Transition Youth Program

Report on Fiscal Year 1998 Cohort

Prepared by the University of Washington Center for Disability Policy and Research

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1 Background

In the Fall of 1998, the Washington State Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) asked the University of Washington Center for Disability Policy and Research (CDPR) to study portions of the Common Client Data Base (CCDB), a database of all people in the state eligible for services for people with developmental disabilities. DDD specifically requested analysis of state-financed services provided to "transitional youth": young people with developmental disabilities who are leaving school programs and entering employment or day programs. This group of young people may receive services from DDD, through county DD programs, as well as the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

To prepare for this analysis, DDD performed a data extraction from the CCDB for January 11, 1999. On that day, the database listed 2,728 individuals with dates of birth between September 1, 1971 and August 31, 1977 as active and eligible for state services. DDD reported these names to DVR. Both agencies then matched the list of names against their own data collection systems, the County Human Resources Information System (CHRIS) for DDD and the STARS system for DVR. The two agencies identified which clients had received services, and they sent these records to CDPR for analysis.

This report summarizes the findings of CDPR's analysis of the DDD/DVR merged database and what this information reveals about services provided to youth with developmental disabilities as they become eligible for employment or day program services. This analysis covers employment and day programs only. It
does not address residential, family support, Medicaid Personal Care, and other DDD-funded services.

2 Cohort Service Results

CDPR found that, of the original active list, 481 clients were born between September 1, 1975 and August 31, 1976, identifying them as reaching age 21 and thus eligible for DDD-funded county services in FY 1998. Since DVR works with individuals prior to turning age 21, these individuals were eligible for services from DVR in previous years as well as during FY 1998.

Figure 1 (see Appendix A), The Fiscal Year 1998 Transition Youth Cohort Flow Chart of Services, shows what is known of these 481 cohort members, both from the merged database and from CDPR's research. The following information summarizes what Figure 1 presents.

**Cohort members served in previous fiscal Years**

Thirty-nine of the 351 people were served in a fiscal year previous to FY 1998. To investigate further the status of the people reported as being served in a previous fiscal year, CDPR requested information on those individuals contained in the Employment Security Database (ESD). This database contains information on certain employees for whom their employers made payments for employment security (unemployment benefits). Of the 39 individuals served in previous fiscal years, the ESD indicated that 11 had worked in 1998, 16 had worked prior to 1998 but were absent form the ESD in 1998, and no information could be found in the ESD for 12 people.
Cohort members served in fiscal year 1999

Eight cohort members were served in FY 1999. These individuals were listed as being served in the first two quarters of FY 1999 for which data were available on all DVR clients and for some of the DDD clients at the time of this report.

Cohort members served in fiscal year 1998

Of 304 people who were served in FY 1998:

Twenty-seven percent (N=82) received services through county/DDD programs only.

Forty percent (N=123) received services from DVR only.

Thirty percent (N=99) received services from both agencies.

Cohort members served in 1998 with DDD/county services only

CDPR identified what type of services the 82 people received from county/DDD programs:

Twenty-nine percent  (N=24) were served in individual supported employment (IE), through which they work in a paid job in their communities, often with the support of a job coach or employment agency.

Twenty percent  (N=16) were served in group supported employment (GSE), through which they performed paid work in small groups, such as in janitorial and grounds-keeping jobs.

Ten percent (N=8) were served in specialized industries (SI), which are congregate work environments for people with disabilities, often paying less than minimum wage.
Forty-one percent (N=34) received services through community access (CA), where most services focus on helping people achieve social integration in their communities.

**Cohort members served in 1998 with DVR and DDD/county services**

Of the 99 people who were served by both DDD and DVR:

Sixty-six (N=66) were reported as being in individual supported employment.

Ten percent (N=10) in group supported employment.

Twelve percent (N=12) in specialized industries.

Eleven percent (N=11) in community access.

**Cohort members served in 1998 with DVR services only**

People who received DVR services were reported in the database as being in one of six statuses at the end of each month of service. All analysis of DVR service data includes those six statuses. They are defined as:

**Application** — An individual makes official application for DVR services by providing required information and submitting a completed, signed, and dated application to DVR. A 60-day requirement for eligibility determination starts the day the application is signed.
**Eligibility** — A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor determines whether a participant is eligible for services after applying DVR's criteria. After a person is determined eligible, vocational assessment, goal selection, and rehabilitation plan development activities continue.

**Plan** — DVR and the participant mutually agree upon a Rehabilitation Plan. The Rehabilitation Plan is a course of action that includes identification of intermediate objectives necessary to lead to the achievement of the vocational goal.

**Plan-Employment** — This is still considered plan status, but it involves a 90-day waiting period to completion of rehabilitation and closure of case.

