



Plain Language Summary

The Essential Elements of Customized Employment: Results from a National Survey of Employment Providers

This summary is for general information and reference purposes for vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors and direct service providers such as employment specialists from community rehabilitation programs (CRPs). The full article is available from Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin: [<https://doi.org/10.1177/00343552221088256>].

A Quick Look

Customized employment (CE) is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of individuals with disabilities as well as the needs of the employer by using flexible strategies at every stage of employment. The objective of this study was to ask rehabilitation providers who implement these services to describe the current status of CE service delivery. An online survey was administered to employment professionals from agencies within the United States. Participants responded to questions on the unique characteristics of Discovery and job development, current use of CE services, and information on their personal and agency demographics.

Key Findings

- Participants who completed the survey agreed on critical Discovery and job development CE activities.
- Their agreement suggests that they are aware of information about customized employment.
- However, there was a difference between what the participants think are critical CE activities and how well they think these services are provided.
- Although the majority (90%) of the participants identified most of the Discovery activities as critical, fewer than 60% identified any of the elements as being implemented well.
- For example, 72% of people answering the survey questions indicated that it is critical that community rehabilitation programs do not rotate all job seekers through predetermined work experiences. However, only 36.6% of the respondents indicated that this CE activity is implemented well.
- The items from the survey, as well as the participants' responses, can be found in the full text article.

Putting It into Practice

The findings from this survey raise questions about the capacity of service providers to implement elements of CE.

- It is critical that investments be made to ensure that evidence-based training and technical assistance be available to service providers on how to implement CE services.
- Training on CE should not only be focused on building knowledge about CE through training, but it should also be combined with skill building activities for CE implementation.
- To ensure that CE Discovery and job development are implemented well, CE fidelity scales for both should be used at the provider and funder levels. This would help capture and describe the essential practices and procedures for CE.

Article Citation

More information, read:

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