OVR: A History and Overview

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Overview

My Background
OVR Mission
Eligibility
Services/Funding
Case Study

My Background

- Received OVR services after SCI in 2001
- Rehabilitation Counseling at Pitt
- Eight Years With OVR
- Liaison to CAT and UPMC Mercy
- Assistive Technology Specialist for PGH OVR
### The History of VR Services

- **Smith-Hughes Act of 1917**
  - Established funds for vocational education programs
- **Soldiers Rehabilitation Act of 1918**
  - Funds for rehabilitation of disabled veterans
- **Veterans Bureau established in 1921**
- **Disabled Veterans Act of 1943**
  - Helped disabled veterans return to work

### OVR's Mission

- **Mission**
  - To help people with disabilities gain or maintain employment
- **Career Counseling and Guidance**
  - Career Exploration, Service Options
  - Provider Options, Information
- **Job Placement Services**
  - Resume, Interview Practice, Job Leads, Job Fairs, Employment Funding
- **Public Sector**
  - State and Federal Funding
  - Funded with Taxes
- **Funding for Contracted Services**

### Application Process

- **Referral**
  - Self, Doctors, Teachers, Audiologists, Psychologists, CSH and P&H
  - Relatives, Other Agencies
- **Application**
  - Demographics, Work Authorization, Medical, Goals, Services
- **Records or Evaluations**
  - Collect medical records in order for evaluations if there are no records
- **Eligibility**
  - Write a justification for services based on records and needs and goals
- **Individualized Plan for Employment**
  - Goals, Services, Timeframes, Responsibilities of Counselor, Employer
Eligibility

- Not an Entitlement Program
- Referrals must be reviewed to determine eligibility
- Disability
  - Physical, Cognitive, Mental Health, Communication, Vision, etc
- Barriers to Employment
  - Mobility, Communication, Learning, Balance, Self-Direction, etc
- Multiple Services
  - At least two services
- Prolonged Period
  - At least 6 months

Contracted Services

- Training and Education
  - Pitt, Duquesne, CCAC, Builder's Guild, Trade Schools, etc
- Job Coaching
- Durable Medical
  - Wheelchairs, Shower chairs, Prosthetics, etc
- Assistive Technology
  - Dragon Dictation Software, Hearing Aids
- Home and Vehicle Modifications
  - Stair Lifts, Hand Controls, Van Ramps, etc

Eligibility: Funding

- Financial Need
  - Funding is based on income
  - Funding is not based on debt or assets
- Funding for Contracted Services
  - Wheelchairs, Partial School Tuition, Hearing Aids, Prosthetics, etc
- Working Clients may have a "deductible.
  - Client may have to contribute X amount before OVR funding can be requested
- Clients receiving SSI or SSDI have no "deductible.
- Approved funding is for maximum amount
- Waivers/appeals
  - Can be requested if "deductible is a financial hardship
Case Study

- Spinal Cord Injury
- T8 ASIA A
- Manual chair user
- Referred from rehabilitation facility
- High School Education
- SSI Recipient
- Goal
  - VR Counselor
  - Services
  - Education, Durable Medical, Driver Training, Vehicle Mods

Case Study

- Meets MSD Criteria
  - Has a disability, has barriers to employment, requires multiple services for at least six months
  - Eligible for counseling and placement
- Driving Eval
  - Not Covered By Insurance
  - OVR covers Eval, Training, and Hand Controls
- Wheelchair
  - Not Covered By Insurance
  - Natural Fits Handrims Covered By OVR

Case Study Services

- Vehicle Modifications
  - Client must purchase own vehicle
  - Minimum identification by client on identification
  - CERB reimbursement based on cost
  - OVR pays for hand controls and installation
- Education
  - All with some semester finish
  - Client must cover remaining costs with loans and grants
- Job Placement
  - Assistance with resume
  - Making interviews with potential employers
What can you do?

- Connect with the local office where you practice
- Develop a working relationship with a liaison
- Actively refer patients for VR services
- VR services are in every state
- Offices are assigned by county

Questions

FAQ

Contact Information

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