

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

Transition Services

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State Plan and Program Evaluation Unit

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West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

Transition Services

Introduction

Serving transitioning youth with disabilities¹ (TY) is a high priority for the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS), evidenced by a high percentage of TY consumers, as well as a high rehabilitation rate. Since federal fiscal year (FY) 2007, WVDRS has exceeded national averages for combined agencies in percentage of TY consumers relative to all consumers. WVDRS has also maintained, since FY 2007, a rehabilitation (employment) rate² of all its TY applicants of at least 64.3%. In FY 2011, WVDRS held a rehabilitation rate of 68.4%, substantially higher than the average rate of 52.9% held by WVDRS' peer group (Colorado, Maryland, Mississippi, and Oklahoma; as defined by RSA) and 52.8% for all combined agencies in the nation. This success comes despite the harsh effects of recent economic recession.

The accomplishments of WVDRS regarding TY can be attributed to a number of factors including, but not limited to, sound policies, effective outreach, active communities of practice, dedicated and TY-focused personnel, ongoing performance analysis and feedback, and a commitment to the provision of quality service to transitioning youth with disabilities. This report details these elements and others, examining the potential relationships they hold with the ability of WVDRS to move TY toward competitive employment outcomes. The report is comprised of three sections: Input, Process, and Outcomes. The first section highlights the characteristics of TY applicants as well as essential agency personnel and activities that are central to TY service delivery. The second section highlights and summarizes the experience of TY served. The last section describes the success of WVDRS in helping TY to advance in their education, attain competitive employment, and the return on investment (ROI) they generate for the taxpayers of West Virginia. Each section utilizes data from the WVDRS internet-based electronic case management system (iECM) and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

Input

TY Applicants

The number of TY applicants has risen significantly since FY 2007. Figure 1 displays the number of total TY applicants and the number of closures prior to receiving services (Statuses 08, 30, and 38) for FYs 2007-2012. The number of TY applicants has increased substantially from 1,862 in FY 2007 to 3,013 in FY 2012, an increase of 62%. The number of

¹ The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) defines transition aged youth as an individual aged 24 years or younger at application. Due to requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the US and WV Departments of Education consider those aged 21 years or younger to be transition aged youth, this is reflected in cooperative agreements. Consumer statistics in this document reflect the RSA definition of transition age youth.

² Defined as the total number of individuals with a status 26 closure type, divided by the total number of individuals with a Status 26 or 28 closure type, multiplied by 100.

Status 08 and 30 closures has increased at a higher rate than the number of applicants, though it should be noted that a major cause for the increases in these closure statuses, particularly for Status 30, is due to the re-opening of all Order of Selection (OS) Categories in FY 2008. During

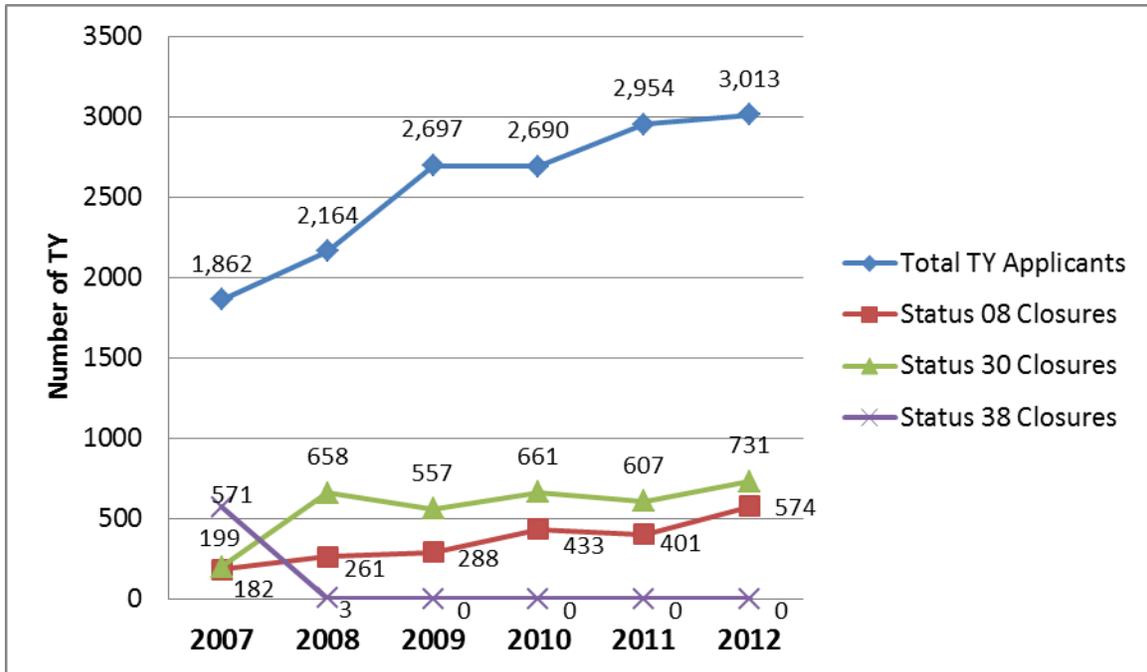


Figure 1. Number of TY Applicants and Number of Status 08, 30, and 38 Closures, FY 2007 to FY 2012.

FY 2007, all OS Categories were closed which sharply reduced the number of Status 30 closures (exiting from the waitlist is a Status 38 closure). Thus, when all OS Categories were re-opened, the number of Status 30 closures returned to a “normal” level and the number of Status 38 closures was reduced to zero by FY 2009. Excluding FY 2007, the increase in Status 30 closures from 2008 to 2012 is only 11 percent, much lower than the percentage increase in applicants. This widening gap demonstrates that an increasing proportion of applicants are receiving services.

Referral Source.

Referral sources for WVDRS’ TY consumers have remained fairly constant since FY 2007. Compared to other combined VR agencies, WVDRS receives a higher percentage of referrals from elementary/secondary schools (64% vs. 51%), but receives a smaller percentage of referrals from community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) (1.3% vs. 6.2%). Table 1 and Figure 2 compare the average percentages for WVDRS’ and all combined VR agencies’ referral sources from FY 2007 to FY 2011:

Table 1

Referral Sources by Percentage for WVDRS and Combined Agencies, FY 2007 to FY 2011

Referral Source	Average Percentage (FY07-11)	
	WVDRS	Combined Agencies
Elementary/ Secondary Schools	63.9	51.4
Post-Secondary Schools	5.9	5.0
Physician or Medical Personnel or Medical Institution	2.4	4.1
State or Local Welfare Agency	0.7	1.0
CRPs	1.3	6.2
Social Security Administration	0.3	0.5
One-stop Employment/ Training Centers	0.8	0.9
Self-Referral	15.4	15.6
Other Sources	9.3	15.3

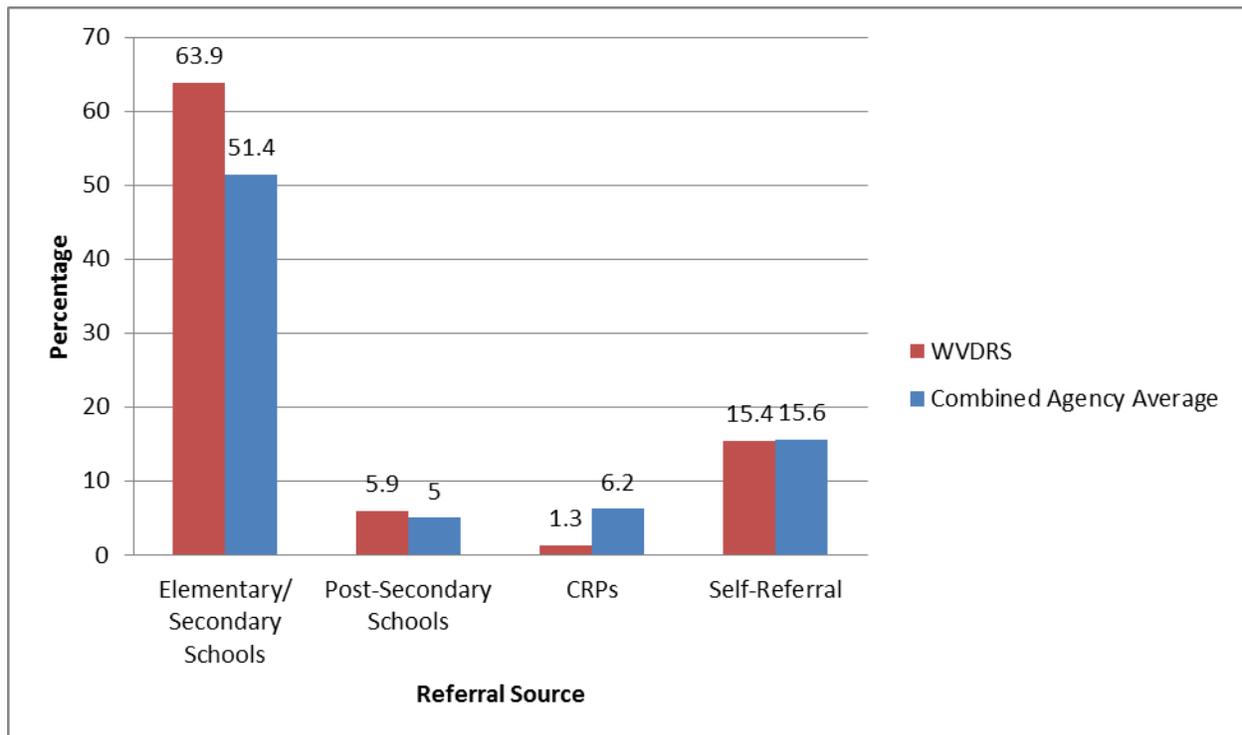


Figure 2. Selected Referral Sources by Percentage for WVDRS and Combined Agencies, FY 2007 to FY 2011.