**Closed-Rehab** — The case is closed when rehabilitation is complete. A participant is considered successfully rehabilitated when:

A. The participant has completed a Rehabilitation Plan.

B. Substantial services were provided.

C. The participant has been suitably employed at least 60 days.

In addition to competitive employment, other types of closures may be considered successful rehabilitation. These closure types include noncompetitive employment (e.g., homemaker), extended employment (e.g., specialized industries), or unpaid family workers. These closures must meet all of the following criteria:
A. Increased participant function, or adjustment that significantly contributed to improved function, in non-competitive employment

B. Actual increases in economic benefits

C. The participant’s work activities contribute significantly to the total activities required in the particular work setting.

Closed-Other — If a participant’s case is closed and the participant is not employed, one of the following four categories usually applies:

A. Ineligible — This determination may occur at any point in the rehabilitation process when circumstances arise in which the participant is no longer able to benefit from services.

B. Further Services are Not Appropriate — The participant becomes unavailable for services or further services are not appropriate.

C. Participant Choice — The participant requests closure.

D. Post-employment Services/Other — The participant is unable to retain or regain employment and cannot benefit from further DVR services in terms of employment.

Cohort members not receiving DDD/DVR services

CDPR set out to find why 130 people were not listed in the database as having been served by either DDD or DVR programs. A representative of DDD sent out lists of client identification numbers to each of DDD's six regions, asking for the
most recent information on these people. Following is the information that the regions reported back to CDPR:

Of the 130 people not in the merged database:

Thirty-three percent (N=43) refused services. In some cases, a refusal meant that the client had secured work or other activity without involvement by DDD or DVR. To investigate further the status of the people whom the regions reported as refusing services, CDPR requested information on those individuals contained in the ESD. Of the 43 people reported as refusing services, 5 were reported in the ESD as having worked in 1998; 13 worked prior to 1998, but were absent from the ESD in 1998; and 25 did not appear in the ESD. Eight percent of the people (N=11) were reported as "not available for service" because they had died, moved out of the state, were in corrections, or resided in institutions (i.e., RHCs).

Forty-five percent of the people (N=58) were not referred to DDD county programs or DVR or the referrals failed. CDPR counted as failed referrals any people that the regions reported as having been served but who were not listed in the CHRIS or STARS systems. Of those 18, 8 were reported as referred to DVR but did not appear in STARS, and 12 were reported as referred to or in a county program but did not appear in CHRIS. The total of referrals is 20, as opposed to 18, due to 2 people being referred to both DVR and a county program.

Fourteen percent of the cohort members (N=18) could not be located by the regional offices.
3 County and Regional Summaries

Tables 1 and 2 (see Appendix B) display the services received through DDD and DVR by counties.

For example, the DDD/DVR database indicated that 41 FY 1998 transition cohort members were in Spokane County. On Table 1 we see that of those 41 people, 16 received DVR services only, 14 received DDD services only, and 3 received services from both DVR and DDD. Table 2 indicates that the 8 remaining were reported by DDD Region 1 as refusing services (n=4), not referred or failed referral (n=2), and cannot locate (n=2).

Tables 3 and 4 (see Appendix B) summarize the same services by DDD's 6 regions.

The wage outcomes were figured for cohort members served by DVR and DDD. For DVR service recipients, wage data are only available for people who achieved Closed-Rehab status. For those 44 individuals who achieved Closed Rehab status in FY 1998, the average wage in the month of closure was $5.27 per hour. When those 44 individuals are combined with the 49 individuals who achieved Closed-Rehab status in other fiscal years, the average wage in the month of closure was $5.23 per hour.

Wage outcomes for cohort members reported in the CHRIS system are also reported. In order to be comparable to the wages reported for DVR service recipients, only the wages reported in CHRIS for the first month for DDD service
recipients are reported. For the 44 individuals in individual employment in FY 1998, the average first month wage was $5.91 per hour. For the 15 in group supported employment, the average first month wage was $3.57 per hour and $1.73 per hour for the 19 people in specialized industries. The first month wages for all people receiving DDD services across all fiscal years for the FY 1998 cohort were: $5.60 per hour for individual employment; $4.24 per hour for group supported employment; and $2.10 per hour for specialized industries.

Although some individuals receiving community access services are gaining employment, no wage data for those people are reported in the CHRIS system.

Table 5 (see Appendix B) shows DDD/county programs for which cohort members were enrolled. The left side of Table 5 shows which DDD/county programs cohort members enrolled in and received DDD/county services only. The right side of Table 5 indicates which programs cohort members enrolled who received both DDD/county and DVR services.

4 Legislative Assumptions

For each fiscal year, fiscal analysts on the staff of the Washington Legislature project the number of people within each transition cohort who are likely to seek services from DDD and DVR. They assign costs to these projections, and the calculations are integrated into the spending projections for each agency. Table 6 (see Appendix B) summarizes the legislative assumptions.

