

The Vocational Rehabilitation Return on Investment Project

Knowledge Translation for Employment Research Center
May 21, 2019



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**Webinar
Knowledge Translation for Employment
Research (KTER) Center**

May 21, 2019

Today's Speakers

- Mr. Rick Sizemore (moderator)
Director, Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center (WWRC)
- Dr. Robert M. Schmidt
VR ROI Project Principal Investigator, University of Richmond
- Dr. Kirsten Rowe
Project Coordinator, Va. Department for Aging and
Rehabilitative Services
- Dr. Joe Ashley
Co-principal Investigator, private consultant
- Dr. Maureen McGuire-Kuletz
Project Liaison, The George Washington University

Webinar Objectives

- Provide a brief overview of the Vocational Rehabilitation Return on Investment (VR ROI) Project
- Describe the project's approach to ongoing engagement of state VR agencies and other stakeholders
- Provide examples of successful knowledge translation activities resulting from ongoing stakeholder engagement

Other Project Staff and Consultants

- Dr. Robert Froehlich
Project Manager, The George Washington University
- Dr. Christopher Clapp
Consultant, University of Chicago
- Dr. John Pepper
Consultant, University of Virginia
- Dr. Steven Stern
Consultant, Stonybrook University

Project Overview

- Research grant from the National Institute for Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research to refine an earlier ROI model with a diverse set of vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies and more recent cohorts of VR program applicants
- Partners with 9 agencies from 7 states: Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and Virginia
- Uses VR applicant cohorts from 2000, 2007, 2012 (and multi-year cohorts from 2007-2012 for low-incidence disabling conditions like blindness, autism spectrum disorders)
- Uses readily available administrative data to estimate the return on investment of services provided by state VR agencies.

Project Overview (continued)

- Generates estimates of the impact of specific types of VR services on VR applicants' long-term (2-3 years before through 5+ years after application to VR) employment and earnings for individuals with specific types of disabling conditions.
- Estimates annual rates of return for individuals with specific disabling conditions (mental illness, cognitive impairments, physical disabilities, blindness/vision impairment) as well as overall agency ROI
- For more information, visit the project website:
www.vrroi.org

Ongoing engagement of VR agencies in

- developing, implementing and refining the project and its intended products;
- ensuring validity of results (making sure they pass the “smell test”);
- interpreting results and applying them appropriately; and
- ensuring the methodologically rigorous approach was conceptually valid and reflected how VR services are actually provided

Engagement of VR as equal partner in

- developing the multiple grant applications that led to the grant awards;
- including VR agency staff as co-PI;
- using grant funds to help support VR agency costs for project participation; and
- identifying and implementing effective knowledge translation strategies.

Stakeholder engagement

“early and often”

- Multiple focus groups held in conjunction with stakeholder meetings to get input on knowledge translation activities
- Project advisory group of senior VR agency staff and other stakeholders provide ongoing input into the refinement of the ROI model, review and discuss preliminary results, and identify what VR staff need to make use of ROI results;
- Ad hoc groups of VR staff in several states help the researchers understand variations among states in how VR services are delivered, and how to turn the research results into information for VR agency staff use

Stakeholder engagement in KT

- Building knowledge translation (KT) into the project from the beginning by including VR training experts as major project partner.
- Allocating significant grant resources for stakeholder involvement in developing and implementing KT
- Creating learning community and other feedback channels to assist VR staff in using the ROI information.
- Determining how ROI results can – and should not – be used for VR program decision-making

“Elevator Speech”

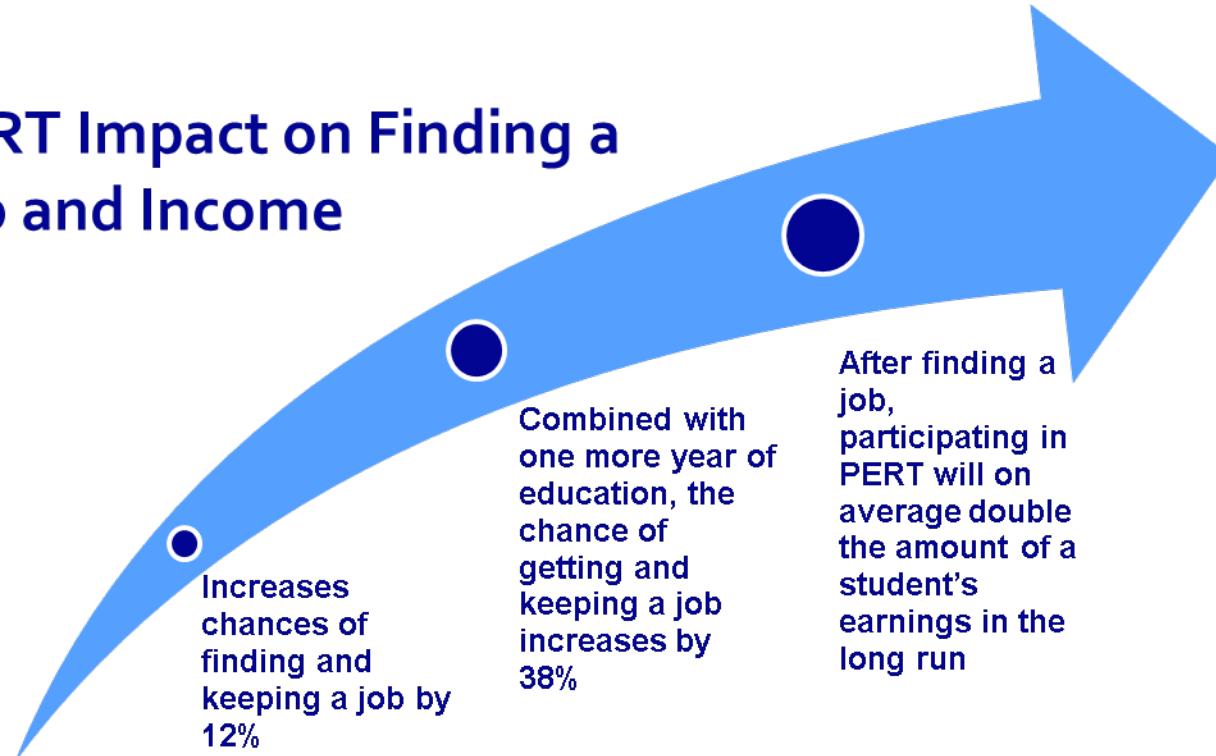
For those VR applicants in 2000 who received VR services, 80% enjoyed earnings gains that exceeded the cost of their VR. For every \$1,000 spent by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, the average (median) consumer earned \$7,100 more over 10 years than they would have earned without VR services... And the top 10% earned \$45,100 (or more) over the same period.

ROI of a Collaborative Transition Program

Post-secondary Education/Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Program

- Comprehensive career and independent living skills assessments at WWRC for high school students with disabilities selected by local school divisions
- Community-based team implementation of assessment findings
- Participants may receive additional VR services following PERT participation

PERT Impact on Finding a Job and Income



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Project website: www.vrroi.org

Wrapping Up

We invite you to:

- Provide your input on today's webcast
- Share your thoughts on future webcasts topics
- Contact Us at kter@air.org

Please fill out the brief evaluation form:

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4987603/Evaluation-The-Vocational-Rehabilitation-Return-on-Investment-Project-Webcast>

Disclaimer

The contents of this presentation were developed under grant number 90DP0009 from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research ([NIDILRR](#)). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this website do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.