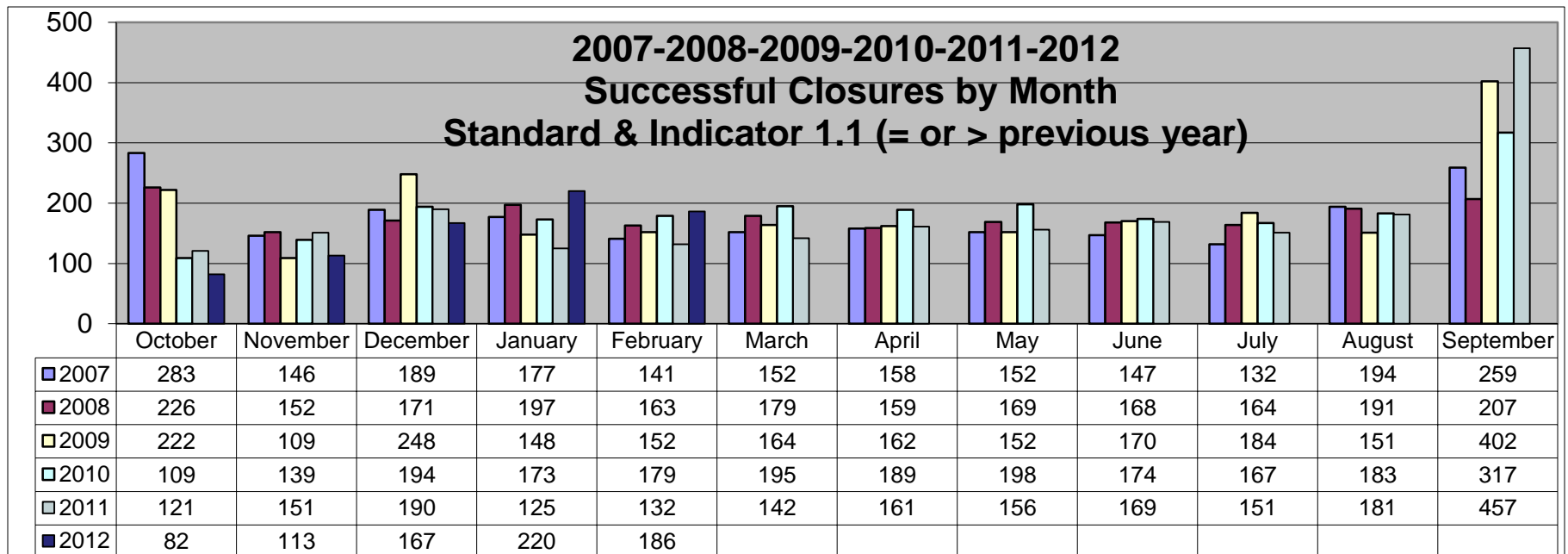
- Case File Review
- Strategic Planning
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Materials www.ncrtm.org
- IRI – Institute on Rehabilitation Issues
- TACE
- CSAVR

National Clearinghouse Website

- Return on Investment Studies
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Tools
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Reports
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Quality Assurance Manuals
- Case File Review Instruments
- Occupational Groups and Employer Analyses
- Conference Call Transcripts