Age at Application.

Having TY begin the VR process prior to exiting high school allows for a smoother transition to employment. Thus, one of WVDRS’ strategies for FY 2013 State Plan Goal and Priority 8 (improve and expand services to TY) is to increase the percentage of individualized plans for employment (IPEs) developed by the student’s 11th grade year, or approximately age 17. From FY 2007 to FY 2012, the average age of TY consumers at application has remained fairly constant with an overall average of 18.60 years (the average ranged from 18.34-18.69 during this time period). Age at application information, including the number and percentage by age, is shown in Table 2 and Figure 3.

Table 2

Percentage of TY Applicants by Age, FY 2007 to FY 2012

Age at Application	Average State Percentage (FY 2007-2012)	Total Number of Applicants (FY 2007-2012)
14	.06	9
15	.59	90
16	3.53	543
17	23.09	3,557
18	37.94	5,835
19	13.04	2,006
20	6.22	956
21	4.69	722
22	3.85	592
23	3.47	534
24	3.52	541

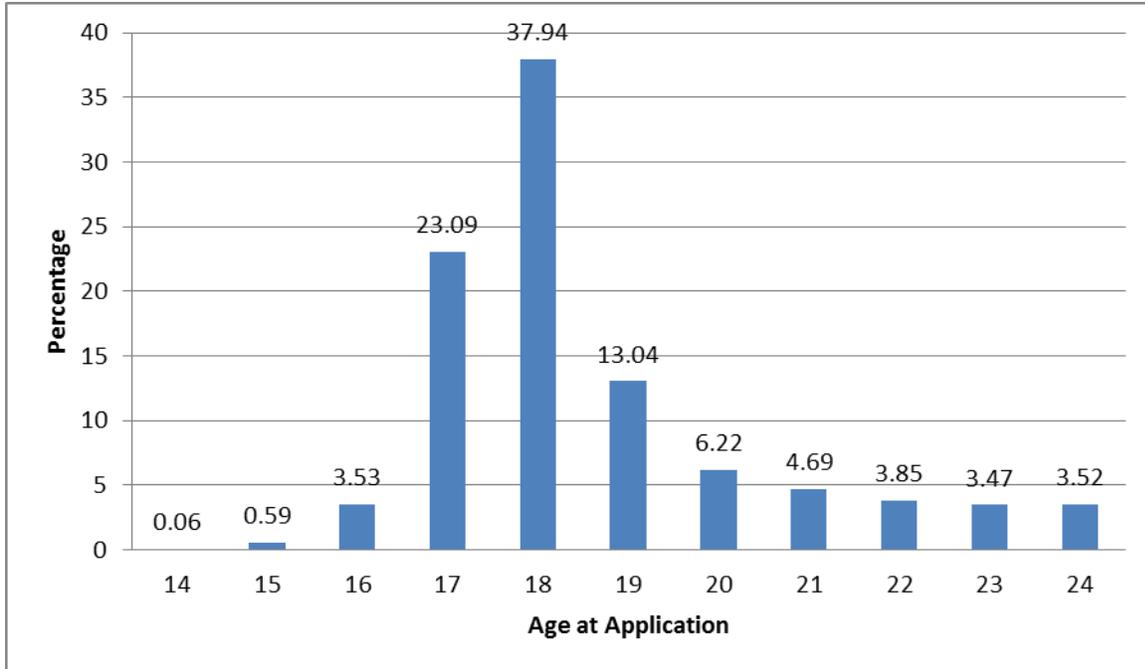


Figure 3. Percentage of TY Applicants by Age, FY 2007 to FY 2012.

Gender and Race.

From FY 2007 to FY 2012, gender and race breakdowns have remained fairly constant and are similar to non-TY consumers. Males make up about 54% of WVDRS’ TY consumers. Similar to the state’s population, about 94% of TY are non-minorities.

District Data

At the district level, differences appear in year to year trends and percentage breakdowns. This section provides district data for several RSA-911 elements collected at application.

Referral Sources.

Data for FY 2007 to FY 2012 were totaled to determine the overall percentage of TY referred to WVDRS by three sources that had variations among the districts. These sources include elementary/secondary schools, post-secondary schools, and self-referrals. The data are presented for each district and the stage average in Table 3.

Table 3

Referral Source by Percentage and District, FY 2007 to FY 2012

Referral Source	Average Percentage from FY 2007-2012						State
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Elementary/Secondary School	64	54	64	61	61	73	63
Post-Secondary School	4	13	6	7	6	6	7
Self-Referral	16	13	14	16	20	10	15

IEP Status.

Transition Counselors are often invited to IEP meetings to provide information regarding VR services and eligibility requirements. When appropriate, the IEP and IPE are coordinated to provide a more seamless transition from school to employment. The statewide percentage of TY with an IEP has remained fairly constant with about 53% of TY having an IEP during FYs 2007-2012. However, this percentage does vary by district and over time as detailed below. The state and district averages for FYs 2007-2012 are provided in Table 4.

IEP Status by district:

- District 1: This has remained fairly constant with an average of 65% having an IEP
- District 2: Slightly more have an IEP in FY 2012 compared to FY 2007, going from 47% to 54%
- District 3: There has been a decrease in the percentage with an IEP, starting at 57% in FY 2007 to 50% in FY 2012
- District 4: There has been an increase in the percentage with an IEP, starting at 42% in FY 2007 and 50% in FY 2012
- District 5: There has been a decrease in the percentage with an IEP, from 48% in FY 2007 to 39% in FY 2012
- District 6: This district has a large majority of TY with an IEP, with an average of 75% having an IEP

Table 4

Percentage of TY with an IEP by District, FY 2007 to FY 2012

IEP Status	Overall Average Percentage from FY 2007-2012						State
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Has IEP	65	52	56	52	56	76	56
Does NOT have IEP	35	48	44	48	44	24	44

Education Level/Status.

Between FY 2007 and FY 2012, the majority of TY, 70%, have some high school education at the time of application, but do not yet have a diploma. Due to the reporting restrictions of the RSA-911, it is not possible to distinguish between TY who are still enrolled and those who have exited the school system prior to receiving a diploma. According to employment status reporting for the same TY, approximately 60% are enrolled in high school at the time of application and also not currently employed. Therefore, approximately 10% of TY have some high school education, but are no longer enrolled. Table 5 presents the total number of applicants by age (at the time of application) as well as the percentage of each age group (i.e., all 15-year olds, all 16-year olds, etc.) that were: (1) enrolled in secondary school and not working, (2) enrolled as an “Other Student” (this could be college or some other non-secondary school) and not working, and (3) employed. These data are derived from the RSA-911 element recording “employment status at application.” This data element allows the counselor to indicate a current enrollment in school or report that the consumer is currently employed. Due to the mutual exclusivity of employment and school enrollment options for this data element, it is not possible to determine if some of the consumers are both enrolled in school and working at the time of application.

Table 5

Employment and Current Enrollment Status of TY Applicants by Age, FY 2012

Age at Application	Percent Enrolled in Secondary School ³	Percent Enrolled as “Other Student” ⁴	Percent Employed ⁵	Total Number of Applicants by Age at Application (FY 2012)
15	75	22	2	125
16	80	11	3	428
17	80	10	9	1,809
18	71	14	13	2,087
19	47	21	15	587
20	14	21	24	259
21	6	21	21	228
22	6	16	25	178

District Differences.

When examining district-level data, differences appear. This can be seen in trends for some districts that are going in the opposite direction of the rest of the state, or large differences in percentage breakdowns of data elements. These findings may require additional information to identify and understand the underlying causes for large differences across districts. For example, having a large university within the district may impact the number and age of TY referred and the types of services that are needed. Because WVDRS has Memorandums of Understanding with each county school district, differences in local policy may drive differences in TY referred to WVDRS. Economic differences across the state and over the five-year time span can also influence the data presented in this document.

Interdependent Contributing Factors to TY Employment Outcomes

WVDRS Transition Policy.

