CENTER ON EFFECTIVE REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE BASELINE SURVEY
Baseline Survey

Identifying the State of Practice
Baseline Survey

- Purpose of the survey – identify state of practice:
  - Establish a baseline of current practice (services, systems, policies, practices, and outcomes as well as barriers and facilitators)
  - Help identify the important aspects of service delivery for detailed assessment and analysis, and
  - Allow for comparison across states, and
  - Inform the development of the quality indicators framework
Survey creation process

- Initial drafting by a core survey team with CERT using the above methods
- Rigorous review process with full project team, Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel, and invited testers
  - Requested feedback on every question in the survey pool regarding importance, relevance to different categories of service providers and suggestions for modifications
- Three similar but separate versions created for State VR agencies, State AT Act Programs, and CILs
- ~60 items across 14 categories
Data Collection

- Baseline surveys widely disseminated through RESNA, CSAVR, NCIL

- Data collection on State AT Act Program version complete (38/56 = 68% response rate; 56 is universe)

- Surveys for State VR Agencies in progress (37/80 = 46%; 80 is universe)

- Data collection on CIL activities complete (84/200 = 42%, 50 was targeted limit)
State VR Agencies
Consumers served & services provided

- Top three disability groups served: Multiple disabilities, sensory impairments, Orthopedic impairments

- Reasons why individuals go to VR for RT/AT services:

- Top three types of RT/AT services provided:
  1. Job/Workplace Accommodations
  2. Computer Applications
  3. Technology for visual impairment (includes agencies for individuals with blindness/low vision)
Personnel

- **Who is involved in providing RT/AT services? (n = 36)**
  - ATPs (92%), CRCs (69%), Low vision specialists (69%)
  - Audiologists (50%), Driver rehab specialists (50%)

- **Educational qualifications of RT/AT staff (n = 34)**
  - Bachelors degree (38%), Masters degree (35%), Other (15%)

- **61% require specific certifications and licensure (n = 36)**
  - ATP certification from RESNA, CRC

- **81% require/encourage RT/AT personnel to undergo ongoing training and continuing education (n = 37)**
VR agencies - Barriers

- Top three challenges to appropriate use of RT/AT specialists within agency:
  - Time constraints of the RT specialist (41%)
  - Time limitations on the RT/AT assessments that can be provided (31%)
  - Lack of RT specialists (31%)

- Program perceived gaps in providing RT/AT to a consumer (n = 39):
  - Availability for supports, assistance, accommodations and maintenance for successful use (49%)
VR and Employers

- 91% assist employers in identifying RT/AT needs and solutions for individuals with disabilities (n = 32)

- Types of services provided:
  - Assessment (100%)
  - Device selection (100%)
  - Device training (100%)
  - Device modifications (89%)
  - Maintenance and repair (50%)
RT/AT in vocational evaluations

- Limited funding is not a challenge to using RT/AT in vocational evaluations
- 87% assess the need for RT/AT during vocational evaluations
- RT/AT services considered at which status:
  - 100% during IPE development (status 10, 12)
  - 91% while providing services (status 14, 16, 18)
  - 84% during placement/follow-up (status 20, 22)
The following requirements of RT/AT solutions are matched with consumer resources:

- **Most often:** Training, Cognitive demands
- **Less often:** Physical/Sensory demands of the RT/AT including use and maintenance, Support services and maintenance, environments
- **Least often:** Expense, Method of service delivery
Many respondents noted partnerships with other community agencies which serve underrepresented populations, churches, senior centers, village community centers etc.

Partnerships with independent living centers and IL specialists

Partnerships with Agrability programs, subcontracts to universities

Conduct outreach and awareness services through health fairs, county health departments, job fairs, community events

Designated and dedicated staff for community outreach activities
State AT Act Programs
Consumers served

- Top three disability groups served: Multiple disabilities, sensory impairments, Orthopedic impairments

- Reasons why individuals go to AT Act programs for RT/AT services:

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<td>Home-based needs</td>
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<td>Community participation</td>
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Services provided

- Top three types of RT/AT services provided:
  - Alternative and Augmentive Communications, Computer Applications, Technology for visual impairment

- Programs available:
  - Device loan programs (83%)
  - Device demonstration programs (67%)
  - Device exchange programs (58%)
  - Reuse or refurbish programs (58%)
  - Used equipment referrals (54%)

- 67% have alternative financing programs
Personnel

- Educational qualifications of RT/AT staff (n = 29):
  - Bachelors degree, 50%
  - Masters degree, 19.2%
  - Some college, no degree, 15.4%

