

REHABILITATION WORKSHOPS: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

JACK HUTCHISON

The function of sheltered workshops is changing once more, toward extended employment side-by-side with rehabilitation services. Financing facilities and providing enough of them will continue to be a problem. Congress and the Department of Labor are scrutinizing workshops for their effectiveness. Future effectiveness of workshops depends in large part on the cooperation that can be achieved between workshops and State agencies. Suggestions are offered for improving workshop-agency cooperation, with a discussion of the guidelines developed by the Council of State Administrators.

A Shift From Yesterday

There has been a cyclic shift during the past twenty years within rehabilitation facilities. Many facilities stopped serving the indigent to serve the disabled, and then had to shift back again to serve the poor. During these twenty years, however, most sheltered workshops and rehabilitation facilities found a need to supply more than just jobs. This has led to merger of ongoing sheltered workshops and rehabilitation facilities so that they have a combined effort of jobs and services leading to the rehabilitation workshop. Rehabilitation facilities and sheltered workshops across the country have been busy phasing out the label "terminal" and updating their image to rehabilitation. Such change is expensive.

An interesting corollary, people are beginning to say, "What about extended employment?" We are turning full circle if we suggest extended employment and attempt to differentiate this from terminal employment. To furnish extended employment, for example, we require a greater amount of money due to a greater degree of client disability and a longer stay. This demands greater subsidization, and where will greater subsidization come from? Apparently it will be a blend of incomes from the United Funds, from state and local tax funds, and from federal funds. It is doubtful that we can go back to the "good old days" when Goodwill Industries, for example, provided service with 90% industrial income, and additional funds were not necessary for sophisticated programming. In the past Goodwill Industries in many areas had large used-goods programs, financing, in the main, services called rehabilitation services. There are still large used-goods programs (the income from used goods amounts to 70% of the total Goodwill income) and there are

large contracts shops. In many places there are large employment services and in most places there are new rehabilitation services.

Although rehabilitation facilities appear to be taking a different direction there remains a generic base to programming: evaluation, adjustment, counseling, job readiness services and advocacy; using work as a vehicle.

In the last two years the author has visited sixty rehabilitation workshops in the United States. Although there is emphasis on sophisticated individualized programming, efforts are still of a generic nature. There are services that all people need regardless of disability, or regardless of whether they are disabled. The strength of a rehabilitation workshop can usually be determined by the soundness of the generic programming offered.

The purpose of this paper does not include a discussion of the merits of functional versus categorical disability programming. However, it appears that rehabilitation workshops offering generic programming are in a better position to serve all clients. This is in comparison to those workshops mounting categorical disability programs that segregate one disability from another, requiring the design of basic programs for each disability.

Today's Growth Potential

In 1970 the Department of Labor listed 1,487 sheltered workshops serving 68,000 persons. Some 40% of all persons served were included in Goodwill Industries workshops. In 1968 the clients earned an average of \$1.27 an hour and trainees earned an average of \$.57 an hour (Committee on Government Operations, 1971). In the ten year period ending in 1971, 841,000 clients were served in rehabilitation facilities and sheltered workshops. Almost 20% of the clients served by state vocational rehabilitation agencies received one or more services in a rehabilitation facility in 1971 as compared to less than 7% of their clients in 1962. Another index of the importance of rehabilitation workshops may be found in the fact that 28% of all case service funds expended by state vocational rehabilitation agencies were spent in rehabilitation facilities in 1971 as compared to approximately 15% in facilities in 1962.

To translate percentages into number of people served, it is important to note that in fiscal year 1962, 23,000 people were

served in rehabilitation facilities and workshops. In 1971, almost 200,000 persons were served in such facilities. The increase in the services to people is impressive and is dependent upon a number of factors, not the least of which is available dollars. The increase will no doubt continue. The increase in the number of disabled people will certainly continue and so will the increase in the development of new rehabilitation facilities (*State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Program Data*, 1972).

As Brolin (1973) points out, the appropriate use of rehabilitation facilities by rehabilitation counselors has been a controversial matter for a considerable period. One problem is that many new counselors know very little about facilities and tend to be repelled by their appearance and character. Often counselors expect too much and are disappointed in the outcomes of their referrals. Consequently, many counselors use facilities either sparingly or not at all.

Although 300,000 persons were rehabilitated by the state-federal program in 1972, very little is said about the 500,000 persons who became disabled in the same period. We might look at statewide planning statistics and the possible backlog of millions of people who need rehabilitation services from a rehabilitation workshop. Statistically, that figure varies from 1 to 3 per cent of the general population. It is doubtful that we will ever be able to specifically indicate the number of people who need rehabilitation services within a rehabilitation workshop.