Section 4000 of the WVDRS Client Services Manual provides the basis for the agency’s transition services. WVDRS defines transition services as a coordinated set of activities for students with disabilities which promote movement from the secondary schools to employment. The policy requires outreach to youth with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process to identify those who are in need of transition services, including students who are enrolled in school and youth who are not enrolled in school. The policy further outlines how transition counselors work with students, families, and educators during the transition process to inform them of available rehabilitation services and to help identify students who might benefit

³ RSA definition- “Not employed: Student in secondary education.” Data from FY 2012.

⁴ RSA definition- “Not employed: all other students are persons attending school full or part-time other than students in secondary education.” Data from FY 2012.

⁵ RSA definition- “Employment without supports in integrated setting.” Data from FY 2012.

from or need vocational services and/or career planning. The policy defines the role of WVDRS and the school during the transition process, including timelines, appropriate services, and financial responsibility.

Outreach to TY.

WVDRS conducts many outreach projects targeting TY including participation in public events, partnerships with Family Resource Networks, job fairs, and disseminating promotional materials. Transition counselors establish linkages at the local level between WVDRS and school special education staff, county 504 coordinators, principals, and other related personnel.

To ensure all students (not just students under a 504 plan or with an IEP) are aware of WVDRS services, the Transition Program Survey is administered by a transition counselor in a classroom/group setting during the first semester of students' 11th grade year. This setting helps to ensure timely outreach to all students and help WVDRS identify students with disabilities who could benefit from VR services.

WVDRS Personnel.

A key component to WVDRS' success in serving TY is the personnel who specialize in transition services. Staff at the state, district, and branch office levels work together to share information, maintain high quality casework, promote positive working relationships with other partner agencies, and develop and ensure best practices in transition services.

VR Counselors.

In order to provide high quality VR services to TY throughout the state, WVDRS employs 61 VR counselors and field office supervisors classified as "Transition Youth Specialists" (see Table 6). Thirty of these counselors spend 100% of their time working with TY and 31 spend at least part of their time working with TY. There is a VR counselor assigned to each high school in the state, including three counselors whose offices are co-located within the state's largest high schools.

Table 6

Number of Transition Youth Specialists by District as of December 2012

Number of WVDRS Transition Specialists by District	
District 1	10
District 2	12
District 3	7
District 4	11
District 5	10
District 6	11

Employment Specialists⁶.

Employment Specialists assist WVDRS consumers of all ages. However, they are a great asset to TY, many of whom are entering the workforce for the first time. Employment Specialists lead programs that provide practical advice and preparation for employment. Employment Specialists also maintain a positive relationship with local employers to identify potential employment opportunities for VR consumers. When requested by the consumer, Employment Specialists can also provide workplace-related advocacy. WVDRS has 11 Employment Specialists throughout the state (see Table 7). Employment Specialists may work with more than one WVDRS branch office depending on the population and level of demand in each district.

Table 7

Employment Specialists by District as of December 2012

Number of Employment Specialists by District	
District 1	2
District 2	1
District 3	1
District 4	3
District 5	3
District 6	1

Key State Administration Transition Staff.

Field staff working directly with TY are supported by state-level staff members that devote substantial portions of their time on transition services. State-level staff monitor TY service provision, analyze consumer and performance data, ensure that any changes in the agency’s transition policy are appropriately developed and disseminated, and develop and maintain relationships with the West Virginia Department of Education, CRPs, employers throughout the state, and other partners in transition.

Service Providers.

WVDRS strives to provide its consumers with high quality VR services in all areas of the state. There are 58 WVDRS-acknowledged CRPs with 85 total service locations throughout the state (as of February 2013). CRPs provide a variety of VR services, including supported employment services, to TY in their own communities. To ensure job coaching availability for TY, WVDRS has participated in the Student Transition to Employment Project (STEP). This project trains special education teachers and staff to become WVDRS-acknowledged vendors to provide TY VR consumers with job coaching and job placement services. This program has enabled WVDRS to ensure quality VR service providers are available in previously underserved

⁶Employment Specialists are officially titled as Employment Programs Interviewer III at WVDRS

areas of the state. As of February 2013, there are 23 active STEP vendors and 84 students have achieved employment outcomes through the project.

Performance Analyses.

WVDRS performs ongoing reviews of TY-related performance data and case management related to transition services. The combined efforts of several units allow administrators, managers, counselors, and stakeholders to make data-driven decisions and implement targeted strategies that have measurable outcomes. Analyses are based on macro data (e.g., from all TY cases in a given time period) as well as information gathered from samples of individual cases.

Electronic Case Management.

WVDRS' iECM provides counselors and administrators with access to valuable tools and reports that ensure timely and appropriate service delivery and case management. This is accomplished with readily available reports as well as automatic flagging of cases that have exceeded the allowed amount of time for a particular status (e.g., over six months from eligibility to IPE development). Use of this database and available tools allows counselors, managers, and administrators to make data-driven decisions to better serve TY consumers.

Quality Assurance.

The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit conducts counselor training and Quality Assurance Reviews (QAR) to ensure consistent policy interpretation and service delivery to VR consumers, including TY. QA Specialists provide new transition counselors with training and clinical supervision, ongoing review and guidance on case work and caseload management, and technical assistance and training on all aspects of successfully functioning as a transition counselor.

QA Specialists also conduct the QAR. Results from the QAR allow WVDRS to develop targeted training in specific casework domain areas at office locations where scores were below the acceptable threshold.

Field Specialty Programs.

The Field Specialty Programs Unit within Field Services provides oversight and coordination of several transition-related areas including the School Transition Program, the CRP Unit, and Employment Programs.

The Program Specialist over WVDRS' School Transition Program develops, implements, and trains on policy that is unique to the school transition population. The specialist also plans and develops annual school transition training on a local and statewide level. Furthermore, the Program Specialist provides statewide technical assistance and guidance to our school transition counselors. The Program Specialist is also the agency liaison to the WV Department of Education.

The Manager of the CRP Program Unit works closely with CRPs to provide services to the school transition population. This unit oversees grants awarded to the CRPs, many of which provide services to TY. The CRP Unit is also instrumental in evaluating TY service needs at the local level and working with CRPs to meet those needs.

The Program Specialist over Employment Programs works with the Employment Specialists statewide to provide employment activities to the school transition population. The Employment Specialists provide job placement and job preparation services to TY in high schools.

Program Evaluation.

The SPPE Unit regularly provides reports and analyses of TY performance, demographic, application, and fiscal data to a variety of WVDRS personnel, including the Executive Management Group, which consists of the agency's key management personnel. This information allows the agency to make proactive, data-driven decisions. The SPPE Unit also reviews and reports on performance trends covering the provision of services and expenditures to TY consumers to assist WVDRS' Executive Management Group and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in strategic planning efforts centered on transition programming. To assist district and branch office managers, regular assessments of counselor caseloads are conducted.

The SPPE Unit conducts the triennial Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Results from the FY 2012 CSNA provided a detailed analysis of the service needs of transitioning youth around the state. Input was gathered from various stakeholders including TY consumers, VR counselors, and service providers. These findings were the basis for the adoption of a new agency State Plan Goal and Priority to expand and improve services to TY.

Transition Communities of Practice.

WVDRS maintains communities of practice to better serve youth with disabilities. Transition-related teams, committees, and conferences help WVDRS uphold high standards for transition services. Because WVDRS has many new VR counselors (over 40% have less than three years of experience), these communities of practice are a tremendous asset to providing professional development. Counselors with more expertise provide guidance and serve as an indispensable resource for their peers.

Transition Teams.

Transition services often require coordination between multiple agencies and service providers. WVDRS maintains a proactive approach to service collaboration through Transition Teams in each district. These teams are comprised of all WVDRS TY Counselors, Employment Specialists, relevant school personnel, and WVDRS-acknowledged CRPs that serve TY within the district. These teams meet regularly to review coordination of services, WVDRS and WV Department of Education policies, appropriate VR referrals, and services available to TY within the district. The meetings result in improved collaboration with IEP/IPE development, more appropriate referrals, and improved working relationships between all parties involved.

Transition Advisory Committee.

The WVDRS Transition Advisory Committee is comprised of the Program Specialist over the School Transition Program and a WVDRS TY Counselor from each district. This committee assists in the development of transition-related policy and training activities. The counselors also act as liaisons between the state and district offices to provide feedback and possible emerging practices.

Annual Transition Conference.

Each year, WVDRS holds a two-day conference focused on transition services. The conference provides VR transition counselors, supervisors, and managers from all districts a variety of information pertaining to the provision of VR services for TY. The conference also provides an opportunity to: improve service delivery to TY; improve policy interpretation; improve case management; identify areas of concern; and allow district and state level staff to share experiences and best practices. In FY 2012, 85 counselors, managers, quality assurance specialists, and other WVDRS staff attended the training to get updates and current practices in the areas of financial aid, vocational assessments, assistive technology, Intellectual/Developmental Disability Waiver Program, labor market information, depression in youth, autism, and relevant WVDRS policy. Attendees were involved in general and breakout sessions as well as small group activities to enhance their learning experience.