CDPR compared the legislative assumptions for the 1998 transition cohort of 481 with actuals from the database. This analysis addressed activity during FY 1998
only. The Legislative Assumptions for the FY 1998 Transition Cohort shows where the assumptions and the actuals contrast for the 481 people in the DDD/DVR database. All assumptions were based on a cohort total of 444, which was the number of active clients of the appropriate birth date range in the Common Client Data Base at the time of projection, September 1997.

- **Cohort members entering DVR**: assumption of 65% (n=313) versus an actual of 46% (n=222) from the merged database

- **Cohort members obtaining DDD services only**: assumption of 25% (n=120) versus an actual of 17% (n=82 people)

- **Cohort members obtaining neither DDD nor DVR**: assumption of 10% (n=48) versus an actual of 27% actual (n=130)

- **DVR "Closed-Rehab" cases needing "follow-along" services**: assumption of 55% (n=71) versus an actual of 58% (n=75)

- **Average DDD monthly cost**: assumption of $433 per month versus an actual of $434

- **Average DVR monthly cost**: assumption of $500 versus an actual of $183

- **Average DVR months served**: assumption of 10 months versus an actual of 9 months

The CDPR analysis shows that county/DDD programs over-spent their service allocation ($549,878 against an allocation of $365,000) and that DVR underspent its allocation ($365,634 against $1,702,296 including administrative expenses).
5 Cohort Services by Month

Figure 2 (see Appendix A) illustrates how some of the legislative assumptions might be modified to provide a more accurate picture of the funding needs of transition youth cohorts. All of the data provided in this final chart were not available at the time that the original legislative assumptions were developed. Since this information has only now become available, however, it can be used to construct service needs assumptions and funding allocations for Fiscal Years 2002-2003.

All of the original legislative assumptions were based within the fiscal year only. The services of DVR and DDD were anticipated to be delivered within the fiscal year in which the youth left high school and turned 21. Subsequent years would budget for the “bow wave” created by including those youth. Figure 2 shows how the 351 youth of the Fiscal Year 1998 Cohort actually received their services from the two divisions.

Figure 2 illustrates which Division provided services, and the duration of those services, for the 351 youth of the FY 1998 cohort. The data are the same as were provided in the Flow Chart and the tables summarizing services by counties and by regions. Services provided by DVR are indicated in blue, services provided by DDD/county programs are indicated in red and dual services are
indicated in gold lines. The vertical axis indicates number of youth, while the
horizontal axis indicates the months and years services were delivered.

Reading the Transition Youth chart from top to bottom reveals that a large group
of youth were served with DVR funds only (the blue lines). Some of those youth
began their services with DVR in years previous to FY 1998. Nineteen of the
youth began their services in FY 1994, when they were about 17 years old. A
similar number began services in FY 1995, a smaller number in FY 1996, and
approximately 50 began their DVR services in FY 1997. Gaps in the blue lines
indicate that DVR services were not delivered in those months. Many of the
youth, particularly those served in earlier fiscal years, show a cessation of DVR
services, often before the beginning of FY 1998.

The next group begins at the vertical axis line labeled 200. This group received
services from both DVR and DDD/county programs. They first received services
from DVR (blues lines) and subsequently were either served simultaneously by
both divisions (gold lines) or DVR services ceased and DDD/county services
began (red lines). This section from the vertical axis of line 200 to approximately
line 112 can be viewed as 3 subgroups. The first subgroup began its services
with DVR and ended in DVR services (n= 17), the second subgroup began with
DVR services and ended with DDD/County services (n= 32), and the third
subgroup began with DVR services and ended receiving services form DVR and
DDD/county programs simultaneously (n= 42).
The group on the Transition Youth chart that begins at vertical axis line 112 and extends down to approximately line 30 were all initially served by DDD/county programs. As indicated by the chart, most of those youth began their services in FY 1998, with the vast majority beginning service by September 1998. DDD/county services are governed by Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and can only be provided to youth when they reach age 21. Therefore, only those youth served with an exception to policy should be receiving a DDD/county employment/day program prior to age 21. Following the convention used with the above groups on the chart, those cases indicated by red lines only received all of their services from DDD/county programs. A small number of youth who began their services with DDD/county programs subsequently received DVR services (blue lines) or simultaneous services from both DDD/county programs and DVR (gold lines).

Figure 2 shows that that many youth began their services prior to FY 1998, most of them with DVR. In fact, for youth who received only DVR services through FY 1998, most began their services with DVR prior to that fiscal year. About a third of the youth received services from both divisions, usually beginning with DVR services in a previous fiscal year. Another sizable group received DDD/county services only, and a smaller group received services from both divisions but beginning with DDD instead of DVR. Of those youth who began their services with DDD/county programs, most started their services in FY 1998.
6 Next Steps

Based on the information contained in this report, DVR and DDD will develop a proposed model for determining the amount of funds needed to serve transition youth for the 2002-2003 biennium. Included in this proposed model will be a phase in schedule for services in each fiscal year. Strategies will include the policies and procedures required at the field and county level to insure that transition youth receive timely services appropriate to their employment/day program needs.