Over the years rehabilitation facilities and sheltered workshops have been critically scrutinized. The year 1973 may begin a time of even more critical examination. Congress has authorized a study of workshops to be completed in twenty-four months (U.S. Senate, 1972). In addition the Department of Labor has already begun an in-depth examination of rehabilitation workshops. Both studies will review the number of individuals employed, the amount of funding provided, the relationships between rehabilitation workshops and other programs for handicapped individuals, etc. In general, the question is "How effective are rehabilitation workshops serving handicapped people?"

Tomorrow's Possibilities

Most of the rehabilitation workshops are dependent upon the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program for rehabilitation financing. This financing has been a hit or miss proposition, the

facility saying, "You have to tell us how many dollars we can have during the year so that we are able to budget our services;" the state-federal rehabilitation program saying, "We will send you 'X' number of clients and pay for them as we go along." This arrangement has been extremely difficult. In May of 1972, the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation developed a booklet called *Guidelines for Working Relationships between VR Agencies and Rehabilitation Facilities*. This was put together by a committee of CSAVR, chaired by E. Russell Baxter, then chairman of the Rehabilitation Facilities Committee. The booklet covers the function of vocational rehabilitation agencies, the role of rehabilitation facilities in programming, the classification of facilities, sponsorship, and the state agency staff. It deals with the purchase of services and makes recommendations that should be far-reaching in terms of services, accreditation, and programming. It points out that ordinarily in the purchase of services, a fee-for-service base is utilized by the vocational rehabilitation agency.

However, the booklet also states that the vocational rehabilitation agency should accept responsibility for all reasonable costs and must insist on paying only the costs. It should pay for the cost of services that it is purchasing, but not support other services. On the other hand it says that the facility must have reasonable assurance as to the volume of clients and income from client fees. To do this there must be agreement on a reasonable rate of fees and there must be agreement on the system of service evaluation. The most important factor is that there must be a strong and effective relationship between a state rehabilitation agency and a rehabilitation facility if they are to make progress in service to the disabled population of the United States (CSAVR, 1972).

There must exist a partnership between the facility and the purchaser of services. The partnership breaks down, rapidly, when vested interests interfere with the delivery of services. These vested interests can be seen on both sides. On the one hand the rehabilitation facility is saying, "You must tell us, Mr. State Rehabilitation Agency, how many dollars are going to come into our shop so that we can develop the best possible system of services." On the other hand, the state agency says, "You must give us service so that our clients can be rehabilitated." At some point an effective agreement must be achieved.

The *Guidelines* can be seen as a blueprint for the coming-together of the facilities and the state-federal agency. On the other hand, the facility, in order to stay in business, must look elsewhere for its funding base if it cannot depend on the state agency for rehabilitation dollars. Some facilities have done this, and this may be the route many should take.

The capricious nature of agreements may be seen in the development of an agreement at the beginning of a fiscal year with an escape clause that says that either party may terminate the agreement on short notice. In fiscal year 1973 some agreements, although not terminated, were decreased in dollars because of the decreased funding the state agency suffered. This was beyond control of the state agency and was certainly something that they had neither anticipated nor wanted to have happen. One facility recently reported that their rehabilitation income from the state agency was cut by \$85,000 half way through fiscal year 1972. This cut required reductions in staff and made it impossible for the facility to continue providing the agreed quantity of service. The argument is that this situation will always exist as far as the funding situation is concerned. However, if viable services are to be rendered to the disabled through rehabilitation workshops dependent upon the state-federal rehabilitation funding, then binding agreements must be developed, implemented, and honored.

The concepts behind such agreements are simple: the facility needs the money to offer the services; the state-federal rehabilitation agency needs the services of the facility to rehabilitate the clients. The terms of the agreement are also simple: (1) the VR agency accepts responsibility for all reasonable costs for services and should pay only those costs; (2) the rehabilitation workshops must have reasonable assurances as to the volume of clients and the income from client fees; (3) together the parties must agree on a reasonable rate; and (4) they must agree on a system of evaluation of service in the VR agency and rehabilitation workshop. The concepts and terms are explicated in the *guidelines* referred to earlier.

The problems encountered deal with the words "reasonable costs," and "evaluation." Yet there exist reasonable men in both the public and private sectors. If the goal of services to people remains foremost, the details can be resolved and agreement can be reached.

A number of rehabilitation workshops utilize a contract for service indicating to the rehabilitation agencies that they will offer services agreed upon by agency and workshop personnel at a fee-for-service base. This is regardless of the outcome of the service. For example, counseling and guidance services may be offered to a client at \$35.00 a week for twelve weeks. At the end of the twelve week period the facility may say to the agency, "We have completed the counseling phase," and indicate some progress or behavioral changes. Or, services may be under contract for a certain number of hours agreed upon in advance, applied to an individual, and billed to the agency. This comes about, no doubt, through the facility agreeing with the agency counselor that a client requires a certain amount of service of a specific nature to lead him toward rehabilitation. This is done in the client's best interest. However, there seems to be no end point; no goal to be reached as a result of the service, other than the provision of the service. It is hoped that the client will be better off because this service has been rendered.

