

CSSI Consortium Meeting
9-11:30 January 24, 2008
Meeting Notes

Welcome

The consortium members present introduced themselves by groups: WIA staff, employers, educational institutions, government—list is attached.

Status Report

The status report was distributed—fresh off the press. Consortium members who weren't able to attend the meeting will receive a copy in the mail soon. Lois went over it and highlighted some of the successes.

Second Round of Funding

In the fall we received notification that our second round of funding is approved. The grant period runs from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. Though we are still waiting on receipt of funds, we have enrolled participants in training and have accomplished some of the work plan already. We reviewed the root causes and activities to address them. The handout is attached.

WIA Directors Panel

Robyn McCoy, Anne Schneider and Mike Sherer represented each WIA in an informal panel discussion. They talked about how working regionally has changed the way they do business. They have served more people than they would have, have built stronger relationships among the regions. They were able to provide services to incumbent workers. The CSSI research in the beginning of the project showed the needs of the whole region. They have networked with hospitals, other employers and training providers. Without CSSI funds, they would not have offered Master of Nursing training or regional classes for preparing coders for their certification exam.

The Directors also talked about the match requirements of the grant. The first year, CSSI provided 100% of the funds for the project. This second year, we have to demonstrate a dollar for dollar match for every dollar spent. Employers and career counselors from the employment centers will need to be diligent about asking clients/employees about their status. The WIAs are providing match dollars from their own funds as well. Employers paid their staff while they participated in training (e.g. coding certification training) so that constituted match.

Consortium Discussion

We talked about each of the projects for the current funding year and what the likelihood of continuing efforts will be past this year.

Project Two—Registered Nursing

This includes training costs, tutoring, MSNs, expanding nursing programs, clinical sites issues.

- Enrollment—We currently have 29 nurses enrolled in training, so with the 90 we served last year, we went way over our projected 60 for the life of the project.
- MSNs—We have provided scholarships to nine Master of Nursing students total. Four have graduated and found jobs teaching in area colleges. Five are still in school, but plan to teach upon graduation. In the Spring we'll take a look at our budget and if we have unspent funds, may offer support for the fall semester. The WIAs expect to continue supporting MSNs in training.
- Match-We have commitments from hospitals and other employers to match WIA dollars for training. Facilitating that and communicating is the challenge, but it is doable.
- Tutoring—Lincoln Land has been very successful with its tutoring program. Last Spring, 28 students took advantage of it. Of that group, 24 remained in school and are continuing their studies. Cynthia reported that it has made a big difference, that students were anxious to get started in the fall. Since CSSI didn't have a commitment for funding until late fall, LLCC moved forward and funded the tutoring with other sources until CSSI funding came through. Memorial Medical Center provided the match dollars for the program and is likely to continue next year.

Richland has offered tutoring this year with grant funds from the State Board of Higher Education, so can't use those dollars as match for CSSI funds (they're from the same source). However, Teresa said they are committed to offering tutoring in the future.

All area nursing schools were approached and very interested in offering tutoring, but did not participate in this project this year.

- Scholarships/Tuition Assistance—Two years ago, Lois put together a document listing other sources of scholarships or tuition assistance provided by employers in the region. The document was given to the WIA Directors to make available to career counselors. Now it's time to update and add to it. Please take a look at the attached document and if your agency offers support for health careers and it's not listed, or if you've changed your policy, fill out the form and send it back to Lois by February 15, 2008.
- Expansion—nursing schools still need faculty. MacMurray hired two of our three MSN graduates, but they replaced two who retired. Millikin hired one part time. The fourth graduate, who just graduated in December, may have signed on with Lewis and Clark (I'll have to follow up on that since I haven't heard from her.) Cynthia from LLCC says to expand they need more clinical sites on weekends and evenings and right now faculty aren't interested in those shifts. Carmen from Nursing Home Managers talked about using long term care facilities for clinicals and using their faculty. The group agreed this was something to explore in the future. Richland is considering a two-year bridge program for LPNs moving toward RN, since most students are working and going to school full time is an obstacle. This may not expand their numbers, but it could affect graduation rates.
- Clinical Sites—The Clinical Sites Ad Hoc Committee met in 2007 over a period of six months. All the area schools and major employers participated in that committee. Each one agreed to adopt the Standard Clinical Affiliation Agreement and it is working its way through their systems. Many have formally signed on:

The Christian Village, Memorial Medical Center, St. John's Hospital, Passavant Hospital, Pana Community Hospital, Nursing Home Managers, MacMurray College and Parkland College. The Committee decided not to meet again in the near future around nursing issues since the program directors meet as part of other professional groups.

- The nursing schools and hospitals offer review sessions for nurses to take the NCLEX exam, so CSSI does not need to get involved in that.
- Report from the Community College Consortium for Health Care (Metro Chicago). Nancy Krier sent a summary to keep us informed about what the CCC4HC is working on.
 - They are continuing to enlist agencies to use the Standard Clinical Affiliation Agreement.
 - Exploring region-wide consortium career credit programs.
 - Working on attrition in nursing schools—tutoring, licensure exams, graduation rates.
 - Establishing a task force in the northwest suburbs to work on nursing issues.
 - Clinical Faculty Academy—Rockford and St. Louis have done this and other groups nationally. They may offer a workshop in the metro area.
 - Standard Clinical Orientation is at a standstill right now. The hospitals trust the colleges to “certify” their students have covered the standard topics, regardless of vendors.

Project Three—Clinical Lab Scientists, Medical Lab Technicians, Medical Coders

The project includes training costs, review for coding exam, MLT Agreements.

- Coding review classes update-We've hosted two review classes and one review weekend workshop. In all, 23 coders have participated, 12 have passed the exam, 2 won't do it again, 8 haven't taken it yet, 1 is planning to retake it. The coders that participated had at least two years hospital coding experience. It is a very difficult exam—the most experienced coders seemed to score better on the exam. Most employers in our region would like their coders to be certified. They offer raises and/or promotions to those who become certified. We are exploring the option of offering a review class for the Coding Certification Exam for Physician Offices.
- The MLT agreement with Kankakee Community College to offer at Richland is in the works and should be ready by Fall of 2008. Linda McCown from UIS Clinical Lab Science B.S. program raised the issue in an email prior to this meeting that clinical sites could be a problem. She asked that we consider getting clinical sites for MLTs at smaller hospitals so the larger hospitals can take the CLS students. The range of experience at smaller facilities doesn't meet the requirements of the B.S. degree. In this way, we can make sure we prepare more laboratorians, not just different levels.
- Lincoln Land has an agreement with UIS now for students to complete their first two years (in science courses) at LLCC and then they are accepted into the UIS Clinical Lab Science program (a 2+2 agreement). Richland is working on a similar agreement.

- There was a short discussion about whether we need to do awareness activities around other health careers in the future. Generally, we are focusing mostly on nursing and awareness isn't really the problem. However, the issue was raised about raising awareness about the lab science careers. The UIS program director reported six months ago that their class was full for the first time and their graduates who wanted positions found them. Lois will look into that.
- The CSSI could offer support to CLS students by paying exam fees.

Project One—Consortium

This includes maintaining the consortium, Status Report, quarterly newsletters.

- Benefits of working together regionally—Several consortium members talked about the benefits of meeting every six months—networking, getting to know the others' programs, learning more about the workforce training centers—and felt we should continue meeting twice a year. The WIA directors will take the lead in pulling the group together. It was suggested that future meetings be used to continue developing the network and relationships, and perhaps each meeting focus on one or two issues the group can problem-solve around.

The next meeting of the Consortium will be held in June. Stay tuned!

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January 24, 2008**

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