

Attachment I

Direct Care Worker Registry

Boston HCBS Conference Presentation

September 2008

Vermont's Direct Care Worker Registry

Merle Edwards-Orr

**VT Dept of Disabilities, Aging and
Independent Living**

merle.edwards-orr@ahs.state.vt.us

802-241-4496

Background

- 2003 study recommends development of a Registry
 - Registry would be telephone and paper based
- 2005 – Community of Vermont Elders (COVE) convenes working group to look at design of a registry
 - Includes several discussions with Rewarding Work

Background

- 2007 Legislature directs (and funds) VT Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living to develop a Registry
 - Department opposed legislation concerned about capacity
- Work begins on Registry in Summer 2007

Registry Principles

- Available to consumer, family and agency employers
- Available to all consumer groups
 - children, adults and elders
 - Physical, developmental and emotional disabilities
- Free to all users in Vermont
- Web based with telephonic support

Vermont Challenges

- Uncertain web access
 - Rural setting
 - Aging population
- How to make the service free to all
- Recruiting workers

Vermont Strengths

- **Excellent grassroots support**
- **Easy access to current consumer-employed workers**
- **Adequate start-up funding**
 - **State funds**
 - **Robert Wood Johnson Cash and Counseling Funds**
 - **DSW TA and funding support**

Responding to Challenges Web Access

- Using cooperating agencies to support consumer access
 - AAAs
 - Home Health
 - Developmental Services
 - 211

Vermont Challenges Free to All

- Access code system
 - Agencies get access codes to give out
 - Consumers are given agency numbers on website
 - VT Center for Independent Living as fail-safe agency contact
- System also allows tracking of where consumers are getting information

Vermont Challenges Recruiting Workers

- 6,000 direct mail flyers to current workers
- Posters and brochures all over the state
 - We hope
 - Relying on cooperating agencies to help

Next Steps

- Registry in final development
- Letter to workers going out Oct 9
- Launch events around the state on October 21 – 23
- Fervent prayer

Benefits of RewardingWork.org

- Long-term solution
- Interactive database
- New prospects added everyday
- Search by specific need
 - Geography (zip code search)
 - Experience and education
 - Access to transportation

Vision for the future

- Build online community for elders and people with disabilities and their families
- Online community for PCAs
- Place to share ideas
- Provide up-to-date information about new programs and services
- Link to more resources
- Expand to more states
- Share resources across state lines

The future: Connected Living

RewardingWork.org and My Way Village are working together to provide Connected Living to seniors and people with disabilities. They have a common goal to provide services enabling people to live where they choose to lead full and independent lives.

Connected Living

Connected Living is an online resource that helps seniors and people with disabilities stay at home by providing an easy connection to family, community, products, and services.

Benefits of Connected Living

- Encourages self direction
- Provides resource for seniors and people with disabilities to identify and obtain goods and services
- Assists people in finding qualified personal care assistants
- Creates 'peace of mind' for family members and caregivers
- Provides customer support through its Ambassador service
- Teaches new technology skills and expands educational opportunities

Testimonial



“Up until now my only resource was word of mouth or ads in newspapers which was time consuming. In just one week with www.RewardingWork.org, I have interviewed four people, two of whom I hired. Thank you again. This Website is a lifesaver.”

---Family Member

Testimonial



“I found my first PCA using Rewarding Work and she is still employed by me today. I interviewed her while I was still residing in a nursing home. Rewarding Work is a great resource for recruiting and finding PCAs.”

--- PCA User

The end result



Connecting people who need support with qualified direct care workers.