



Tips for Partnering with Local Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Offices

- Contact and build a relationship with VR Counselors. To find your local office, visit the Florida Department of Education / Division of Vocational Rehabilitation at <http://www.rehabworks.org/> and click on “VR Office Directory.” You may search for offices by County or Area.
- Provide information to VR Counselors on the ESRD population, and their ability to work:
 - Hemodialysis (HD) is a medical procedure performed usually three times per week to remove harmful toxins in the blood when a person’s kidneys have failed. Thus, kidney failure is treatable.
 - Dialysis treatments can be performed at home or scheduled in a center to avoid interfering with work schedules.
 - Peritoneal dialysis (PD) is a medical procedure performed several times daily to remove harmful toxins in the blood when a person’s kidneys have failed. PD is usually done at night, but PD can be done by the patient in any clean, private environment – even at work; PD is compatible with the demands and schedule requirements of a job.
 - It is a myth that once a person starts dialysis he/she cannot work. Most patients will be restriction-free, and with the exception of heavy physical labor, capable of performing the specific job tasks they did before starting dialysis.
 - Dialysis patients who continue to work experience economic stability, personal satisfaction, and an enhanced sense of well being.
- Hold a face-to-face meeting with your local VR Unit Counselors, either in their office or at the dialysis facility. Some dialysis facilities in Florida have held “VR Days” – inviting local VR Area Supervisors and Work Incentive Coordinators to visit with patients at the facility and answer questions about work and Social Security benefits.
- Provide education on VR to your facility staff.
- Post VR materials in public areas of the facility.
- Educate ESRD patients on the VR referral process
 - Referral
 - Orientation and receipt of the VR Handbook of Services
 - The VR Handbook of Services and can be found on line at <http://www.rehabworks.org/index.cfm>
 - Application
 - Assignment to a Counselor
 - Determination of eligibility
 - Placement on a waiting list – priorities are based on category of status and date of application
 - Services are provided via a written plan
- Ask patients to keep you informed of their VR activities, barriers, progress, and need for help (e.g. communication with counselors, coordination of care).