Agency Goals and Priorities.

Based on input from various stakeholders and the results of the FY 2012 CSNA, WVDRS added a new agency goal and priority in the FY 2013 State Plan to expand and improve services to transitioning youth with disabilities. WVDRS will accomplish this goal by implementing several strategies that will increase access to service providers and improve communication and collaboration between students, parents, school staff, VR counselors, and service providers. Progress will be measured using results from the annual WVDRS-SRC Consumer Satisfaction Survey and other needs assessment activities that incorporate input from TY consumers, VR counselors, and other stakeholders.

WVDRS Agreements/MOUs Related to Transition Services.

To coordinate transition services with schools, WVDRS has a Cooperative Agreement with the WV Department of Education in addition to Cooperative Agreements with all 55 county school systems in the state. These agreements cover the development of the IEP, technical assistance, outreach, and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of personnel from each agency.

Because transition services often extend beyond secondary school students, WVDRS has Memorandums of Understanding that help facilitate more effective and seamless transition services with the following:

- WV Department of Education, Division of Technical and Adult Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development

- The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education

Process

Eligibility to IPE Elapsed Time

WVDRS policy includes provisions to allow for extensions of the six-month eligibility-to-IPE deadline. However, even with extensions, IPEs must be completed before the student leaves the school setting. A longer time period allows WVDRS counselors and consumers to develop high quality plans, taking as much information about the consumer as possible into consideration.

Based on RSA data, the percentage of TY requiring less than six months for IPE completion fluctuated greatly from 2007 to 2011, ranging from 70.65% to 78.44%. This range is below the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (83.99%). The percentage of TY requiring more than one year for IPE completion decreased from 2007 (11.64%) to 2011 (9.16%). This is greater than the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (6.67%).

Service Provision (Based on RSA Data) ⁷

- The 5 most commonly provided services for TY in 2011⁸ were:
 - Assessment Services (86.48% of TY)
 - VR Counseling and Guidance (85.57%)
 - Job Search Assistance (46.28%)
 - Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments (40.95%)
 - College or University Training (39.82%)
- The 5 least commonly provided services for TY in 2011 were:
 - Personal Attendant Services (0.15%)
 - Reader Services (0.23%)
 - Technical Assistance Services (0.3%)
 - Disability Related Augmentative Skills Training (0.83%)
 - Interpreter Services (0.98%)
- WVDRS provided the following services to a higher percentage (by at least 5%) of TY in 2011 than the national average for combined agencies:
 - Assessment Services (86.48% vs. 67.93%)
 - College or University Training (39.82% vs. 19.44%)
 - Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments (40.95% vs. 30.48%)
 - Job Search Assistance (46.28% vs. 31.11%)
 - Maintenance (27.42% vs. 15.89%)

⁷ The services listed in this section are service *categories* designated by RSA.

⁸ The five most commonly and least commonly provided services for TY in 2011 were the same in 2007.

- Occupational/vocational Training (23.97% vs. 14.73%)
- VR Counseling and Guidance (85.57% vs. 70.04%)
- WVDRS provided the following services to a lower percentage (by at least 5%) of TY in 2011 than the national average for combined agencies:
 - Job Placement Assistance (26.37% vs. 37.44%)
 - Job Readiness Training (18.86% vs. 28.22%)
 - Miscellaneous Training (4.96% vs. 12.48%)
 - Other Services (14.80% vs. 29.24%)
 - Transportation Services (14.35% vs. 29.62%)
- WVDRS provided the following services to a higher percentage (by at least 5%) of TY in 2011 than in 2007:
 - Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments (40.95% vs. 34.95%)
 - Information and Referral of Services (26.97% vs. 21.66%)
 - Maintenance (27.42 vs. 18.66%)
 - Transportation Services (14.35% vs. 8.51%)
- WVDRS provided the following service to a lower percentage (by at least 5%) of TY in 2011 than in 2007:
 - VR Counseling and Guidance (85.57% vs. 92.71%)

Service Provision (Based on WVDRS Data)⁹

WVDRS holds a commitment to high quality provision of services to its consumers, including TY. Consistent with this commitment, WVDRS has experienced massive increases in service provision in recent years. This section highlights some of the increases that have been experienced: Consumer counts, authorized dollar amounts, and average authorizations per consumer.

Consumer counts and authorization amounts for specific services were calculated using Statistical Analysis Software (SAS). Total consumer counts, authorization amounts, and average authorizations per TY and Non-TY consumer for each FY are shown in Table 8, as well as the totals and percentage of increase over the six-year period. The totals and increases are also delineated in Figures 4, 5, and 6. As depicted, WVDRS' provision of services for TY has increased dramatically since FY 2007. Specifically, the number of TY receiving authorizations for services has nearly doubled, increasing by 80.57%. Total authorizations for TY have more than tripled, from just under \$4,000,000 in FY 2007 to over \$14,000,000 in FY 2012. Relatedly, average authorization amounts have doubled during the same time frame.

Individual Service Examination.

SPPE staff selected 47 different services authorized for TY during this time period to examine more thoroughly. These services represented those that were the most costly and/or

⁹ The services listed in this section are individual services, rather than RSA-designated categories.

most commonly used during the time period. The following criteria were used for service selection:

If, in any of the FYs in question, a service:

- 1) Accounted for more than 1% of the total authorizations for that year, or was authorized for a total of more than \$100,000 for that year.
- 2) Was authorized to more than 2% of the total number of TY receiving authorizations for that year.

Table 8

TY and Non-TY Consumer Counts and Authorizations, FY 2007 – FY 2012

Fiscal Year	TY Consumer Count	Amt. Authorized for TY	Avg. per TY Consumer	Non-TY Consumer Count	Amt. Authorized for Non-TY	Avg. per Non-TY Consumer
FY 2007	2,522	\$3,850,789.44	\$1,526.88	1,440	\$1,986,508.08	\$1,379.52
FY 2008	2,832	\$4,082,033.82	\$1,441.40	2,102	\$3,491,158.54	\$1,660.87
FY 2009	3,381	\$7,187,311.35	\$2,125.79	2,743	\$5,712,312.71	\$2,082.51
FY 2010	3,748	\$9,124,041.33	\$2,434.38	3,590	\$9,807,671.72	\$2,731.94
FY 2011	4,168	\$11,400,566.50	\$2,735.26	4,949	\$16,098,957.15	\$3,252.97
FY 2012	4,554	\$14,091,895.32	\$3,094.40	6,070	\$21,609,591.31	\$3,560.06
Total (FY07 – FY12)	21,205	\$49,736,637.76	\$2,345.51	20,894	\$58,706,199.51	\$2,809.72
FY07 - FY12 % Increase	80.57%	265.95%	102.66%	321.53%	987.82%	158.07%

Note. The consumer count for any particular year is an unduplicated count and does not reflect the total number of authorizations for that year. That is, it is possible for a single consumer to receive authorizations for multiple services or multiple authorizations for a single service, though this would not be indicated in the table. Also, the total consumer count across the six-year period is most likely a duplicated count, as a single consumer may have received authorizations for multiple years. Therefore, the average for that row may not be accurate, as it could reflect a mean based on a duplicated consumer count.

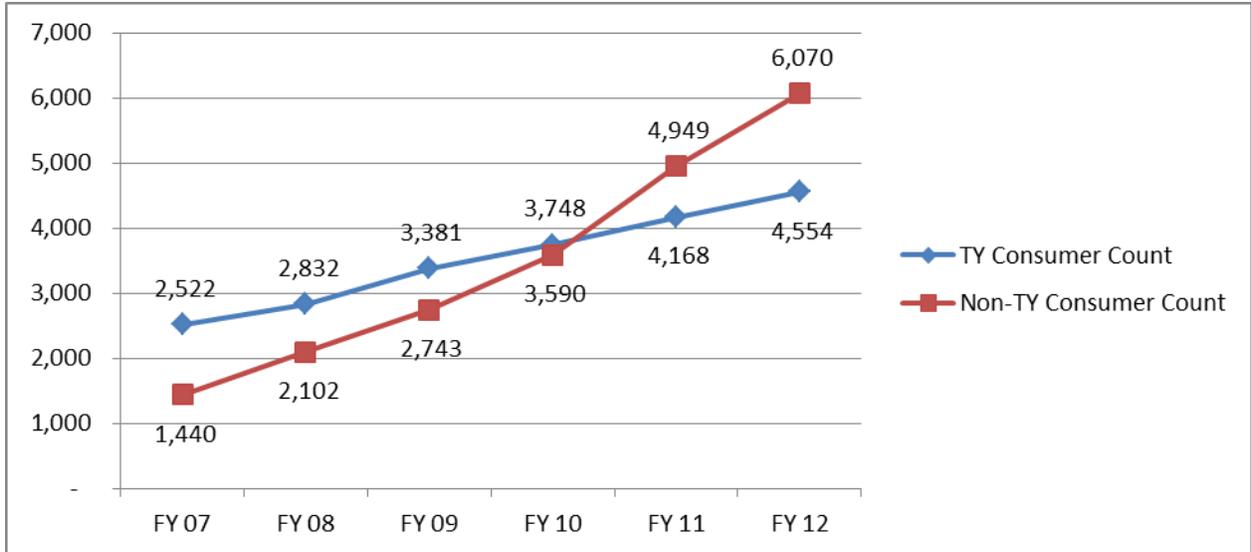


Figure 4. TY and Non-TY Consumer Count, FY 2007 to FY 2012.