- 59% require specific certifications and licensure (n = 30)
  - ATP certification from RESNA
  - ATACP, ATS
Top three challenges in using RT/AT services (n = 28)

- Access to appropriate equipment resources:
  - Never: 15%
  - Seldom: 25%
  - Occasionally: 25%
  - Frequently: 35%

- Limited staff resources:
  - Never: 19%
  - Seldom: 5%
  - Occasionally: 38%
  - Frequently: 38%

- RT/AT specialist not available:
  - Never: 19%
  - Seldom: 10%
  - Occasionally: 38%
  - Frequently: 5%
  - Almost Always: 29%
Matching consumer and technology

- The following requirements of RT/AT solutions are matched with consumer resources:
  - **Most often:** Physical, sensory, and cognitive demands for selected RT/AT
  - **Less often:** Expense, support services and maintenance, training, and environments
  - **Least often:** Method of service delivery
State AT Act Programs - Barriers

- Top three program perceived gaps in providing RT/AT services to a consumer:
  - Understanding user perspectives on, attitudes about, and comfort with RT/AT
  - Assessing the fit between RT/AT and the environment in which it will be used
  - Availability for supports, assistance, accommodations and maintenance for successful use
Outreach to underserved groups

- Top three approaches used:
  - Remote access AT Loan Programs
  - Partnerships with external on-site service providers
  - Remote device demonstrations, one on one onsite assistance

- Many respondents noted partnerships with other community agencies which serve underrepresented populations, senior centers, village community centers etc.
Centers for Independent Living
Consumers served & services provided

- Top three disability groups served: Multiple disabilities, sensory impairments, Orthopedic impairments

- Reasons why individuals go to CILs for RT/AT services:

- Top three RT/AT services provided:
  - Architectural accessibility (includes home and outside), Computer Applications, Technology for visual and hearing impairments
Personnel

- Educational qualifications of RT/AT staff (n = 52):
  - Bachelors degree, 31%
  - Other, 29%
    - Greater weight given to real world and life experiences with technology and disability
  - Some college, no degree, 14%

- 55% had a designated RT/AT expert on staff

- Although a majority (53%) do not require specific certifications and licensure for RT/AT staff, 88% require/encourage RT/AT personnel to undergo ongoing training and continuing education
Challenges in providing RT/AT

- A significant majority of CILs cited budget constraints as a barrier to the purchase (78%) and provision (64%) of RT/AT to consumers.

- 53% stated that funding available to RT/AT specialists for purchase of devices was insufficient, and 37% noted no such funding was even available.
Top three factors that impacted decision-making about RT/AT services (n = 37):

- Financial/ funding considerations (81%)
- Consumer goals (78%)
- Consumer functional need (43%), consumer/family requests (43%)
Outreach to Underserved groups

- Advertising through newspapers, radio, TV, and marketing in schools, rehab facilities, public areas such as laundromats and stores

- Participation in events that draw crowds including fairs (state, health, job), blood drives, DME drives

- Hire individuals from rural areas to spread the word in the community
CILs and Employers

- 75% assist employers in identifying RT/AT needs and solutions for individuals with disabilities (n = 36)

- Services provided:
  - Assessment (75%)
  - Device selection (68%)
  - Device training (54%)
  - Device modifications (32%)
Innovative programs

- Across respondent groups, participants highlighted services available in state as whole
- Low or zero interest loan programs
- Reuse, recycling, and reutilization programs (offered through the respondent groups or private resources such as Craigslist)
- Assistance to fill out funding applications
  - E.g. A State AT Act Program that trains staff on locating public and private funding, who then help consumers to complete funding justifications, and submit documents
  - $500,000 of AT acquired in past 12 months.
Summary

- A broad snapshot into the current state of practice
- VR agencies are the key providers of RT/AT to aid in employment and workplace accommodations
- All three stakeholders show common traits in the highest disability groups served: Multiple disabilities, sensory impairments, Orthopedic impairments
- TBI, cognitive disabilities, and psychosocial disabilities least served
- Computer applications and technologies for visual impairments are most common across providers
Summary

- Funding for RT/AT services varies with mission and mandate
  - CILs experience demand but lack adequate funding to meet demands
- All groups partner with other stakeholders to provide RT/AT services including CRPs, university based programs, private consultants and other government agencies
- Providers use multiple marketing strategies, remote assistance units, and partnerships with appropriate consumer groups to reach out to underserved groups
- Programs based on innovation and creativity in how AT is funded and accessed are highlighted: low interest loans, recycling, and assistance in identifying funding sources
For further Information:

- Please visit our website:
  http://bbi.syr.edu/projects/cert/index.html

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