

## **SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) FIDELITY REPORT**

Date: October 13, 2017

To: John Moore, Chief Executive Officer  
Nicole Eastin, Program Manager

From: Georgia Harris, MAEd  
Mimi Windemuller, Project Manger  
AHCCCS Fidelity Reviewers

### **Method**

On September 18-20, 2017 Georgia Harris and Mimi Windemuller completed a review of the Marc Community Resources (Marc) Supported Employment (SE) program. This review is intended to provide specific feedback in the development of your agency's SE services, in an effort to improve the overall quality of behavioral health services in Maricopa County. Supported Employment refers specifically to the evidence-based practice (EBP) of helping SMI members find and keep competitive jobs in the community based on their individual preferences, not those set aside for people with disabilities. Services are reviewed starting with the time an SMI participating member indicates an interest in obtaining competitive employment, and the review process continues through the provision of follow-along supports for people who obtain competitive employment. In order to effectively review Supported Employment services in Maricopa County, the review process includes evaluating the working collaboration between each Supported Employment provider and referring clinics with whom they work to provide services. For the purpose of this review at Marc, the referring clinics included Southwest Network's San Tan and Mesa Heritage clinics.

Marc Community Resources provides social, educational, developmental and therapeutic services to people with behavioral and/or developmental disabilities. Within their Employment Related Services (ERS) department, the Marc SE program is a stand-alone service for SMI individuals. At the time of the review, Marc had 103 members actively receiving SE services. Nine Employment Specialists support the local SMI clinics; 6 ESs are co-located at six provider clinics, while three ESs provide services to members affiliated with other clinics across the county. The co-located clinics are Southwest Network- San Tan, Chicanos Por La Causa- Centro Esperanza and Partners in Recovery- Arrowhead, East Valley, Gateway, and Wickenburg (Hassayampa). Since last year's review, Marc staff noted several enhancements in the SE program operations, including job logs integrated into the electronic health record and a new form that specifically tracks first employer contact.

The individuals served through the agency are referred to as "members" for the purpose of this report, and for consistency across fidelity reviews, that term will be used.

During the site visit, reviewers participated in the following activities:

- Observation of an SE team meeting on September 20, 2017

- Observation of integrated treatment team meeting at the Southwest Network San Tan clinic on September 19, 2017
- Individual interview with the agency's CEO
- Group interview with the SE Program Manager and SE Program Coordinator
- Group interview with three Employment Specialists (ES)
- Group interview with three members receiving services
- Individual phone interviews with two family support(s)/guardian(s) of members receiving services
- Individual and group interviews with two Rehabilitation Specialists (RS) and one Case Manager (CM) at the provider clinics
- Review of ten randomly selected member electronic and hardcopy records at the agency and the two provider clinics
- Review of additional agency documentation and policies such as the *Marc Community Resources Employment Related Services Contract*, team calendars, data tracking spreadsheets, sample job logs, etc.

The review was conducted using the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SE Fidelity Scale. This scale assesses how close in implementation a team is to the Supported Employment (SE) model using specific observational criteria. It is a 15-item scale that assesses the degree of fidelity to the SE model along 3 dimensions: Staffing, Organization and Services. The SE Fidelity Scale has 15 program-specific items. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (meaning *not implemented*) to 5 (meaning *fully implemented*). The SE Fidelity Scale was completed following the visit. A copy of the completed scale with comments is attached as part of this report.

### **Summary & Key Recommendations**

The agency demonstrated strengths in the following program areas:

- ESs prioritize providing job options to members that are permanent and competitive in nature. Interviews and data provided reflected that nearly all jobs are competitive and that ESs avoid the pursuit of time-limited positions.
- ESs work to ensure that nearly all job search parameters reflect the individual needs and preferences of the members. ESs use and update vocational profiles as a means of monitoring any changes to members' employment goals. Also, vocational profiles are shared between the clinic RSs and agency SE staff.
- Agency data and reporting from staff and members suggests that virtually all enrolled members were able to meet face-to-face with an employer within 30 days of program entry. Moreover, the data also revealed efforts to actively monitor staff achievement of this milestone.

