**May 2020**

**Interim Directors Report**

**End of Fiscal Year, Next FY, Fiscal Audit for last July, and New Cares Act Funding**

These last few months in the State Fiscal Year are quite the challenge on any given year but have been made especially difficult with losing our director, an excess of funds due to self-isolating requirements, an internal fiscal audit by DWS, and the addition of Cares Act Funding.

End of Fiscal Year: Now is that time of year where we need to spend down any remaining money left in our state budget. Because of the inability to hold in-person activities, attend live trainings, or travel for the last few months, we have found ourselves with money left over in several budget categories. It’s an interesting development that the other CIL’s are going through as well. I have managed the situation by establishing committees of staff members for each budgeted category with excess funds. The committees have been assigned the task of finding practical uses for the funds, researching the best products and/or services, sending all recommendations to me for approval, and then upon approval, purchasing those products/services. This has worked well. Team members have pooled their collective knowledge and have come up with creative, and useful ways to utilize the remaining funds.

Cares Act Funding:

RRCI has received funding provided by the COVID-19 Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) which the President signed into law on March 27, 2020. The CARES Act provides $85 million in supplemental funds to Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to respond directly to the COVID-19 pandemic. RRCI’s portion of this money is $141.140. CILs are directed to utilize the entirety of the funds to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the surge of needs of individuals with disabilities to access or reconnect with the services and supports they need to remain safely in their communities.

As you can imagine, such a vast amount of money to be used in such a restrictive way, has caused quite a bit of distress among the centers. Many meetings have been held, both with the directors and SPIL, as well as many training sessions with NCIL and the ACL. Though we have until September of next year to spend the money, in order to stay compliant with the Care Act regulations it will be necessary to create new policy to be put into place before May 30th. This has put a bit of a rush on coming up with ways to spend the money and creating the policy around that spending. I have counseled with other Directors and attended as many training/discussion meetings as possible to prepare for this task. True to form, I have also created a team to work on this with me.

DWS Fiscal Audit and Next FY budget:

Carol and I have been working with Noreen and others from the state to adjust budget lines and stay in compliance with guidelines.

**COVID-19 Pandemic**

RRCI offices have been closed for the past several weeks. However, staff have been keeping busy and work has been moving forward at full speed ahead. Most of the staff have been working from home keeping in touch with their consumers by phone, email, regular mail, and a few in person, one-on-one appointments to exchange equipment, with safety precautions in place. We have continued youth meetings, staff meetings and support group meetings online via Zoom.

I have established a COVID task force with staff members assigned to keep up to date on the ever-changing local and state guidelines. They meet weekly and give recommendations gathered from what they have assessed.

Moving forward, those who are able to go into their offices will do so, while high risk employees and employees with children and who are unable to obtain childcare, will continue to work from home. Because many of our consumers are in the high-risk category, activities, support groups and meetings will continue to be held online. Meanwhile, we are purchasing masks and other equipment to prepare for whatever future guidelines will hold.

**Census 2020**

Staff has come up with amazing ways to continue utilizing the two Census grants RRCI received before the pandemic. This has been a challenge since much of the funds were slotted to go toward in person group trainings and events. Team members have created care packages to be distributed directly to consumers door to door. Staff members, using careful social distancing precautions, have been able to help inform about the Census while also checking in on their most shut-in and remote consumers to assess their needs during this time of isolation. A real win win!

**Consumer Surveys**

Written Comments for April:

#9. How did staff help you the most?

• They keep me informed, provide resources, are positive and supportive.

• B. McKee is the sweetest person. Very helpful and followed through until my needs were met.

• Rarely seen-made appt. but did not show up.

• Gave me good information.

• Knowing there is someone I can reach out to if I need something.

• Help with what ever I needed.Leting me know about meetings.

• Would like more information about other services.

• Support group connections and technology infor. Also rides to meetings.

•

#10. How can RRCI improve our services to help you more effectively?

• I think you are a very resourceful program. Very helpful. Everyone is nice and pleasant to work with.

• They are doing an excellent work! I appreciate them all. Continue to communicate, provide

• Resources and work with community.

• Make sure they keep their appointment.

• Check in occasionally by phone if appropriate.

• Very good now

• Establish a center for the blind in St. Geroge (or So. Ut. Area) w/more services, and training.

#11. Please share any other thoughts you may have about your experience with RRCI and staff?

• Thank you very much. My IL is awesome!

• I greatly appreciate the transportation support as I am blind.

• Wasn’t with them long enough for them to do anything but meet for cooking.

• I need help getting around to places, like home depot,Walmart, my dog groomed.

• I drive no problem just need someone to go with me.

• Myrna has always been kind and considerate. I trust her to help when I need help.

• It is a good thing to be able to meet with other people,

• The Christmas dinner gathering was wonderful, getting to meet others in surrounding areas.