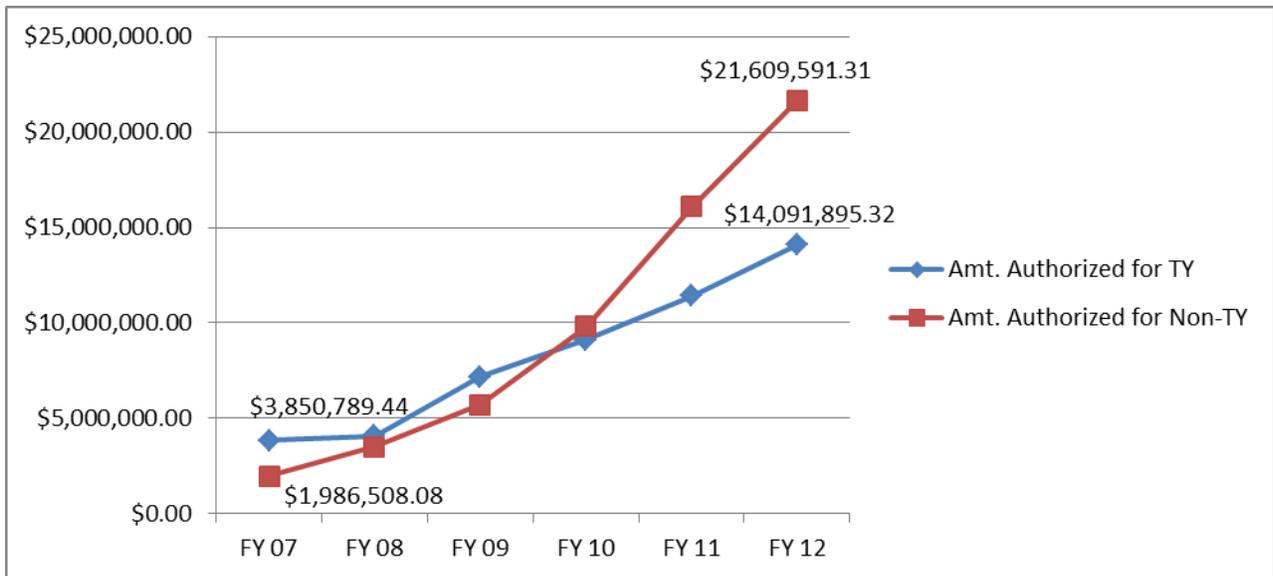


Figure 5. Total Authorizations for TY and Non-TY, FY 2007 to FY 2012.

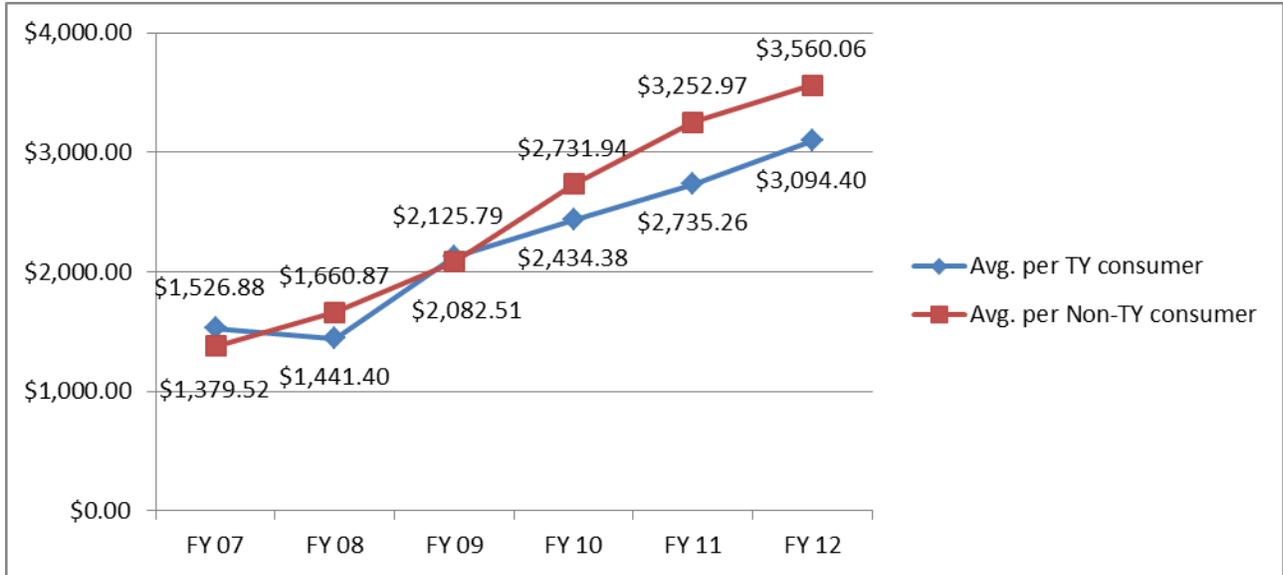


Figure 6. Average Authorizations per TY and Non-TY Consumer, FY 2007 to FY 2012.

If a service met either of these criteria, it was selected. Among the 47 selected services, SPPE staff examined services that: 1) were authorized to the most consumers over the six-year period, 2) had the highest total authorization amounts during that time, and 3) had the highest average authorization amounts over that time. Tables 9, 10, and 11 denote, from these 47 services, the most commonly authorized services, the services with the highest total authorization amounts, and the services with the highest average authorization amounts, respectively.

Some of the most commonly authorized services (see Table 9), also with some of the highest authorization totals (Table 10), were in regard to college and vocational school, including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and transportation. WVDRS is a national leader in providing higher education services to its TY population, which may stem from the fact that West Virginia is ranked sixth nationally in number of degree granting institutions per capita (Statemaster.com, 2013). That is, in addition to the recent ubiquity of online higher education, brick-and-mortar colleges are prevalent and generally accessible for many West Virginians, if given the proper supports.

Table 9

Most Commonly Authorized Services, FY 2007 – FY 2012

Service	Total Consumer Count ¹⁰	Per FY	FY 2007	FY 2012
Books and Supplies; College Only, Vendor Purchase (903007)	8,042	1,340.33	833	1,991
College or University Tuition and Fees (903001)	6,410	1,068.33	788	1,482
Records (999081)	4,064	677.33	412	838
Psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, eg, MMPI, Rorschach, WAIS), per hour of the psychologist's or physician's time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report (96101)	1,865	310.83	153	405
Room and Board; College Only, Vendor Purchase (904008)	1,504	250.67	148	420
Clothing and Uniforms, vendor purchase (906001)	1,430	238.33	90	392
CRP Plan development; per hour; not to exceed 2 hours (902031)	1,403	350.75	*239	450
Shipping and Handling fee (999001)	1,148	191.33	23	462
LTM; Client Maintenance; Transportation college only, when payment is to client (902017)	1,103	183.83	120	235
Vocational School Tuition and Fees (903004)	1,075	179.67	120	206

Note: Consumer counts for each of these services increased during the six-year period by at least 72%.

* = Service was not authorized in FYs 2007 and 2008; Value reported for FY 2009.

¹⁰ Consumer duplication across FYs is possible.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

Table 10

Services with Highest Total Authorizations (over \$1,000,000 during FY 2007 – FY 2012)

Service	Total Authorizations	Per FY	FY 2007	FY 2012
College or University Tuition and Fees (903001)	\$16,814,454.08	\$2,802,409.01	\$1,774,151.19	\$4,404,268.56
Books and Supplies; College Only, Vendor Purchase (903007)	\$5,364,097.24	\$894,016.21	\$515,213.95	\$1,503,484.69
Room and Board; College Only, Vendor Purchase (904008)	\$3,485,685.58	\$580,947.60	\$282,151.32	\$1,149,028.26
Vocational School Tuition and Fees (903004)	\$1,994,562.91	\$332,427.15	\$155,607.67	\$432,752.81
LTM; Client Maintenance Room and Board. College only, when payment is to client (902021)	\$1,844,882.36	\$307,480.39	\$122,067.27	\$449,660.46
LTM; Client Maintenance; Transportation college only, when payment is to client (902017)	\$1,575,923.72	\$262,653.95	\$129,273.59	\$416,299.57
Community Based Assessment; per hour, paid at the completion of goals not to exceed 90 hours in a 6 month period. Not to exceed a total of 3600 (903028)	\$1,256,080	\$314,020	*\$149,940	\$560,780
Computer system complete (904009)	\$1,072,077.10	\$178,679.52	\$6,085.00	\$524,247.08

Note: Authorization amounts for each of these services increased during the six-year period by at least 148%.

