

**CAC MINUTES**  
**Friday, July 14, 2017**  
**9:30 a.m. LIFT St. Marys**

Welcome & Introductions: Bob Mecca, LIFT, ran the CAC meeting today. Those in attendance were: Chris Palmer, OVR; Mark Morelli, PA Link; Beth Rogers, OVR; and Mark Flacinski, parent advocate. Call in participants included Carma Horner, Pitt Bradford and Jessica Dineen, OVR.

Review of Minutes: No changes needed to minutes from March meeting. Chris Palmer indicated that when the minutes went out the last time, OVR Early Reach Coordinator Missy Franklin responded to a comment whether OVR is part of the McKean County Collaborative Board and she indicates that she is. Mark Morelli of PA Link also added that regarding the Educational Consortium that Duane Vicini will speak at Elk Cameron McKean group in September.

**Member Updates**

**Bob Mecca, LIFT** updated that LIFT has a new Independent Living Coordinator, Kathy O'Conner. If anyone needs Independent Living skills in the 6 counties to contact her.

Hope and Sheila from LIFT have been working with the Sherriff's department and the 911 Center coordinating Project Life Saver in Elk County. They have requested funds through Stack the Hall Foundation as well as Elk County Foundation. Letters have also gone out requesting donations. Project Life Saver is for people who may have Alzheimer's, dementia or ID who tend to roam. Families can purchase a bracelet for \$300-350 each. They are hoping to help individuals who can't afford it on their own. The bracelets have a GPS and do not come off the individual. If someone becomes missing, a call is placed to 911 who then notifies the Sherriff's department that the individual is missing. The Sherriff is able to access monitoring which will locate the GPS device. The individual is then able to be picked up. This program has cut searches from days into as little as 9 minutes and has a 100% success rate. LIFT is very excited about the program which is beginning in Elk County. It is a county by county program and at this time Warren and Clarion Counties are the closest counties to us that operate the program.

Chris Palmer noted that Project Life Saver was in the LIFT newsletter and that if anyone does not get the newsletter, to let LIFT know.

**Mark Morelli, PA Link** updated that the McKean County Partnership meeting is coming up in September. There is a sharing information session in September. All employment services throughout the area attend and explain what they do. Also, there is an Alzheimer seminar at the end of October/beginning of November. Three sessions are to be held. One each McKean/Potter, Elk/Cameron and Clearfield/Jefferson.

**Carma Horner, PITT Bradford** indicated that Pitt is on summer so things are slow. Today is the last day of second summer orientation and they are available for housing needs and getting services started. Carma did have a few questions for OVR:

- Q. How does OVR make a determination of giving financial supports to a student with a disability entering college?
- A. Chris Palmer explained that it is very individualized. The OVR 169 form is completed; family contribution is also taken into consideration. Sometimes the EFC is too high for OVR to contribute. Once this is all looked at, there is a formula that is used based on the type of school. Chris can send some more information to Carma and then they can discuss it further.
- Q. How does OVR make a determination if they would be willing to assist with adaptive equipment or technology?
- A. Chris explained that we do purchase equipment for students. To be able to purchase might require an evaluation – depends on what it is. It can also help expedite the purchase if the customer has been using the AT previously such as in high school. The student will need to talk to their OVR counselor. Carma asked about Kurzweil and Chris said that yes, we can purchase that – it just depends on the situation.

College funding and equipment are two different services and follow different paths.

- Q. When Jen goes out on maternity leave, what will be happening in McKean County?
- A. If the individual is on Jen's regular caseload, they will be handled by Supervisor Christy Patterson. The OT that Jen was handling for McKean County is being handled by VRC Del Materazzi. But please direct any questions to Christy Patterson.

Bob Mecca added that LIFT can also help with assistive technology. They have a program through Temple University as well as a re-use program. They have devices in their AT room and have access to hundreds of different AT. Call LIFT and ask Sheila about any AT needs. Carma asked if LIFT does software. Bob mentioned that there are many apps available. Through their PIAT program, individuals can try any type of AT.

**Jess Dineen, OVR:** No updates.

**Mark Flacinski, Parent Advocate** stated that his daughter has aged out of school and will be 21 this summer. With OVR's help, she has gained employment at Silver Creek Nursing Home. She is excited to go to work; she comes home happy – the way it's supposed to be.

Chris Palmer added that Mark has been a part of the CAC for a long time and it is wonderful to hear of her success.