Reports

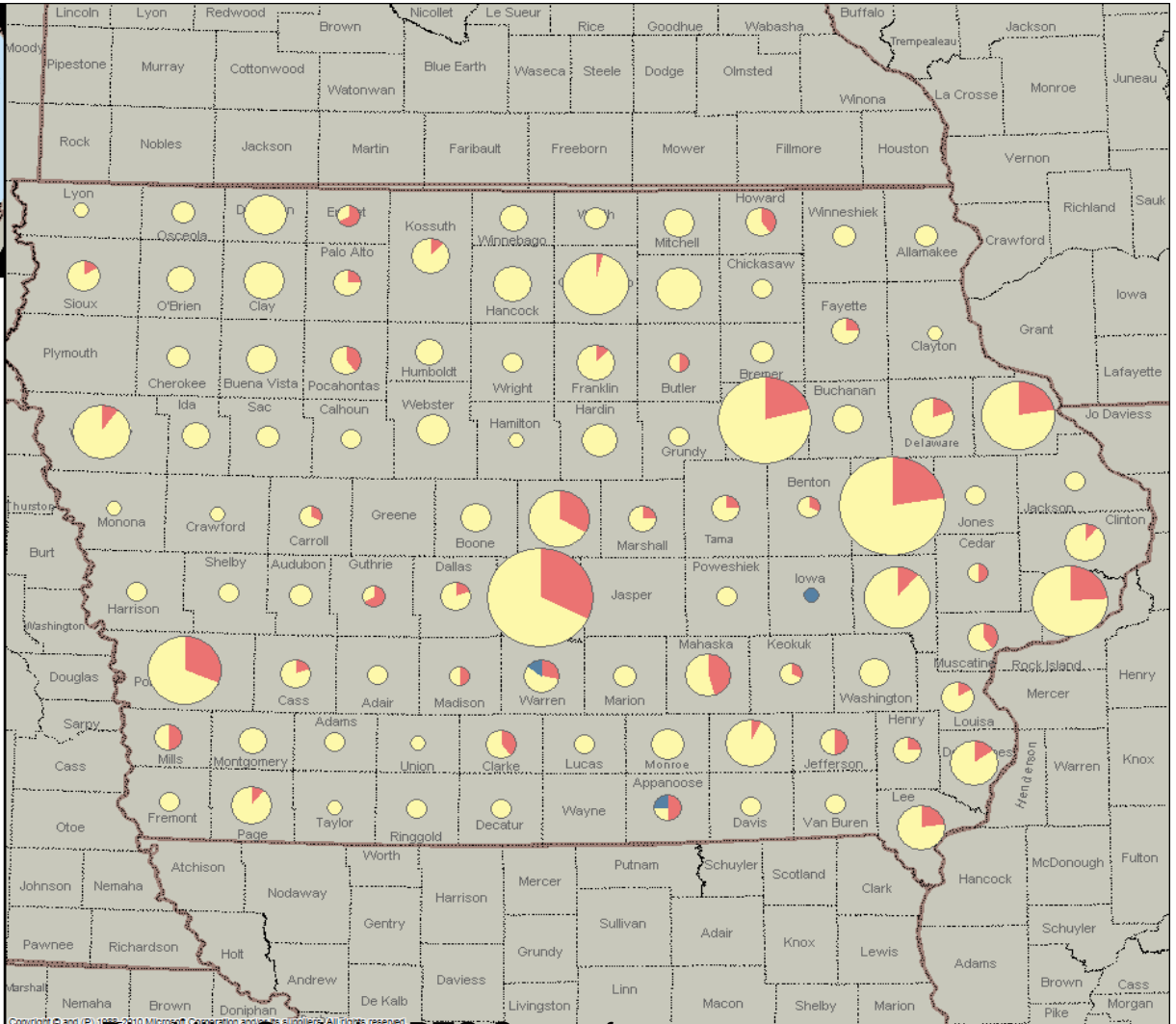
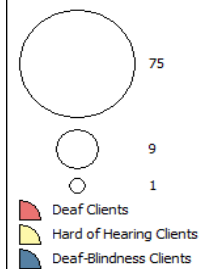
- Disseminate the Data
- Graphs



Maps



FFY2011 by County



Disability Statistics RTC State of the Science

Garbage In Garbage Out

- RSA_ERA Errors, Reasonableness Checks and Anomalies Program

www.rsa.gov



Training

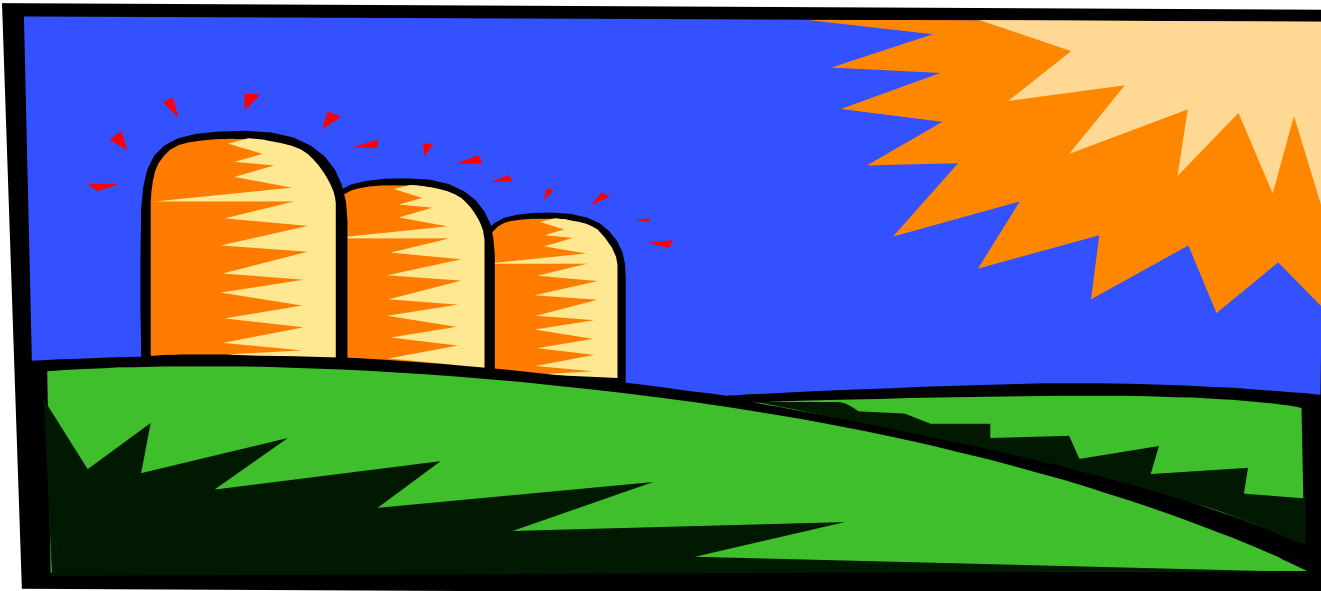
- Training Opportunities
 - How the data is used
 - Why is the data important
 - What decisions are made regarding the data