The following are some areas that will benefit from focused quality improvement:

- Though the SE team was able to clearly demonstrate their commitment to zero exclusion, the referring clinics showed some inconsistency in their understanding of this particular criterion and how Marc's SE program differs from their other employment services in this regard. The provider clinics, the SE agency and the RBHA should continue to provide training to all referring staff (at both co-located and non-co-located clinics) on the principles of SE and the role employment plays in recovery.
- Staff provide the majority of services in community based settings; however, these settings (i.e. coffee shops, fast food restaurants) tend to serve as extended staff offices and locations that are "comfortable" for the members rather than points of contact relevant to employment opportunities. Whenever possible, staff should strive to provide services in places that are related, or can develop a connection to, the employment goal.

- Though SE staff makes multiple contacts with members who are no longer engaging and will pause services when needed, the program's outreach policy is still time limited. If the policy is incongruent with actual agency practice, revise it to reflect the definite course of action.

**SE FIDELITY SCALE**

<b>Item #</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Rating Rationale</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Staffing</b>				
1	Caseload:	1 – 5 5	At the time of review, the Marc Supported Employment (SE) program served 103 members. The SE team consists of nine staff: eight (8) full time Employment Specialists (ESs) and one (1) part time Job Coach (JC). Six of the staff are co-located at local behavioral health clinics; the remaining three staff serve members from SMI clinics throughout the county.	
2	Vocational Services staff:	1 – 5 5	The Marc ESs provide only vocational services. Staff report that their work is solely focused on helping members to find and maintain employment. These services consist of resume building, interview preparation, job development, job placement and job retention. ESs report that they do not provide any additional support or services to the other employment programs at the agency.	
3	Vocational generalists:	1 – 5 5	Both general agency ESs and those co-located at clinics provide all phases of vocational services to their members with the exception of one part-time job coach. Staff and members reported that ESs individually work alongside members from their intake until they obtain employment. If the member is interested in extended support after obtaining a job, their assigned ES will remain with them and will provide their job retention services.	
<b>Organization</b>				
1	Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment:	1 – 5 4	There are six ESs co-located at six provider clinics, while three ESs provide services to members affiliated with other clinics across the county. The SE team experiences much better integration with their co-located clinical teams. The co-located ESs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the current structure of the behavioral health system, the agency may have limited opportunity to affect change in this area. However, the RBHA, agency and clinics should</li> </ul>

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			<p>are scheduled to attend at least one clinical team meeting per week and is assigned a workspace in the same room as the clinical team. Staff report feeling more welcome and respected in team meetings. At the clinical team meeting attended by reviewers, the ES was observed interacting with the entire team. The team Psychiatrist was also aware of the employment services offered to their members. The clinical staff reported frequent and ongoing communication with the SE staff regarding their shared members. In addition to weekly clinical team meetings, staff connect via face-to-face conversations, emails, and monthly summary reports that are provided to the team.</p> <p>ESs who serve members in clinics that are not co-located do not attend any clinical team meetings, and have greater challenges in coordination. Both the ESs and referring clinic staff report limited communication, and some clinic staff does not appear to have a full understanding of Marc's SE services.</p>	<p>explore any opportunities for SE staff that are not co-located to have more participation and coordination for their co-served members.</p>
2	Vocational Unit:	1 – 5 5	<p>The SE team is currently co-managed by both the Supported Employment Manager and the Supported Employment Coordinator as staff transitions into different management positions. Every Friday, the entire SE team meets as a group for supervision. The first and third Fridays are scheduled for one hour; the second Friday of the month is scheduled for one and a half hours (1.5). The last Friday of the month is reserved for individual caseload reviews with each ES. Reviewers observed the staff as they openly discussed job leads, coverage needs, policy changes and effective interventions for their more challenging cases.</p>	

