

*“Hard of Hearing Students in
Postsecondary Settings”*

**VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
SERVICES LEADING TO
EMPLOYMENT**

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2 Important Resources for State VR Agencies Services to HoH Persons

- *“Hard of Hearing Students in Postsecondary Settings: A Guide for Service Providers”*, May 2007; PEPNet

AND

- *“ Model State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation Services to Person who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing or Late Deafened 2008”*, April 2008; Fifth Edition



PEPNet HoH Guide: Ch. 4 – *“VR Services and Hard of Hearing College Students”*

- VR only recently began recognizing the needs of hard of hearing persons as unique and different from deaf persons.
- State VR agencies vary widely in their knowledge and skills of HoH.
- Most VR counselors wrongly assume they know the issues and needs of HoH consumers.
- There is a severe lack of training resources for VR counselors to obtain skills to serve HoH consumers.

Model State Plan

Fifth Edition - 2008

Revisions Driven By

- Reauthorizations of the Rehabilitation Act – some changes in how services are provided.
- **Recognition that Deaf-Blind & Non-Signing Consumers with hearing loss (Hard of Hearing/Late Deafened) have different communication, employment and VR counseling needs from culturally Deaf.**
- Assessment model outline provided for state VR agencies to improve their services to HoH consumers.



SAC & VR: Working Together

Student Access Center

- Requires documentation of hearing loss
- Outreach to high school students
- Focus on HoH Student's successful education and/or training

State VR Agency

- Eligibility – Requires info on functional limitations of hearing loss resulting in impediment to work
- Outreach to high school students
- Focus on HoH Consumer obtaining or maintaining employment



SAC & VR: Working Together

Student Access Center

- May loan ALDs and technology
- Advocates and arranges classroom accommodations, i.e. captioning , note takers
- Develops MOU with VR to address costs of support services

State VR Agency

- May purchase hearing aids, personalized ALDs & other technology
- Advocates accommodations in the workplace
- Develops MOU with SAC to address costs of support services

VR Services to Deaf (Signing)

- Began in early 70's
- Focus on clients using ASL
- University training to VR Counselors for sign language and deaf culture
- National Association of the Deaf Involvement
- 1973 – 1st VR Model State Plan to Serve Deaf Clients – concentration on signing deaf



VR Awareness of Hard of Hearing

- Started in mid 80s
- Rocky Stone influenced national association of VR State Directors Committee to expand services to HoH
- State SHHH Chapters Developed
- Sam Trychin Coping Skills Groups



VR Awareness of Hard of Hearing

- 1990 - 4th Revision of the Model State Plan – Small chapter on HoH persons
- 1991 - VR national Training to Serve HoH
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- 2008 – 5th Revision of the Model State Plan – Plan gives equal treatment to all persons with hearing loss including addressing the needs of non-signing persons with hearing loss – HoH



State VR Agencies With HoH Services

- 1994 - KY VR used National Training to design services to serve HoH. From 1995 - 2006, a 300% increase in successful employment outcomes occurred.
- 2000 – AL VR began assessment of services, strategic plan was implemented in 2001. Counselor training has been provided and 2 staff audiologists have been added.
- Texas VR has Hard of Hearing Specialists. Also, an excellent video, “Let’s Make It Clear” was developed.

State VR Agencies With HoH Services

- 2002 – CA passed a law (SB 105) that direct service staff and program managers for deaf and blind services will have demonstrated experience and sensitivity in working with the target population. This included mandatory training about persons with hearing loss.
- 2002 – NJ VR conducted re-assessment of services and implemented strategic plan for improvements in 2003. On-going assessment and improvements.

VR Services: Obstacles to Services for HoH

- VR is an eligibility program with limited funding. Many states are in an “Order of Selection” and cannot serve all eligible consumers.
- Hard of hearing persons are often unaware of their work related problems and/or are reluctant to admit difficulties, so they may not be identified and evaluated correctly by VR.
- Hearing aids are a VR service that may be provided. However, serving more hard of hearing often results in hearing aid costs overwhelming VR budgets.

Why Should VR Focus on Hard of Hearing Workers?

