

## Attachment 4.2(c)

### **Summary of Input and Recommendation of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit, And Explanation for Rejection of Input or Recommendations**

The following comments were provided by the Mississippi State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) concerning the FFY 2014 State Plan. At the suggestion of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, items were included from the minutes of recent council meetings, specifically input into the questionnaires that were distributed following presentations on agency policy. These comments and responses are also found in the SRC Annual Report.

#### **SRC comments and/or recommendations for input into the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (OVR/OVRB) service delivery system:**

MDRS was the only one of state WIPA grantees who successfully addressed the needs of Native American individuals with disabilities who received SSI or SSDI and who were seeking employment. However, I see in today's resource materials the new WIPA plan to begin 8/1/13. I would like to know the current plan of MDRS WIPA to meet the unique needs of Native Americans and provide services in a culturally relevant and accessible way.

*Agency Response: Although the barriers to serving Native Americans with disabilities are significant, they are not impossible to overcome. Our WIPA Staff is dedicated and committed to assist our Native American citizens in providing traditional WIPA services with adapting to the Native American needs. The best plan of action is our outreach in person visits to the areas where Native Americans live. Outreach will consist of advertising in tribal newspapers, having informational booths at tribal fairs, using posters and brochures, and similar activities. WIPA Staff will also enhance working relationships with the staff of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians who can then refer clients to WIPA and other resources in their local community. WIPA staff will visit the Choctaw Indian Reservation regularly and meet potential clients through coordination and collaboration with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. WIPA staff will provide services that are coordinated in a culturally appropriate manner and, typically, will involve the client's family.*

#### **SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning the results of consumer satisfaction surveys:**

- Consumer satisfaction remains high indicating that service delivery is meeting consumer expectation/need.
- The report indicates good consumer satisfaction. Comments indicate that services are helping individuals achieve employment.

*Agency Response: MDRS appreciates the compliments. Information was given to the members of the SRC showing that the consumers input is valued and appreciated. We continue to strive to address any concerns members may have.*

**SRC comments and/or recommendations for input in terms of potential service providers or discussions on the performance of service providers currently being used by OVR/OVRB:**

I was happy to hear the discussion of consumer choice of vendors for orientation and mobility and other education for individuals with blindness.

I am not familiar thoroughly with the listing. Consider clients' choices when economically feasible and when providers are judged to be high quality. Hearing overall staff comments and apparent concern for high quality services and their concentration on client satisfaction, I am sure this recommendation is being followed.

*Agency Response: MDRS appreciates your comments. MDRS will gladly address any specific concerns of individual service providers at any time throughout the year.*

**SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning VR Policy, State Plan Development, and SRC business:**

I was unable to attend the State Plan hearing today. However, I was invited last February to work with staff committees. I was provided a complete draft of the upcoming State Plan and had ample opportunity to comment and ask questions as needed. The process was excellent to allow my participation.

*Agency Response: MDRS strives to keep all SRC members updated regarding the State Plan. MDRS appreciates all suggestions and input from SRC members.*

**Do you have any comments or recommendations concerning the Alcohol and Drug Services Program reviewed by Ms. White at this meeting?**

I would like to read the policies. The consumer was very effective in demonstrating the effectiveness of the services towards his employment.

*Agency Response: MDRS provided material for the member to read concerning the policies of the Alcohol and Drug Service Program.*

As the 2015 State Plan was being developed, members of the SRC were contacted and asked to assist MDRS staff members in developing any attachment of interest to them or to provide input into any changes they would suggest for the FFY 2015 State Plan.

The members of the SRC were provided notice that the attachments were linked on the MDRS website and each member was emailed copies of every attachment. Additionally, each member of the Council was sent an electronic questionnaire regarding any feedback or comments that they would like to offer.