* = Service was not authorized in FYs 2007 and 2008; Value reported for FY 2009.

The services with the highest average authorizations were for vehicle purchases, as seen in Table 11. These services were not authorized in FYs 2007 or 2008, but were part of a later WVDRS initiative to provide individualized transportation solutions to consumers. West Virginia is a mostly rural state, with limited (and in many areas, non-existent) options for public transportation. Having a personal vehicle is the only way for many West Virginians, with or without disabilities, to acquire and maintain employment.

Hospitalizations and Binaural hearing aids are other WVDRS services with high average authorizations and in recent FYs, have exceeded \$100,000 in total authorizations per year for TY. While increases in average authorizations for hearing aids have been relatively steady, average authorizations for hospitalizations have varied wildly, increasing from \$1,600 in FY 2009 to over \$10,000 in FY 2010, before dropping below \$6,000 in subsequent years. Both of these services have also seen increases in consumer count over the six-year period.

Table 11

Services with Highest¹¹ Average Authorizations, FY 2007 – FY 2012

Service	Overall Average	FY 2007	FY 2012
Vehicle Purchase; Vendor Purchase; Vendor: Dealership Licensed in the state of West Virginia (903025)	\$10,234.54	*\$6,156.00	\$8,687.94
Vehicle purchase; Vendor Purchase; Vendor: Good News Mountaineer Garage (903024)	\$6,991.09	*\$5,800.00	\$7,704.67
Hospitalization – Inpatient or Outpatient (999035)	\$6,100.36	*\$1,600.00	\$5,796.24
Hearing aid, Binaural (two) hearing aids, per unit (620023)	\$3,004.45	\$2,298.14	\$3,722.56
LTM; Client Maintenance Room and Board. College only, when payment is to client (902021)	\$2,741.28	\$1,937.58	\$2,864.08
College or University Tuition and Fees (903001)	\$2,623.16	\$2,251.46	\$2,971.84

Note: Average authorization amounts for each of these services increased during the six-year period by at least 32%.
 * = Service was not authorized in FYs 2007 and 2008; Value reported for FY 2009.

Application to Eligibility Elapsed Time

The percentage of transitioning youth (TY) requiring 0-60 days for determination of eligibility remained fairly consistent from 2007 to 2011, ranging from 76.77% to 79.68%, which is consistent with the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (79.7%). However, the percentage of TY requiring more than 120 days for an eligibility decision decreased from 2007 (9.81%) to 2011 (5.64%). This is lower than the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (6.36%).

¹¹ Over \$2,345.51 (the average authorization amount for all TY services – see Table 1) per consumer during FY 2007 through FY 2012.

As shown in Figure 1, WVDRS has seen great increases in the number of TY applications. With relatively small changes in the number of counselors available to make eligibility decisions, as well as the high proportions of new (less than two years of experience) rehab counselors that WVDRS employs, the amount of time needed for counselors to make greater numbers of valid determinations of eligibility will increase.

IPE to Closure Elapsed Time

The percentage of TY taking less than one year to close following IPE completion has increased dramatically from 2007 (16.14%) to 2011 (30.96%). This is greater than the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (27.18%). At the same time, the percentage of TY requiring more than two years to close following IPE completion has decreased from 2007 (51.84%) to 2011 (42.37%). This is lower than the national average for combined agencies in 2011 (46.97%).

Outcomes

Intermediate Outcomes: Educational Advancement

- Nearly 70% of TY who exit in Status 26 (69.14%) and Status 28 (67.85%) have some high school education (grades 9-12, no diploma) at application.
- A higher percentage of TY who exit in Status 28 (25.92%) exit at the same education/training level they had at application than TY who exit in Status 26 (14.93%).
- At closure, a higher percentage of TY who exit in Status 26 (97.47%) have, at a minimum, completed high school (including equivalency and earning a special education certificate/completion) than those exiting in Status 28 (93.30%).
- TY who exit in Status 26 (85.07%) tend to have attained a higher level of education/training than TY who exit in Status 28 (74.08%) at closure. Though the overall percentages are lower than for Status 26 cases, many TY who do not achieve an employment outcome at the time of closure (Status 28) do advance in their level of education/training while receiving services from WVDRS which may allow for increased employment opportunities in the future.

Percentage of TY Closures

Between FY 2007 and FY 2011, TY have accounted for 44-58% of all WVDRS closed cases. Figure 7 shows that in 2011 TY made up 44% of closed cases for WVDRS, substantially higher than the combined VR agency average of 36%.

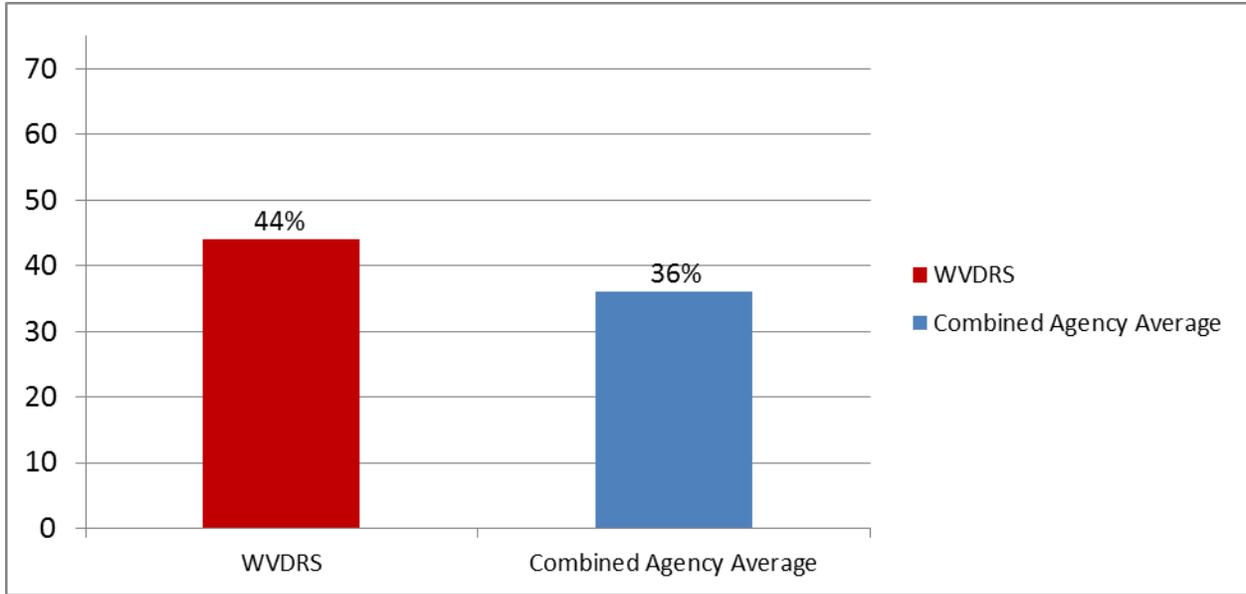


Figure 7. Percentage of Closed Cases from TY Consumers, FY 2011.

Employment

WVDRS is committed to helping transition youth (TY) with disabilities shift from school to the labor market. Figure 8 shows that WVDRS has been successful in maintaining this commitment. Since 2007, the majority of TY consumers who exited the WVDRS system each year (between 36% and 39.7%) exit with employment (Status 26). WVDRS is also outperforming most combined VR agencies in this area, as is shown in Figure 9. In FY 2011, 37.5% of closed TY cases for WVDRS were closed in employment compared to 29.9% on average for peer agencies and all combined VR agencies.

The Great Recession created an economic environment in West Virginia that has not been ideal for TY, especially those with disabilities. Numerous jobs were eliminated as a result of the recession, which presented a challenge for WVDRS in helping youth transition from school to the job market. Figure 10 clearly shows the negative impact the Great Recession had on employment outcomes for TY served by WVDRS. As the figure shows, economic conditions in West Virginia began to deteriorate for TY prior to 2009. The unemployment rate for TY¹² jumped from 12.80% in 2008 to 18.75% in 2009 and continued to rise, peaking at 23.00% in 2010. The figure also shows that 955 TY served by WVDRS in 2008 had their cases closed in employment. With unemployment beginning to rise in 2009, the number of TY employment outcomes fell to 895 before reaching bottom at 872 in 2010, when TY unemployment peaked. By the end of 2011 the labor market in West Virginia began to improve. Unemployment for TY fell slightly in 2011 to 22.80% and employment outcomes for those served by WVDRS started to rebound, as 910 TY became employed. This pattern has continued as of 2012: TY unemployment was at 16.75% and WVDRS helped 969 youth with disabilities transition from school to work.