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3	Zero-exclusion criteria:	1 – 5 3	<p>Based on the information provided, reviewers determined the Marc SE staff does not exclude anyone from services. Staff report that they are willing to assist anyone who desires employment, and that they work with members of all backgrounds, including those who may have criminal histories and sexual offences. Members also report that they did not feel limited by SE staff in any aspect of their services.</p> <p>Though the SE team was able to clearly demonstrate their commitment to zero exclusion, the evidence was less clear with the referring clinics. The referring staff in the co-located clinic demonstrated the same commitment to employment as the assigned ES; they believed that anyone who desires employment should be referred to SE services. During the integrated meeting with the same team, the Psychiatrist was engaged in employment discussions and agreeable to members participating in SE services. The referring staff at the non-co-located clinic expressed more familiarity with Work Adjustment Training and enclave programs for members who have limited work experience, “are not ready,” and need to “start somewhere”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider clinics, the SE agency and the RBHA should continue to provide training to all referring staff (from both co-located and non-co-located clinics) on the principles of SE and the role employment plays in recovery.</li> </ul>
<b>Services</b>				
1	Ongoing, work – based vocational assessment:	1 – 5 5	<p>Upon program entry, members complete a vocational profile. Staff report that the vocational profile is updated each time the member desires a change in employment goal or job search preferences. Staff also complete the Job Start/Job End forms whenever a members’ vocational status has changed. Reviewers found evidence of amended vocational profiles, Job Start and Job End forms in many of the selected member charts.</p>	

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2	Rapid search for competitive jobs:	1 – 5 5	ESs begin the job search promptly after program intake. Members reported that the ESs are willing to take them to meet potential employers on the intake date (if possible). Staff reports and member charts revealed that some members were able to meet with employers and obtain positions within the first few appointments; one member was hired on the same day for a local waste management company. The data reflected that nearly all members (98%) were able to meet face-to-face with an employer within the first 30 days of program entry. Reviewers also saw reminder prompts and tracking of first employer contacts in staff calendars, showing proactive pursuit of this job development milestone.	
3	Individualized job search:	1 – 5 5	Staff uses the vocational profile to inform criteria for the job search. Members reported that ESs focus searches on jobs that they desire and are based on their needs such as location, hours, etc. Clinical staff noted the use of the vocational profile for all members and sharing those with ESs. The record review indicated that most job searches were reflective of members' goals. However, one record reflected a member who came into the program already employed and wanted a specific job change, but he never appeared supported in that pursuit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that ESs discuss job preferences and satisfaction with members on an ongoing basis, including those who are already employed and may want to pursue a different path.</li> </ul>
4	Diversity of jobs developed:	1 – 5 4	In general, the ESs develops and provides job options that are in a variety of settings. For the data provided, it was determined that members were employed in the same work setting and/or the same job type about 15% of the time. Though the majority of jobs developed appeared diverse, some members gravitated to fast food, cashier, and Peer Support Specialist jobs. Staff reported that members may request similar types of jobs,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all efforts to provide members with employment opportunities that are in varied settings.</li> </ul>

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			<p>but the ESs seeks employment that matches their individual preferences, such as proximity to home and work environment. In one example, a member wanted to work in retail but did not want to work with women’s clothing. The team helped him connect with employers better suited to his preferences.</p>	
5	Permanence of jobs developed:	1 – 5 5	<p>The SE team works to develop employment opportunities that are competitive and permanent in nature. Members report that the Marc ESs have not offered temporary or time limited jobs to them. Staff report that they have a couple of members who are in seasonal positions with the school system because the positions desired by those members only exist in that capacity. The data provided to reviewers suggests that approximately two (2) of their 103 members are currently working with staffing agencies.</p>	
6	Jobs as transitions:	1 – 5 5	<p>ESs help members to end jobs when appropriate and assist with the search for new employment. The SE Staff report that the team is available to assist all members when transitioning from a job. Members also verified staff involvement in their previous and/or current job searches after ending employment. In the member records, reviewers found evidence of staff helping members to evaluate the factors contributing to separation from employment, while encouraging them to restart their employment search. In one instance, a member had left a job without notifying his ES, even after recently obtaining a salary increase. After learning that the job ended, the ES immediately engaged with the member. During their conversation, the ES reminded the member that he could help to create a transition plan when choosing to leave a job. The ES and the member</p>	