- Between 1971 and 1990, hearing loss among working age adults increased 26% (18-44 - 17%)
- Missed opportunities for promotions and advancements. Workplace errors, accidents, etc.
- Untreated hearing loss averages \$23,000/yr. negative impact. Use of hearing aids restores lost income by 50 percent. *
- Better Hearing Institute

PARTNERSHIP Opportunities With HLAA : State Level

- State HLAA Chapters can develop MOUs with state level VR Programs.
- State VR Programs can utilize HLAA Academy of Hearing Loss Specialists as resources and/or vendors to assist with VR consumers who are hard of hearing.
- VR Counselors and other VR personnel can attend and make presentations at state and national HLAA conferences.

PARTNERSHIP Opportunities With HLAA – National Level

- More info and articles about VR Services can be included in the HLAA website and journal.
- The Council of State Administrators (directors) in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and HLAA currently have a formal MOU outlining a cooperative relationship.
- HLAA is invited as a representative to the CSAVR Committee on Services to Individuals who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened to ensure states are addressing these needs.

HLAA Advocacy Opportunities: State Level VR

- State Vocational Rehabilitation Council, required by Rehab Act – HLAA members can become representatives to this Council and provide input to state VR services about HoH worker needs.
- Some state VR agencies also have additional specialized advisory councils for services to persons with hearing loss. HLAA members can become representatives on these Councils.



Resources for VR Partnerships

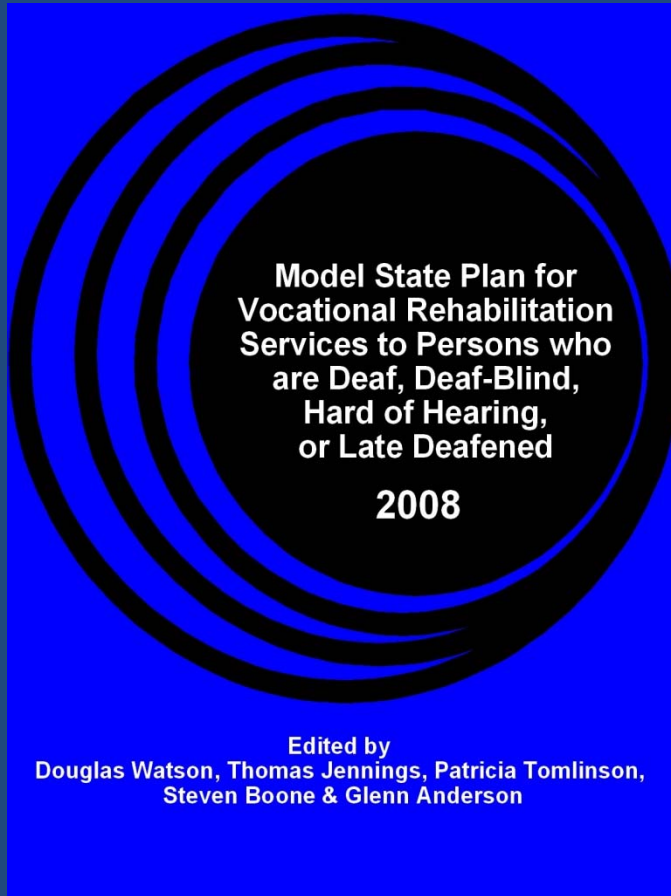
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Committee on Services to Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened.
www.rehabnetwork.org; Click on Committees
- Memo of Understanding prototype for state Hearing Loss Assoc. and VR stating how organizations will work together to improve services. On above website.



Resources

- “On the Job With Hearing Loss”, by Rebecca Morris;
www.beyondhearingaids.com
- *Hard of Hearing Students in Postsecondary Settings: A Guide for Service Providers*
<http://prcorder.csun.edu/media/1219hh-students/index.html>
- www.PEPNet.org; & www.wou.edu/wrocc/ Internet Resources
- The Kooser Program, *The Hidden Impact of Hearing Loss*;
www.hillcresthearing.com (click on Kooser Program)
- **TRYCHIN SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
FOR LIVING WITH HEARING LOSS**
<http://trychin.com/>

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