¹² Rate is the average unemployment rate for youth between the ages of 16-19 and 20-24 living in West Virginia.

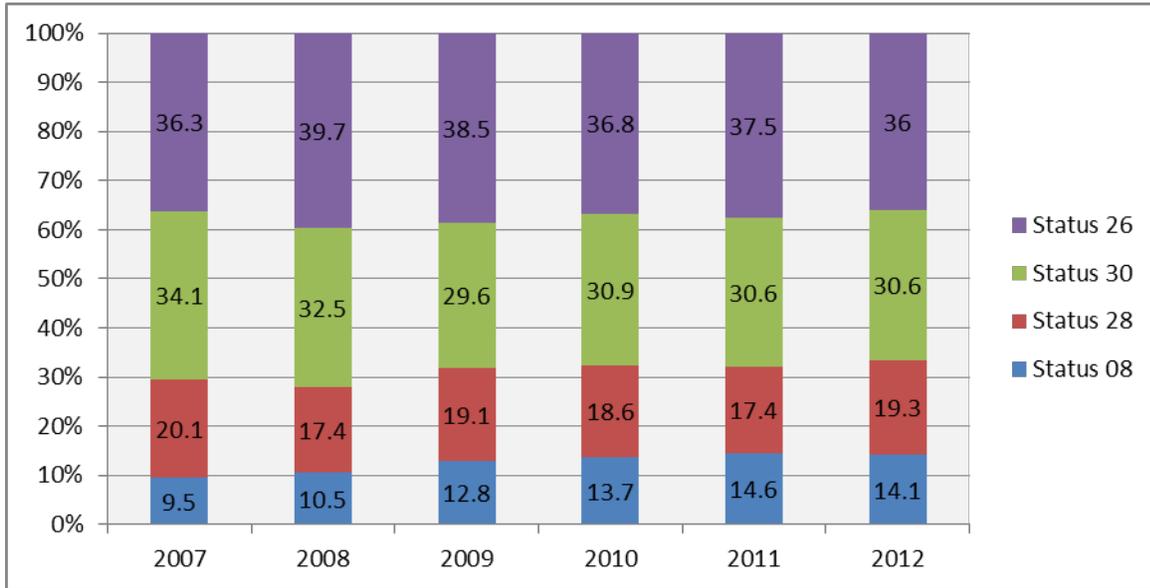


Figure 8. WVDRS Closed TY Cases.

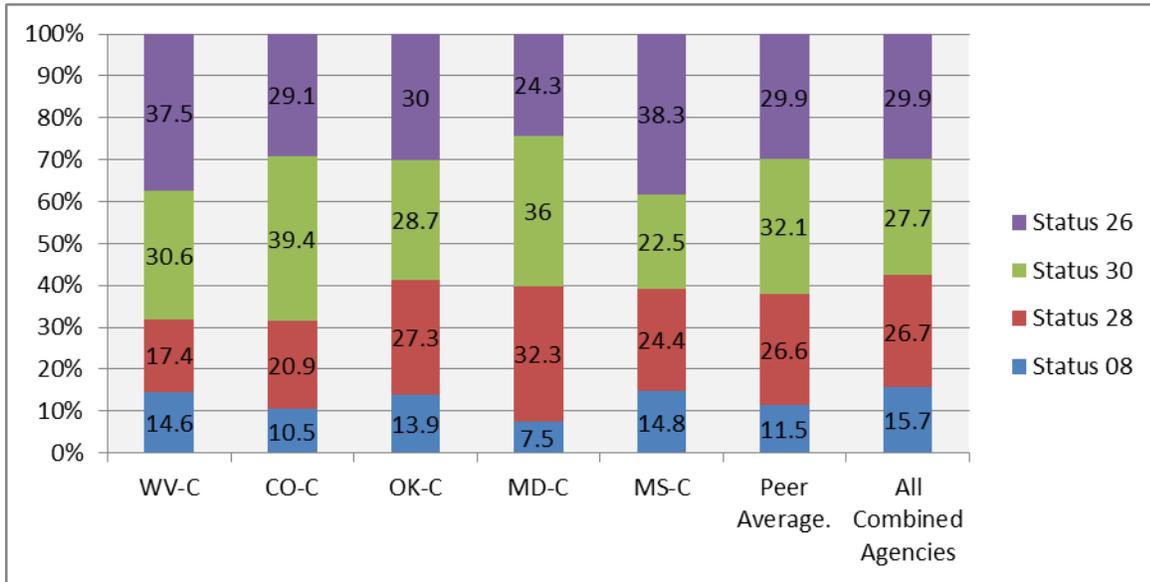


Figure 9. Comparison of Closed TY Cases, FY 2011.

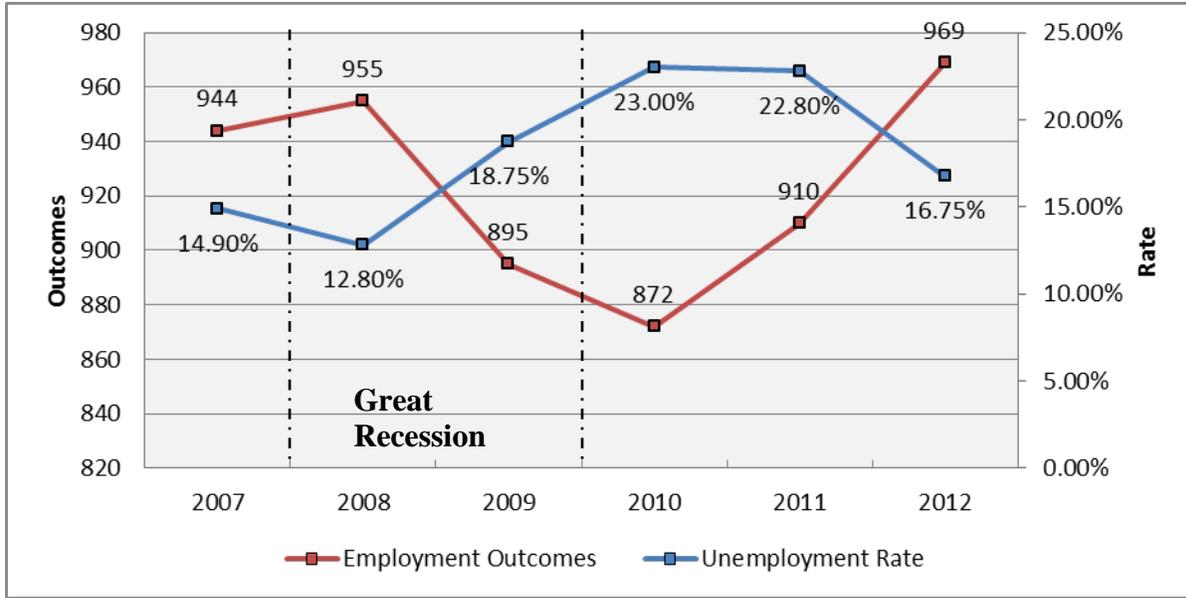


Figure 10. TY Unemployment Rate and Employment Outcomes.

The economic recession also made it challenging for WVDRS to help TY find competitive employment, and competitive employment that meets substantial gainful activity (SGA) and includes employer-provided medical insurance. Figure 11 provides visible evidence that poor economic conditions in West Virginia are linked to low levels of performance on quality employment measures for WVDRS for the years 2008 and 2009. Competitive employment outcomes, and those that met SGA, increased three consecutive years following the end of the recession, and are above or near pre-recession levels as of 2012. The only exception is for competitive outcomes where the employer provides medical insurance, which has not returned to pre-recession performance levels. This most likely is attributed to employers scaling back on the number of full-time staff, choosing instead to hire new staff in part-time positions.

