This quarter saw a significant increase in referrals as compared to the same quarter of 2020, with more than double the referrals. In April there were almost three times as many referrals than last year with 57 referrals, compared to 18 in 2020. In May there were almost double the referrals compared to last year with 41 referrals, compared to 23 last year. Finally, in June there were 53 referrals, compared to 18 last year. This appears to be an upward trend as people are feeling safe in the community again.

Members have continued to work and achieve successful employment goals in this quarter. April had a high of 37 people working, with 30 in May and 33 in June. For members who completed VR services successfully, they worked an average of 30 hours per week in April and May (29.3 for April, and 30 fr May), an average of 20 per week in June. Hourly pay for those members varied slightly each month this quarter, with a high of $13.03 per hour in April, $12.48 in May, and $12.23 in June.

HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL
- VR & DDD worked together to develop a collaborative meeting for VR and DDD to foster better understanding and collaboration between agencies in local areas.
- VR presented to a DDD unit meeting to provide information about VR and how VR supports DDD members
- The new VR/DDD website went live. Stay tuned as additional information is added!

MAY
- VR held the quarterly meeting for VR staff who specialize in serving DDD members, providing updates and best practices for collaboration with DDD to best serve DDD members.
- VR designated additional counselors to be the point of contact to receive referrals from DDD. As a result, there is now a specialty DDD counselor in nearly every VR office across Arizona.

JUNE
- The first DDD/VR Collaborative meeting was held in Yuma, providing important information to VR and DDD staff about each agency and how we collaborate to support mutual members.
- Training was provided to VR staff regarding Supported Employment Services, an important service that can help members retain employment through job coaching and other support services for up to 24 months after becoming employed.

QUARTER DATA

- Referrals from DDD to VR: 151
- Mutual clients made eligible: 53
- Average hours worked for mutual clients closed successfully employed: 26.4
- Average hourly wage of Successful Closures for mutual clients: $12.58

CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

VR & DDD Employment teams participated in the following conferences and trainings:
- The African American Conference on Disability
- ADA: The State of the Science 2021 Virtual Conference: a conference which highlights current research on issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act
- The Association of People Supporting Employment First National Conference
- Assistive Technology Arizona Training on Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Episodic Disabilities
- Capacity Building Institute: A national conference that focuses on best practices serving youth with disabilities, with state specific capacity building activities.