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7	Follow-along supports:	1 – 5 4	then agreed to resume the job search. Marc offers follow-along supports to all employed members. These supports may include phone calls, advocacy for accommodations with employers, on-site observations, and follow-up phone calls. Staff estimates that nearly all of their members who are employed are currently receiving follow-along support. Though these services were reported and evidenced in member charts, the record review reflected little evidence of follow-along supports that extended beyond regular phone calls and face-to-face visits with members at the same location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue all efforts to provide extended supports to members; seek to provide those supports in an individualized fashion.</li> </ul>
8	Community-based services:	1 – 5 4	Vocational services are mostly provided in the community. Data derived from the chart review suggests that ESs provide approximately 61% of all vocational services in the community. Members report that the ESs will meet them in neutral locations, such as local fast food establishments, coffee shops and libraries. Staff also report that they will meet with members “wherever there is wi-fi [access]”. Though staff meet with members in public venues, the majority of the locations were irrelevant to the job search itself; for instance, most appointments at the local coffee shops were not to engage with the establishment for potential employment, but to conduct online job searches for unrelated employment. In essence, the local coffee shop had become an extended office for ES staff, rather than an opportunity for employer engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide community based services with the goal of connecting members (as often as possible) to the employers in that environment. Local venues should not serve as satellite offices, but rather members should be engaged in a place where they can be exposed to a variety of settings and explore vocational possibilities that may assist with their employment goals.</li> </ul>
9	Assertive engagement and outreach:	1 – 5 3	The agency has an established outreach protocol which is followed by all SE staff. All staff interviewed were able to articulate the outreach protocol, and reviewers were also provided copies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempted engagement should continue at least monthly for an unlimited timeframe. Though SE staff may provide some exceptions, the</li> </ul>

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			<p>of the outreach protocol, as outlined in the <i>Marc Community Resources Employment Related Services Contract</i>. The contract states that members are contacted by SE staff within 24 hours of any missed appointment. Over the next 30 days, outreach is conducted with the member and the clinical team. If the member still cannot be located, a 10-day, intent to close letter is sent to the member. If there is no contact in that 10-day period, the agency will close the member's file. Per interviews and chart notes, staff appears to follow this policy but also report that there are some exceptions; namely, members who the clinical team determines should be placed on hold due to a medical/psychiatric emergency.</p>	<p>general agency policy is to outreach just over 30 days. If necessary, revise the policy so it is congruent with actual agency practices.</p>
<b>Total Score:</b>		<b>67</b>		

<b>SE FIDELITY SCALE SCORE SHEET</b>		
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Rating Range</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Caseload	1 - 5	5
2. Vocational services staff	1 - 5	5
3. Vocational generalists	1 - 5	5
<b>Organizational</b>	<b>Rating Range</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment	1 - 5	4
2. Vocational unit	1 - 5	5
3. Zero-exclusion criteria	1 - 5	3
<b>Services</b>	<b>Rating Range</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Ongoing work-based assessment	1 - 5	5
2. Rapid search for competitive jobs	1 - 5	5
3. Individual job search	1 - 5	5
4. Diversity of jobs developed	1 - 5	4
5. Permanence of jobs developed	1 - 5	5
6. Jobs as transitions	1 - 5	5
7. Follow-along supports	1 - 5	4
8. Community-based services	1 - 5	4
9. Assertive engagement and outreach	1 - 5	3
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>67</b>
<b>Total Possible Score</b>		<b>75</b>