Barriers

- Tearing down Silos
- All staff are program evaluators on some level

Future Ideas

- Dashboard Concept
- Strive to Eliminate Silos



Statements Repeated Throughout the Summit Conferences

- What gets measured gets done
- “Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.” – Albert Einstein
- Garbage In Garbage Out
- Performance management is everyone’s business

The TACE Centers and the Summit Group: A Productive Partnership

Scott Sabella PhD
Director, TACE Region 8
University of Northern Colorado

The First Summit

- Getting to know the players involved
- Forming relationships
- Understanding the issues
- The first signs of direction
- The first signs of leadership

Gaining Steam

- TACE Region 8 cohosts the 2nd Summit conference with Colorado DVR
- Greater involvement in planning
- Forming the core nucleus of leadership
- Establishing a home base (website)

Giving and Receiving

- Giving
 - Viewpoint from a national perspective
 - Viewpoint from a monitoring perspective
 - Viewpoint from rehabilitation education perspective
- Receiving
 - Viewpoint from inside the agency
 - Viewpoint as PEQA develops in state VR
 - Greater insight into needs and barriers to PEQA

TACE Center Support

- Planning and direction support
- Needs assessment contributions
- Listserv contribution
- Conference hosting
- Speakers and facilitators
- Sponsoring activities
- Research and literature contributions
- Helping state agencies participate

Examples of TACE Contributions to Summit Activities

- First Summit Group webinar delivered by Joe Mathews (TACE Region 8)
 - “Changing VR systems through QA”
- Webinar series on research basics, statistics and project design (MSU)
- Hosts for the 2nd, 3rd and next Summit
- Consumer satisfaction survey item pool

Examples of TACE Contributions to Summit Activities

- Reading group
- Securing funds for participant travel to the Vancouver Summit
- Institute on Rehabilitation Issues on Program Management authorship
- “The Summit Group” article in J. of Rehabilitation Administration

A Successful Community of Practice

- A real need
- An environment that promotes sharing and interaction
- “Stoke the fire”
- A few to drive the process
- Community focus
- Diversity
- Promote a group identity

Into the Future

- TACE Centers are in year 4 of 5
- RSA has been supportive of our involvement with the Summit Group
- The ideal Summit conference involves co-hosting from a TACE and state VR agencies
- What is the next evolution?

Community of Practice in Action:

Summit Reading Groups and the Rehabilitation Program Evaluation Network

Darlene Groomes
Oakland University

Summit Reading Groups

- What are they?
- Who are they?

Summit Reading Groups

- Development
- Topics: Utilization-focused evaluation
 - Program management
 - Dashboard Information
 - Systems
- Notice a shift in purpose

Benefits from the Shift

- Implementation of program evaluator role;
- ROI examples shared by a specific state;
- Visualization of data/data display (GIS webinar, Summit presentation, article in JRA) ;
- Dashboard Project:
<https://ncrtm.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=100>

Intended Uses of Program Evaluation Emerge

- Growing sense of SRGs as an outlet for professional development
- Agencies may want to think about topics of PD that emerge from PE efforts and send them to me/facilitator of the SRGs to consider as a book topic
- Professional identities strengthen, sense of renewal and competence: RPEN

The Rehabilitation Program Evaluation Network (RPEN)

- Division within the National Rehabilitation Association
- History and Development
- Purpose

Kindred Spirits

- The Summit Group and RPEN support each others' mission and values.
- RPEN seeks to network beyond community of practice, with a focus on professional identity promotion
 - WorkLife Resources Online Distance Education Courses
 - » <https://worklife.digitalchalk.com/dc/guest/login.dc>
 - Performance Institute Trainings
 - » <http://www.performanceweb.org/>

Opportunities Abound

- *Journal of Rehabilitation Administration* is RPEN's host journal.
- Writing for publication opportunities
- Conference presentations
- Mentoring programs

Growth Outlook

- Continue with SRGs to stimulate more professional development opportunities
- Continue to promote RPEN and its mission and values