

Fiscal Year 2022 was a busy and dynamic year for Program Services overall. The department earned its 3-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). This commitment from Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center to obtain the highest level of accreditation ensures that exceptional services and care are provided to its consumers. Some difficulties remain as a result of the pandemic however as we enter into a post-pandemic time Program Services saw a shift in numbers across all programs that seem to be trending back upward. Total enrollments in consumers were up from last year at 412, compared to 321 in 2021 and 676 in 2020.

All demographic categories continued to show the same variance in proportions that has been seen across the last several years regardless of the pandemic influence. There were 245 males, and 165 females enrolled this year, in addition to 2 individuals that chose not to disclose their gender. Race again distributed similarly to past years with 256 whites, 120 Black or African American, 13 Hispanic or Latino, 2 Asian, 2 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 19 individuals that chose not to disclose. The age distribution also remained consistent in proportions having 138 have an age of 17 or under, 219 between the ages of 18 and 30, 42 between the ages of 31 and 50, 9 between the ages of 51 and 60, and 4 over the age of 60. The distribution in referrals by county was similar to the past several years. The top 5 referring counties were Houston with 92 referrals, Henry with 89 referrals, Dale with 77 referrals, and Covington with 55 referrals. The top 4 disabilities that referred consumers had as a primary diagnosis were Intellectual Disabilities at 215, Specific Learning Disabilities at 153, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder at 16, and Mood Disorder at 18. Services were provided in 11 counties by 4 employment specialists. These include Houston, Geneva, Henry, Dale, Coffee, Covington, Barbour, Bullock, Pike, Crenshaw, and Butler.

The Program Services staff worked diligently at getting individuals ready for the world of work, teaching soft skills, work ethics and acceptable work practices. Out of 104 individuals that were referred for employment services, 72 of them found jobs and 64 of those individuals that found jobs stayed at their job for a minimum of 90 days. This is an increase from 2021 where 69 consumers were placed in a job and 57 of those stayed for a minimum of 90 days.

Supported Employment services are trending up this year from 2021. Total amount billed for all Supported Employment services in 2022 was around \$40k, in 2021 the total amount billed was around \$20k and in 2020 the total amount billed was around \$60k. With the number of referrals increasing in 2022 from 2021 there should be an expected increase in total amount billed for Supported Employment services in 2023. Other services that referrals were received for in 2022 included Job Sampling with 35 referrals, Comprehensive Vocational Evaluations with 15 referrals, Paid Work Experiences with 14 referrals, and Work Site Tours/Skill Up! with 145 referrals.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) had a productive year in 2022. These services are provided to school age students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade that need to learn more about the working world specifically soft skills, work ethics and general discovery into career interests. In 2022 Program Services received 145 referrals for work site tours and Skill Up! a curriculum based vocational education program. The Job Experience Training (JET) program that occurs during the summer had a total of 87 students referred however only 63 of them worked in the community or at WRC for a minimum of 3 weeks, gaining valuable experience and knowledge that they can use once they graduate.

Program Services has great expectations for 2023. With referrals increasing over the past year, 2023 should see a further increase in referrals for all services. Additionally, several other programs are being sought to increase the number of referrals for services. One program that will be expanded is Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program. Which helps those individuals that receive supplemental income from the government and want to enter the work force and get off cash benefits. Local referrals sources including the Department of Human Resources will be explored as well to increase the number of consumers that are served.