

# Vocational Rehabilitation & Brain Injury

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# What is Vocational Rehab?

The process of preparing and guiding a person, after intensive rehab, to focus on regaining prior or new competitive employment.



# What is a Vocational Case Coordinator?

- ▶ Vocational Case Coordinator's role:
  - ▶ assist client with planning and coordinating services for returning to work
  - ▶ assist client with job searching provide job coaching
  - ▶ serve as the client's advocate to employers
  - ▶ can provide long-term work supports
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# How Does this process start?

- ▶ Referral from DORS Counselor, Therapist, Dr., etc. with a recommendation to return to work.
  - ▶ Neuropsychological evaluation and medical evaluations reviewed by VCC for pre-screening
  - ▶ Intake interview conducted to confirm patients qualifications for program participation
  - ▶ Patient, at this point, can go different paths such as; Work Readiness Training, Career Assessment, Functional Capacity Evaluation, Therapy, or begin Job Development Services with VCC.
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# How Does this process continue...

- ▶ VCC reviews recommendations for return to work and creates a voc plan to assist the patient with their own road map to their return to work.
  - ▶ Neuro Treatment Team (Neuropsychologist, Psychiatrist, VCC, DORS Counselor, Therapist, etc.) plays a very critical role in assisting with recommendations
  - ▶ At the point of being “job ready”, VCC works one on one with patient to begin job development or job coaching services, based on their voc needs.
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# Voc process continued...

- ▶ Typical patients begin job development services to prep them for the job market, leading into job development services to find competitive employment
- ▶ This includes resume and cover letter writing, interview prep sessions, assistance with job applications, interview assistance and on and off site job coaching once hired.



# Barriers to Employment...

- ▶ **Transportation**
- ▶ **Income**
- ▶ **Medical/Health Issues**
- ▶ **DORS Funding**
- ▶ **Criminal Record**
- ▶ **Age**
- ▶ **Housing**
- ▶ **Drug/Alcohol abuse**
- ▶ **Gaps in employment**
- ▶ **Disability**



# Neuro Treatment Team

- ▶ Neuropsychologist
- ▶ Psychiatrist
- ▶ Therapist
- ▶ OT, PT, SLP Therapists
- ▶ Navigator/Case Manager
- ▶ DORS Counselor
- ▶ VCC



# Role of Clinicians

- ▶ The Neuro Treatment Team is critical in the patients return to work, always assessing current, old and new issues and progress to see how that fits into the patients new work role.
  - ▶ VCC views the whole person and their individual needs with a Patient Centered approach.
  - ▶ Individual Therapy is often key for individuals returning to work to address anxiety, frustration, nervousness, etc.
  - ▶ Physiatrist specializing in Brain Injury is a MD in physical medicine, rehabilitation, and pain medicine, who works with patients in maintaining their personal health as they continue the return to work process.
  - ▶ OT, PT, SLP continue working with patients giving strategies on conforming to the new work environment.
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# Overview

- ▶ The Return to work process after a Brain injury is different for each person
  - ▶ Neuro Treatment Teams are key is guiding the VCC in assisting the patient to return to competitive employment
  - ▶ The role of the VCC changes as the patient's needs change; role of job developer, job coach, advocate, support, navigator
  - ▶ Barriers do exist and are minimized with the help of the VCC and treatment team
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# Overview

- ▶ Referrals can come different ways and are assessed by the VCC for job readiness
- ▶ Unfortunately, many patients are not referred for Voc Rehab after their intensive, inpatient treatment and discharge from the hospitals and are referred later on, resulting in more evaluations needed to become job ready
- ▶ The Return to work process is a job in itself, especially after a brain injury, but can be the most rewarding experience!



# Case Studies.....



# Q & A

