Workplace Accommodations in Healthcare – Attract and Retain a Quality Workforce

June 13th, 2024
WI DVR & SVRI Collaboration

Vocational Rehabilitation

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a federal/state program designed to obtain, maintain, and advance employment for people with disabilities by working with DVR consumers, employers, and other partners

- The Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) provides solutions to positively impact the future of people with disabilities through services, research and education programs that prepare VR professionals

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DWD
Department of Workforce Development

UW-Stout
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant (H421C210018) from the Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474).
Objectives

1. Define disability, universal design & accommodation
2. Discuss the benefits of hiring those with disabilities, particularly in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives
3. Explore how universal design and accommodations impact those working in the healthcare field
4. Share success stories
5. Learn about the Business Services Team at Wisconsin DVR and how to leverage their support
# Definitions of Disability

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines disability within a legal context but is important to remember that disability is defined differently in other settings.*

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<th>Part 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Physical or mental impairment</td>
<td>Substantially limiting</td>
<td>One or more major life activity</td>
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*University of Wisconsin-Stout*
How many adults in the U.S. report having a disability?
Prevalence

1 in 4

Adults in the United States report experiencing some type of disability

CDC Infographic
Disability and the Labor Force

U.S. Dept. of Labor – Disability Employment Statistics

- Labor Force Participation Rate (16+):
  - Persons with a Disability: 24.50%
  - Persons without a Disability: 67.60%

- Unemployment Rate (16+):
  - Persons with a Disability: 6.60%
  - Persons without a Disability: 3.90%
Myths Debunked

• Not everyone with a disability may need an accommodation(s)
• Accommodations vary, just as people’s strengths, work environments, and job duties vary
• Accommodations can be little to no cost
• Retain valuable employees
• Reduced workers’ compensation & training costs
• Increased productivity, morale, and company diversity
• Many employees with disabilities are skilled problem solvers by virtue
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

• Evidence from Research

- Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder possess higher than average abilities in many skilled areas

- Individuals with developmental disabilities are more productive, have fewer absences, and are very loyal to their employers

- Individuals with mental health conditions feel work gives them a sense of purpose and belonging
Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy stated this new framework gives us “an opportunity to rethink how we work”

“A healthy workforce is the foundation for thriving organizations and healthier communities”
Career Pathways

- Upskilling Workers
  - Construction
  - Healthcare
  - Information/Digital Technology
  - Manufacturing

- Focus on competitive integrated employment
  - Company advancement
  - Learn additional skills

- Apprenticeship programs
Universal Design

- Universal Design (UD) is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of age, size, ability, or disability.

- Application of universal design principles minimizes the use of assistive technology, results in products compatible with AT, and makes products more usable by everyone, not just those with disabilities.

- If well designed with accessibility and usability, everyone will benefit.
Universal Design in Healthcare

• Universal Design can be applied to almost every engineering plan to insure those that are tall, short, deaf, blind, or have mental or physical disabilities can all access the same resources

• There are patients and employers from all aspects of life. Facilities need to be accessible to all

• Healthcare considerations are space, cleanliness, accessibility, security, and environmentally friendly

“Specifically, universal designs, job accommodations, and assistive technology can play a significant role in enhancing a person’s ability to interact with his or her environment and to meaningfully participate in society” (Huang et al., 2016)
What is an Accommodation

• Any change to the work environment or job that enables a person with a disability to be successful or enjoy equal employment opportunities including promotions, raises and recognition.

• The employee must meet the skill level required and must be able to perform the essential functions of the job.

• Through an interactive dialog between employer and employee, it is determined what is effective but ultimately, is the employer's choice.
What accommodations have you seen in your workplace or out in the community?
Assistive Technology in Healthcare

- Vital to enable people to live healthy, independent lives
- Lessens the burden of long-term healthcare
- Enables people to access education, remain in the workforce, and be active in society
- They exist to improve an individual's quality of life
- Reduces the need for healthcare services
- Allows people to live full lives
AT vs. Medical Devices

- Medical Device
  - "Any instrument, apparatus, implement, machine, appliance, software, material, or other similar, intended to be used alone or in combination for a medical purpose"

- Assistive Technology
  - any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
  - Falls under medical device umbrella, but not all medical devices are assistive technology
Assistive Technology

- Accessible Telephones
- Adjustable exam tables
- Amplified stethoscopes
- Bath chairs
- Blood pressure monitors
- Clear face masks

- Grip aids
- Lifts and carriers for mobility aids
- One handed syringes
- Talking monitors
- Vein finders
- Hearing aids
Latex allergies

High Contrast Keyboard Stickers

Disinfectant spray with no harsh chemicals

Air Purifiers for allergen control
Healthcare Success Stories

"Megan"

- **Diagnosis**: Limitations in mobility, work tolerance and work skills due to chronic regional pain in her foot
- **DVR**: Goal was to get a job in computer work
- **Solution**: DVR funded computer/clerical certificate and TWEs; her employer (dental facility) provided a job modification and a stool to sit as needed

"Lee"

- **Diagnosis**: Interpersonal limitations including self-regulation, inability to interpret/respond in real time to social cues
- **DVR**: Goal was to get a job
- **Solution**: DVR provided systemic instruction; her employer (a senior center) allowed a job coach and extra time to complete tasks

"John"

- **Diagnosis**: Sensorineural hearing loss that affected his interpersonal skills and communication, struggling with expression, processing and receiving auditory information
- **DVR**: Goal was to maintain own business
- **Solution**: DVR funded hearing aids that allowed him to keep his job as a business owner
The DVR Business Services Consultants (BSCs) are statewide and connect employers to a larger integrated business services team to assist in solving challenges in hiring and retaining qualified employees.

At no cost to the employer, we provide:
- Recruitment assistance
- Match candidates to business needs
- Connect you to workforce partners and more.
Business Services Team at WI DVR

- Engage in outreach to employers and build relationships
- Learn about the company culture as a whole and understand its workforce needs
- Provide disability expertise
- Connect with partner agencies and services
Have you connected with a Business Services Consultant from WI DVR?
DVR Business Services Consultant Contacts

<table>
<thead>
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Resources

Accommodation Training Library

Job Accommodation Network
Additional Resources

• U.S. Department of Labor – Accommodations
• U.S. Department of Labor – Disability Resources
• Office of Disability Rights
• Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)
• What Can YOU Do – Campaign for Disability Employment
• https://www.ada.gov/resources/medical-care-mobility/

• National Alliance on Mental Illness – Wisconsin
• Disability: IN
• National Industry Liaison Group (NILG)
• Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEAT)
• Strengths and abilities in autism - Altogether Autism
• Seven Reasons Why Hiring People With Disabilities Is Good For Business (forbes.com)
Thank You!

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