

## Monthly Update: Self-Determination Project December, 1998

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Evaluation: The Project staff had its first meeting with Sarah Taub of the Human Service Research Institute in Cambridge, MA on Friday, December 4. Sarah attended our monthly staff meeting, and discussed with the Project staff HSRI's involvement in the evaluation of project sites throughout the country. Staff provided Sarah with insight into the types and scope of referrals with whom they have been working over the last year. HSRI will compile a written report based on individual project site visits and a summary of all project sites throughout the US.

Intermediary Service Organization: The Division of Developmental Services advertised a notice for the Intermediary Service Organization (ISO) in three of the major newspapers in the middle of December, and on the State of Vermont electronic bulletin board. The notice was also disseminated to local payroll services, banks, designated agencies, and the accountant trade association in Vermont. The Request for Proposals (RFP) is being distributed today, January 4, to those individuals/entities who expressed an interest in applying for the ISO. Deadlines for letters of interest is February 10, a bidders' conference will be held on February 15, with a final deadline for submission of proposals of March 15, 1999. The ISO award will be announced early in the spring, and will be up and running by July 1, 1999.

Project Evaluation Committee: A subcommittee of Project advisory board members gathered on December 10 to work through an comprehensive evaluation process for the Project, based on initial goals and objectives outlined in the Project proposal submitted to RWJ. The intent of the committee is to devise an evaluation plan which includes internal Project goals and outcomes, which may or may not be covered in the evaluations being conducted by external sources, such as HSRI, Center for Outcome Analysis, Center on Human Policy, etc.

CORE Transition Meetings/Work with Schools: A number of Project staff have been working closely and collaboratively with local CORE Transition school to work teams and Vocational Rehabilitation staff on person-centered planning, transition issues, Individual Education Plans (IEP's), etc. To date, the work has proven to be extremely beneficial to all members involved. In some regions, Project staff is working with VR counselors and school personnel to develop/establish CORE teams where they have previously not existed.

Self-Determination Network Meetings: On Friday, December 18, a Network meeting was facilitated by Deborah Lisi-Baker through Vermont Interactive Television. The topic was how to sustain and maintain peer support groups throughout the state, and what support providers/group advisors need to keep the groups going. There was a good turnout at the meeting, and some wonderful suggestions from consumers, staff, and advisors as to what was needed to support peer support groups. Deborah Lisi-Baker will compile the information from the meeting, and at the next VIT meeting on Wednesday, February 17, the first half hour of the meeting will be devoted to reviewing the summary. Project staff are open to suggestions/recommendations for training/discussion topics for future VIT meetings scheduled for: 2/17 and 5/28.

Disability Awareness Day: Regional teams are busy preparing for Disability Awareness Day to be held on March 23 at the Statehouse in Montpelier. They are organizing local/regional meetings with peer support groups, agency representatives, and other disability/aging groups to coordinate transportation to the Statehouse from all over Vermont.

Consumer Booklet Printing and Dissemination: The Self-Determination head office in New Hampshire, through the generosity of Don Shumway, agreed to assist the VT Self-Determination Project in the printing and reproduction of about 500 copies of the consumer booklet which was developed originally by the Northeast regional team. The consumer booklet is a graphic portrayal of the SD principles, and the purpose is to educate consumers and families on what self-determination means, and about the principles that VT Project staff adhere to in their work.

REMINDER: The next Self-Determination Advisory Board is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 1999, from 10-12 in the conference room, lower level WEEKS BUILDING in Waterbury. Please RSVP if you cannot make the meeting. If you have any agenda items that you would like added to the Advisory Board meeting agenda please contact either Michelle or Crystal at: 241-2677.