

Draft
Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Policy Workgroup Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2019

Members Present

Amy Porterfield, Chair
Bob Kresmer
Ed House
Joanne Gabias
Karin Grandon
George Martinez

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Amy Porterfield, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm in the Council Liaison Office, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of March 8, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Bob Kresmer motioned to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2019 meeting. Ed House seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

SBVID Staff Training Outline Discussion

Amy Porterfield stated that she distributed her draft of the Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) staff training document to the workgroup members for review. She noted that she did not include discussion of deaf-blind training or blindness etiquette, although both items could be integrated throughout the training or added as separate sections. George Martinez inquired how the ethics training would pertain to a rehabilitation counselor. Amy Porterfield stated that counselors had a code of ethics through the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification and often ethics could be used to put the best effort forward or could restrict

an individual. George Martinez inquired regarding functional blindness compared to legally blind. Amy Porterfield stated that individuals discussed blindness differently, although functional blindness often indicated that an individual had did not have enough vision to use it functionally. Ed House inquired how the document would be shared with rehabilitation counselors and whether the workgroup would develop a brief statement indicating the changes to the training document. Mr. House stated that Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) was likely offering blindness core training currently. Amy Porterfield stated that RSA was not offering blindness training to staff and the council had expressed interest in overseeing that training. Ms. Porterfield stated that Kristen Mackey, RSA Administrator, indicated that RSA would be willing to pay for blindness training to staff. Ed House stated the workgroup could indicate the part of the training that could be read, explained verbally, or through in person training. Amy Porterfield stated that there were no qualified staff currently to provide the training, and the council had agreed to oversee that training. Bob Kresmer stated the workgroup could define the sections that could be completed by the individual, in a classroom or as homework. Amy Porterfield stated the updated version included case work in each module to give the counselor an idea of how the items applied to their work. Karin Grandon agreed that the training should include ethics training and inquired whether the training would allow counselors to obtain Continuing Education Units (CEU)s. Amy Porterfield stated she would like for the training to qualify as CEUs for counselors. Karin Grandon stated that CEUs were offered through accredited entities and she was unsure whether RSA had the ability to offer all CEU credits. Joanne Gabias stated the section regarding eye conditions could potentially lead to stereotypes of the different eye conditions and noted that all individuals had different needs. Amy Porterfield agreed and noted that the training should include brief discussion on the functionality of the eye conditions.

Amy Porterfield inquired whether the training should include a separate module on deaf-blindness training. Bob Kresmer stated the training could include a brief module on deaf-blindness training. Amy Porterfield stated that she would include a section on deaf-blindness training and inquired whether the training should include a separate section of blindness etiquette. Bob Kresmer stated that blindness etiquette could be included into the existing modules. Karin Grandon stated that blindness etiquette could be included under the discussion of rehabilitation teaching, Orientation and Mobility (O&M) or guide techniques. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the training should include blind myths. Joanne Gabias stated that blind myths could be included with discussion of blindness etiquette. Ms. Gabias noted that some individuals felt it was taboo to say, "good to see you", and some of those items could be discussed. George Martinez stated that etiquette

varied according to whether the discussion referred to a blind individual or an individual with low vision.

Amy Porterfield stated that she would develop a brief introduction to the training and noted the workgroup should identify the appropriate resources for the training. Bob Kresmer stated the council and consumer groups had the required expertise in house and would not need to charge RSA to provide the training. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the training could be provided in house. Ed House stated RSA had a training budget and inquired whether the workgroup would prefer that national organizations provide that training. Karin Grandon stated the council could consider receiving compensation for providing the training. Amy Porterfield stated she would like RSA to consider sending staff to attend conferences, although she was unsure regarding the funds used for staff training. Ed House stated the Department of Economic Security (DES) had a proposed out of state budget for training, which would need to be approved. Amy Porterfield stated that in the past, RSA paid organizations to provide Orientation to Blindness, although she was unsure whether that would be an option. Ed House stated that Procurement would potentially need to have a contract with the agency or organization that provided that training. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the workgroup wanted to recommend that RSA use national training organizations and noted the council and consumer groups had enough expertise to provide the training.

Amy Porterfield stated that section one of the draft SBVID training document included an overview of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and stated that an individual such as Karin Grandon or Bob Kresmer could provide that training. Karin Grandon agreed and noted the individual should have knowledge of the CRC and ethics. Amy Porterfield stated the next section included an overview of blindness and noted that blind and visually impaired individuals and consumer groups could provide that training. Joanne Gabias stated that she could recommend some articles for counselors to read for that section. Karin Grandon suggested that an individual from the Independent Living (IL) community participate in the discussion as well. Amy Porterfield stated the next section included blindness legislation. Bob Kresmer stated that consumer groups could provide that training. Amy Porterfield agreed and stated that an individual with knowledge of disability law could participate. Bob Kresmer stated the co-Chair of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Sarah Kader, could provide that training also. Amy Porterfield stated the next section included medical/functional aspects of blindness. Bob Kresmer stated that consumer groups and a specialist could provide that training. Amy Porterfield stated a low vision rehabilitation specialist or provider could assist in that discussion. Amy Porterfield stated the next section included service delivery methods, which would include

discussion of day, residential or comprehensive and stated that a panel could facilitate that discussion. Amy Porterfield stated that if the consumer group mentors had been assigned, they could meet the clients. Ms. Porterfield noted there should be an individual that coordinated all the training, which could be an internal RSA staff member. Amy Porterfield stated the next section discussed Assistive Technology (AT) training and stated that counselors should go to an AT lab and talk to AT specialists. Amy Porterfield stated the next section included discussion of youth Transition services. Karin Grandon agreed that the Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI)s be involved in that discussion as well as a representative from the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB). Amy Porterfield stated the next section discussed immersion training. Ed House stated the draft did not include mention of blindness professional associations. Amy Porterfield stated that could be added to the service delivery section. Bob Kresmer stated that information about professional associations could be included as a handout. Amy Porterfield stated that counselors often had questions regarding professional associations and the training could include a discussion.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether the workgroup would recommend that VR staff receive immersion training. Amy Porterfield stated that RSA would be required to use funds to send individuals to that training. Karin Grandon inquired whether immersion referred to staff attending national conferences or for staff to stay at local organizations. Amy Porterfield stated that both types of training would be beneficial to staff. Bob Kresmer stated that staff could spend time at each comprehensive training center, which included SAAVI Services for the Blind, the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI) and the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC). Amy Porterfield stated that counselors could also receive training at Blind Inc. and Colorado Center for the Blind, which were out of state organizations. Ed House stated that RSA might be reluctant to send all counselors to attend a national conference, although the draft training could indicate that staff would be rotated to attend conferences. Ed House stated that counselors could spend time at the local centers and could attend video conference presentations with the out of state organizations. Joanne Gabias stated that counselors would benefit from visiting all local state centers, because each center was quite different. Amy Porterfield agreed that counselors could spend one week at each center and inquired how the counselors could be oriented to the out of state centers. Karin Grandon stated that counselors would receive presentations through the video conference sites in the past. Amy Porterfield stated that staff attending the youth Transition presentations were able to interact with representatives from out of state centers. Ed House stated the training did not include discussion of a blindness resource directory. Amy Porterfield stated the council developed a

website, EyeKnow.AZ, which was a blindness resource for the community. Bob Kresmer stated his understanding that clients received the Resource Directory at the Orientation to Blindness workshops. Amy Porterfield stated she would make the recommended changes to the draft SBVID training document.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting date of the Policy Workgroup was TBD.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no responses forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Bob Kresmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Karin Grandon seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.