Tomorrow May Be Better

Given faith in the rehabilitation workshop to function adequately to meet all accreditation standards for a particular service, the rehabilitation agency could purchase a service, not an amount of time. For example, the service of evaluation is usually based on a period of time in a contract for service. The time factor varies from a few days to months. It is recommended that the agency develop a performance contract with the facility, such as the evaluation of a handicapped person. At the end of the evaluation a staffing considers the results. That staffing completes the evaluation and subsequently dictates its length. It is conceivable that the staffing may be called at the end of the first week or at the end of the first year. The cost of the performance contract for evaluation is the same.

Further, the evaluation staffing may recommend the adjustment of the client. The adjustment, social, vocational, personal, etc., of a person is not dependent solely upon a certain length of time, but upon the person's response to the adjustment modalities proposed in the rehabilitation workshop. Again, if adjustment service is the recommendation of the evaluation staffing, then let us set a price on adjustment service, a performance contract for adjustment *regardless of the time element involved*. Both

agencies are interested in the end results of the adjustment process, not how long it takes.

Problems and pitfalls exist in performance contract provisions. They are exceedingly flexible. Only after protracted experience will the facility be able to estimate when the next client may be accepted for service. The agency will never know when the evaluation staffing will be held. This may require that state-federal rehabilitation personnel be assigned to rehabilitation workshops to assure immediate and continued service. The rehabilitation workshop personnel must tool up to offer continuous services sufficiently flexible to accept clients daily and begin a system of required services.

Cooperation Necessary At All Times

Both the state vocational rehabilitation agency and the rehabilitation workshop are committed to the goal of using limited fiscal resources in the most effective manner possible. This call for cooperative planning, especially in the area of rehabilitation workshops. Joint planning between state agencies and rehabilitation workshops should assure rehabilitation personnel of the quality and quantity of services necessary for the rehabilitation of their clients. It further should assure the rehabilitation workshop personnel of sufficient fiscal support, development and operation of programs designed to meet the expressed needs of the state agencies involved; that is, determination that a need for a specific service exists.

There are a number of problems explicated by state agency rehabilitation personnel, for example: services provided by rehabilitation workshops frequently differ from services that are needed by rehabilitation clients; workshop services costs are excessive when compared with the value of services received; waiting lists are frustrating; clients remain in workshops longer than necessary in order to increase the total amount of fees received and rehabilitation services in workshops are sacrificed in the interest of maintaining production. On the other hand, rehabilitation workshop personnel indicate that difficulty exists in budgeting on the basis of income which varies during the year; that and though workshops are encouraged to develop programs and services those services are not utilized by the state; that rehabilitation personnel refer clients without an understanding of the service

vices purchased; and that there is a lack of continuous participation with the rehabilitation workshop staff.

The rehabilitation workshop offers an opportunity to serve handicapped persons in a controlled environment in which the skills of many professionals may be applied in a coordinated way to meet the needs of these handicapped people. The most important element is that there be a strong and effective relationship between a state rehabilitation agency and a rehabilitation workshop (CSAVR, 1972).

REFERENCES

- Brolin, D. The facility you choose. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 1973, 39, 24-26.
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. *Guidelines for working relationships between VR agencies and rehabilitation facilities*, NRA, Washington, D. C, 1972.
- Gellman, W. Rehabilitation facilities and manpower crises in the 70's. Sessions for State Rehabilitation Facilities Specialists, Second Annual Conference of International Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, *HEW Publication No. (SRS) 72-25009*, Las Vegas, Nevada, May 9-11, 1971.
- U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Rehabilitation Services Administration. *State vocational rehabilitation agency program data*, Washington, D.C., 1972.
- U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Government Operations, 92nd Congress, *Hearings*, April, 1971.
- U.S. Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 92nd Congress, *Resolution*, Adopted September 22, 1972.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dr. Hutchison was born in Detroit, Michigan, received his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in 1949, master's degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1951, and his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in 1966. Dr. Hutchison has worked in rehabilitation since 1949. He is currently serving as Director of Rehabilitation for Goodwill Industries of America, Washington, D.C.

1. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) DR. H. HUTCHISON		2. DATE OF BIRTH 10/25/1928	
3. PRESENT ADDRESS The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling Department of Rehabilitation University of Iowa Iowa City, Iowa 52242		4. EDUCATION B.S., Michigan State University, 1949 M.S., Pennsylvania State University, 1951 Ph.D., University of Iowa, 1966	
5. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE Director of Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries of America, Washington, D.C., 1966-Present Director of Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries of America, Washington, D.C., 1966-Present Director of Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries of America, Washington, D.C., 1966-Present		6. RESEARCH INTERESTS Rehabilitation of the handicapped Vocational rehabilitation Community rehabilitation	
7. PUBLICATIONS "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling" "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling" "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling"		8. REFERENCES "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling" "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling" "The Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling"	
9. SIGNATURE H. Hutchison		10. DATE 10/25/1972	