**Chris Palmer, OVR** reminded all that an email was sent out with information prior to today's meeting. Packets were also available at the meeting. OVR staffing updates include recent hires Beth Rogers and Jeremy Rearick. Beth will be in Elk and Cameron counties with general adult population. Jeremy will be in the Southern Jefferson County area around Punxsutawney. Both are currently VRC Interns and will be graduating this summer. It is great news that we are getting some positions filled. We do have some Request to Fills in for a few positions. We are looking for a second Early Reach Coordinator as well as still having DuBois/Jefferson transition and McKean County VRC, and RCD positions still open.

OVR Public Meetings have been reinstated on a state wide basis. These meetings are to seek public comment on the 2-year modification of the 2017-18 VR services portion of PA WIOA combined state plan. Meetings will be done across the state all at the same time by video conference. The two dates/times are August 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and August 29<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 – 5:30 p.m. Both sessions will have the same content. We have always had a CAC presence at the meeting, so all are invited. Bob Mecca, LIFT, indicated that he should be able to make the 8/29/17 meeting.

There is a call in option for the meetings as well. An interpreter will be provided. If other accommodations are necessary, please contact Chris Palmer. Meeting announcements were included in the email as well as meeting handouts.

OVR Annual Report Calendars are available and were passed out to the CAC – a lot of success stories and statistical information. The QR codes can be read to see video success stories. Bob Mecca is in the calendar twice due to different committees he belongs to. The Annual Report is also available on line as well.

Experience the Employment Connection will be held at the DuBois Country Club on 9/21/17. Four or five local teams will be meeting together in DuBois. More targeted planning to put some possibilities in action. If you want to be on a team, contact ADA Mike Jacobson at the DuBois DO for information.

Next, Chris discussed OVR's primary and preferred method to individuals to refer themselves and get the options process started is now through Job Gateway (the user side of CWDS). Individuals have always been able to self-refer through Job Gateway; more specific instructions are being given out. If someone doesn't have internet access or doesn't have the capacity to do it or have someone help them, we do still have staff available to help those individuals. Clerical staff is walking people through it step by step. Feel free to share this information. Individuals are able to save their work and continue it later before submitting it. This role out effective 7/1/17 is the primary and preferred method for the majority of people.

Mark Flacinski, parent advocate, added that as manager of Special Olympics for this area, their registration has been by computer and has been terrible. Three fourths of volunteers have had difficulties with trying to register to help. He hopes that OVR's will be easy for people to navigate the system. Chris appreciates that and notes that there is a learning curve. However, it should expedite things as far as getting people through the rest of the process.

Chris Palmer reviewed the new OVR Essential Procedures. There have been a lot of changes to try to streamline things – to minimize steps. The process of OVR still hasn't changed, but some of the

paperwork and criteria that VRCs consider at different points has changed. We have been in the process of updating to meet the new law. Chris encouraged the CAC members to be familiar with it. The CAC is our voice out there. Contact Chris with any questions after you have had a chance to review.

**Other News:** Bob Mecca discussed LIFT's 4<sup>th</sup> annual Disability and Senior Expo to be held on July 26, 2017, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at Edgewood Hall in St. Marys. 61 vendors have signed up for it. A bag lunch will be provided. They are hoping that by moving the venue to St. Marys that they will have more walk through traffic. Vendors from all across the state are going to be there and there will be a wealth of information available. A shuttle will be provided to transport vendors to and from their vehicles for the loading and unloading process so premium parking can be utilized by consumers. The committee consists of Fritz Lecker of Representative Gabler's office, Chris Palmer of OVR, Mark Morelli of the PA Link, Pauline Gausman of Penn Highlands Elk and John Losney from ATA. Bob noted that this year has been so well organized and things have been running very smoothly.

Chris Palmer updated the CAC on two other non-OVR events. On 7/28/17 Overcoming Addiction of Alcohol and Drugs for Veterans in the community. This is a free event that is limited to 80 registrations. Flyer is attached. Also, on 8/19/17 from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm at the Elk County Fairgrounds in Kersey, "Messengers Supporting Recovery". There will be refreshments, live music, small group sessions. They are on Facebook. Flyer is attached.

Chris asked if there was anything new that anyone wants us to work towards. Carma Horner of Pitt Bradford mentioned the Disability and Awareness Program this year concerning ADA with employment and accommodations. Chris suggested that maybe we could do it as a CAC. LIFT would be welcome to help as well. The program is usually held sometime in October. Chris noted that this will work great in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The sooner OVR knows a date, the better. Carma will be in contact with Chris.

**Next Meeting:** The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 13, 2017. Bob Mecca will check potential sites and advise Aimee at OVR of meeting location. Details will be emailed to CAC at that time.