Despite lingering effects of the economic recession, WVDRS is performing well above the average of its peers and all combined VR agencies in maintaining quality employment outcomes for TY. Figure 12 illustrates performance on five measures in FY 2011. *First*, TY who receive services from WVDRS are more likely to find a job. The figure shows that the employment rate for TY in FY 2011 was 68.37% compared to 52.89% for peer agencies and 52.82% for all combined agencies. *Second*, employment outcomes through WVDRS for TY are more likely to be competitive. In FY 2011, 99.56% of employment outcomes for WVDRS TY consumers were competitive, slightly higher than 96.78% for peer agencies and 96.06% for all combined agencies. *Third*, TY who find competitive employment with the help of WVDRS are more likely to find jobs where they can work 35 hours or more each week. For WVDRS, nearly 69% of competitively-employed TY consumers worked 35 or more hours each week in FY 2011. For peer agencies and all combined agencies, 45.98% and 44.62% of competitively-employed youth worked similar hours, respectively. *Fourth*, finding competitive employment meeting substantial gainful activity (SGA) is achieved at a higher rate by TY whom WVDRS serves. Over 77% of TY competitive employment cases met SGA for WVDRS in FY 2011. SGA

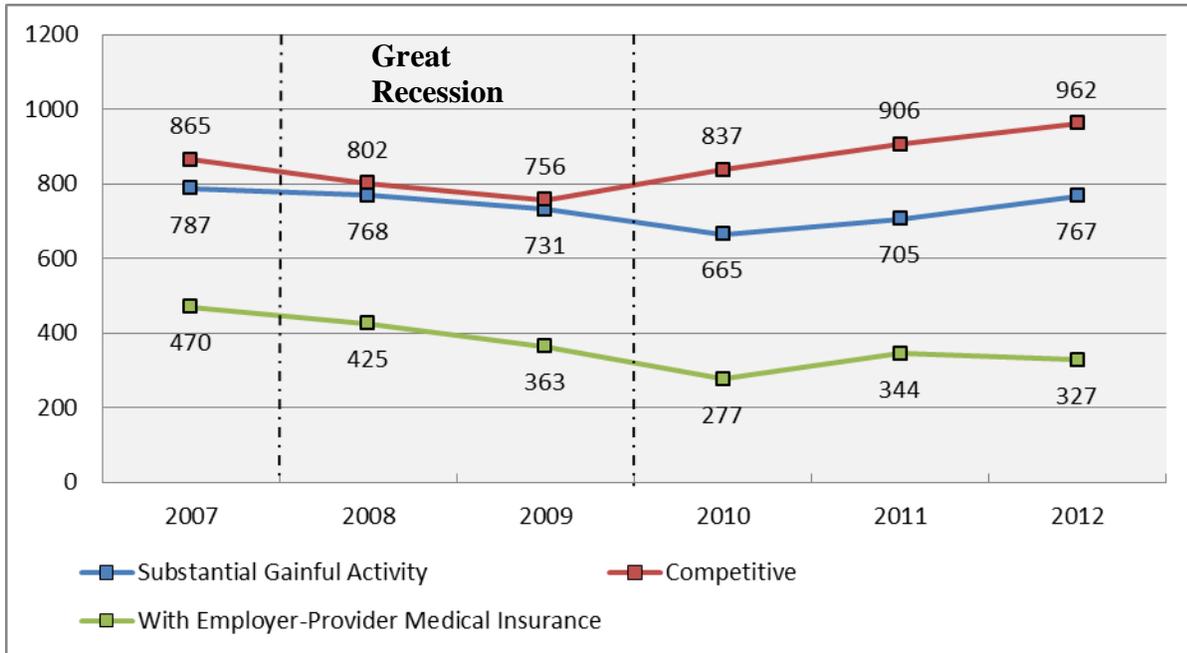


Figure 11. Quality Employment Outcomes.

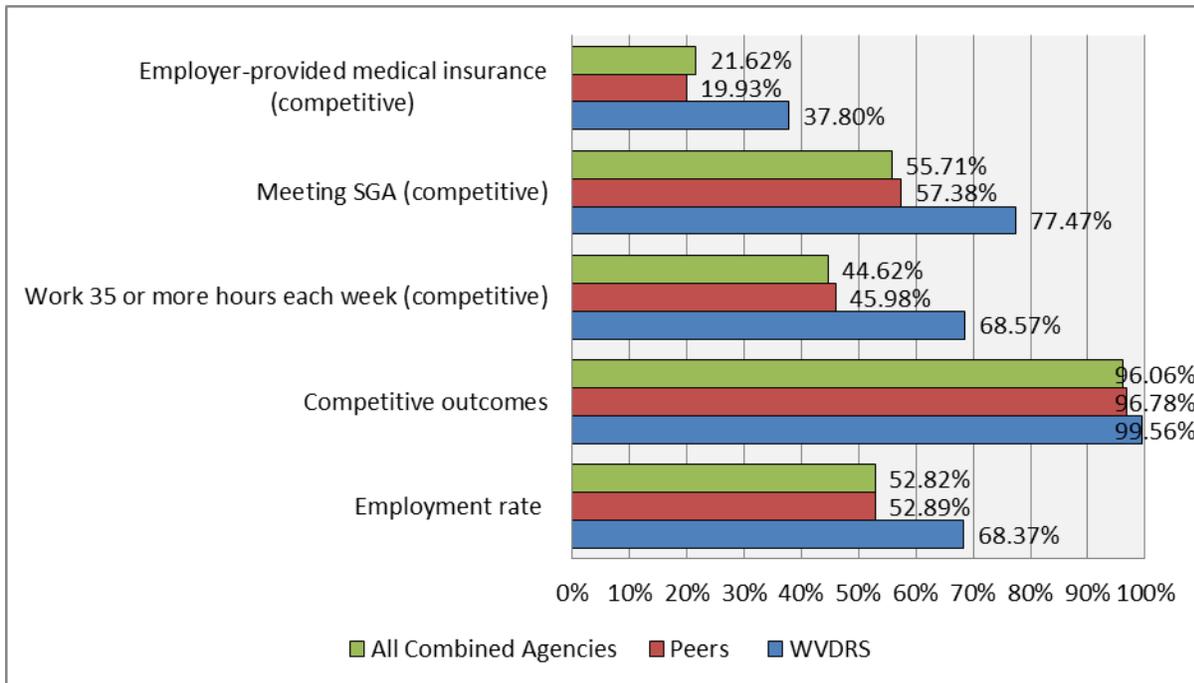


Figure 12. TY Quality Employment Performance, FY 2011. Peers include CO, OK, MD, and MS.

criteria were met for a little over half of TY competitive employment outcomes in FY 2011 for other VR agencies: 57.38% for peer agencies and 55.71% for all combined agencies. *Last*, competitive employment outcomes that TY achieve with the help of WVDRS are more likely to include medical insurance benefits that are provided by the employer. In FY 2011, employers provided medical insurance for 37.80% of TY competitive employment outcomes attained with the assistance of WVDRS. For peer agencies and all combined agencies, only 19.93% and 21.62% of TY competitive employment outcomes included employer-provided medical insurance.

It is equally noteworthy that the typical or average competitively-employed TY earns more income in his or her first year after receiving services with WVDRS¹³. In FY 2011 the typical WVDRS youth worked 35 hours each week for an hourly wage of \$10.95; the typical TY consumer for peer VR agencies worked 30.3 hours each week for an hourly wage of \$9.45; the typical TY consumer for all combined VR agencies worked 30.52 hours each week for an hourly wage of \$9.79. The yearly wage from these numbers adds up to \$18,411.77 for the typical TY consumer for WVDRS, \$13,744.10 for the typical TY consumer for peer agency services, and \$14,341.96 for the typical TY consumer for all combined agencies. These yearly earning differences are illustrated in Figure 13.

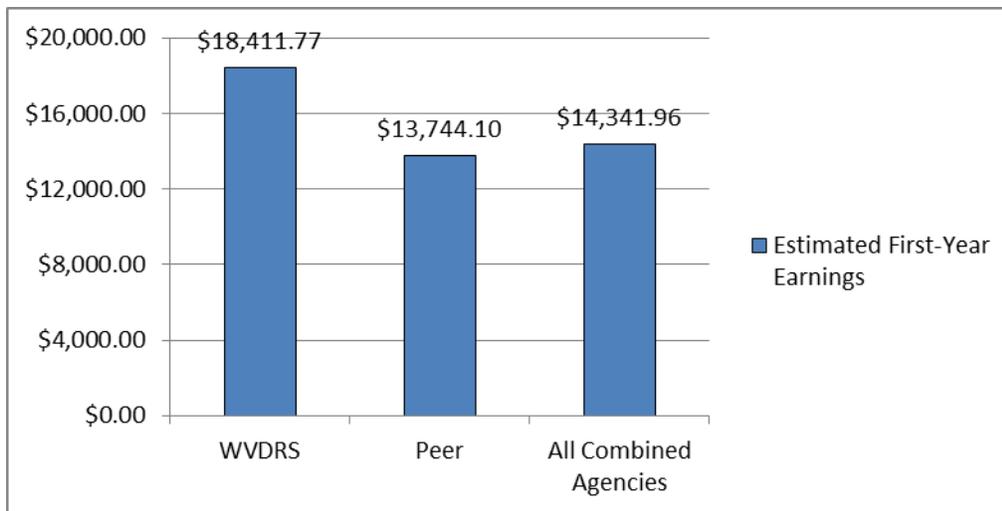


Figure 13. First-year Earnings for a Typical Competitively-employed Transition Youth

Return on Investment (from Bua-Iam & Bias, 2011)

- Short-term estimate (3 year): For every \$1.00 WVDRS invests in TY, there is a return of \$5.09.
- Work-life estimate: For every \$1.00 WVDRS invests in TY, there is a return of \$19.42.

¹³ This assumes the typical TY consumer of VR services remains in the same position for one year after his or her case is closed.

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