Your Secret Weapon for Work: AT Reuse

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Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)

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Webinar Evaluation

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Tuesday, May 28
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM EST
**New Models in AT Reuse with National Potential**
Presenters:
Geri LaPlaca, Director Goodwill Home Medical Equipment
Mary Slutz and Beth Laureijs, Managers
Habitat for Humanity, ReStore Home and Health

Tuesday, June 25
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM EST
**Raising the Bar: All You Need to Know about Certifications for AT Reuse**
Presenters: Joy Kniskern, Pass It On Center

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Learning Objectives:

• To identify reasons for AT reuse
  • Abandonment of Assistive Technology and Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
  • Review of Results of Survey of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies and AT Reuse
    • Practices, Needs and Gaps

• To explore one best Practice Model of AT Reuse – FREE Foundation and VATS

• To demonstrate the Business Case for AT Reuse

• To learn steps Employers can take to ensure that AT no longer needed does not end up in warehouses and in landfills
Rationale: Third-Party Payment for DME and AT

• Huge investment of funds – VR, Medicaid, Medicare, Private Insurance, Veterans Administration

• Abandonment of Devices – Not appropriate, etc.

• Reuse is funded activity through AT Act Program – 216 programs

• Reused equipment is typically gently used, sanitized, checked out to meet or come close to manufacturers’ standards

• Cost – affordable solution!

• Good stop-gap for individuals who are waiting for permanent equipment
### Pass It On Survey of VR Agencies and Reuse

What amount of funds did your agency spend in FY 2011 on AT devices and durable medical equipment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Funds</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $100,000</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $499,000</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$499,000 - $999,000</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000,000- $1,999,000</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $2,000,000</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pass It On Survey of VR Agencies and Reuse

- Do you believe your agency would conserve case service funds if it had a well-crafted system in place to reclaim, safely reutilize, and reassign AT and DME that clients no longer needed?

  82.6% said “yes” 17.4% said “no”

- Does your agency currently reclaim, reuse, reassign AT/DME?

  78.3% said “yes” 21.7% said “no”
Pass It On Survey of VR Agencies and Reuse

What type of system would be best suited to meet your needs?
- Scanning of bar codes and database to track 34.8%
- Designated staff assigned 56.5%
- None of the above – have system in place 17.4%
- None of the above – not interested 21.7%

Does your agency operate one or more lending libraries to try before VR buys AT/DME?
- Yes 52.2%
- No 40.8%
Pass It On Survey of VR Agencies and Reuse

- Upon procurement, who owns the AT/DME equipment?
  - VR 21.7%
  - Client 17.4%
  - VR, then client depending upon depreciation 60.9%

- What are the barriers to reclaiming, reutilizing and reassigning AT/DME?
  - Lack of storage 78.3%
  - Agency has a system of sorts, not consistent 52.2%
  - Clients lost to follow-up 34.8%
  - Management staff not aware of value of reuse 34.8%
  - No system in place 26.1%
What types of AT/DME does your agency reclaim, reuse, reassign?

- Computers, laptops, hardware, software: 82.6%
- Aids for low vision or blindness: 65.2%
- Aids for hearing: 47.8%
- Wheelchairs, manual and powered: 39.1%
- Walkers, rollators, shower chairs, Aids for Daily Living (ADLs): 34.8%
- I-Pads, I-Pods, PC tablets: 30.4%
- Communication devices: 30.4%
Pass It On Survey of VR Agencies and Reuse

What types of AT/DME does your agency want to reclaim, reuse, reassign?

- Computers, laptops, hardware, software 87%
- Aids for Low vision or blindness 69.6%
- I-Pads, I-Pods, PC tablets 60.9%
- Aids for hearing 52.2%
- Portable Ramps 43.5%
- Wheelchairs, manual and powered 39.1%
- Walkers, rollators, shower chairs, ADLs 39.1%
- Communication devices 47.8%
- Vehicle Modifications 30.4%
- Prosthetics and Orthotics 13.0%
AT Reuse in Virginia
Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)

- State AT Program since 1990
- Funded by Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA); Governor designated DARS (State VR Program) to administer AT efforts
- Ensures that Virginians of all ages and disabilities and seniors with limited resources acquire AT
- Has lead responsibility to establish reuse/reutilization programs statewide
What is reuse?

Examples of DME: Wheelchairs, canes, scooters, walkers, shower chairs, etc.

COLLECT

SANITIZE

Repair / Refurbish

Match / Reassign!
Why DME Reuse in Virginia?

• A growing number of Virginians who are uninsured or underinsured.

• Medicare and Medicaid limit DME coverage.

• It helps people to regain mobility, independence, and get back to work!

• It just makes sense!
Question: What Type of Equipment Do We Reuse?

Answer: Showroom Quality!
What is the key to reuse?

Partnerships!
VR and Reuse

Preliminary funding through ARRA Pilot

Problem: Informal relationships – one or two individuals

• Market and educate VR staff about the benefits of reuse.
• VR participants access to “back-up” DME to support employment goals
• Formalize the process of VR Clients or their families donating gently used AT/DME to reuse programs
• Streamline the application process to better facilitate services to VR program open cases.

Current funding – VR Program, CNI and AT Act
VR Reuse Results

- VATS and FREE Foundation have presented to RD, VR field office, AT Specialists and RE meetings statewide.
- (89) VR participants served by Reuse Programs since January 2010:
  - 2010 - 14
  - 2011 - 20
  - 2012 - 40
  - 2013 - 15 (1st & 2nd Qtrs.)
- Cost savings to VR participants = $65,000 (value of equipment)
- Increased donations from VR participants!
“Want the Job…Look the Part!”

• VR purchased scooter for participant while in college
• Scooter was functional but “ratty looking”
• Accessed VRN for a newer / more professional looking scooter for interview
• Client got the job!

Solution: VR program Counselors access the Reuse program for back-up DME!
“The Case of the Missing Bathroom”

Solution: VR program AT Specialists & Rehab Engineers access Reuse program for temporary equipment while bathroom being re-modeled.
“If I Only had a…Part!”

Solution: Rehab Engineers access the Reuse program for specialized parts to refurbish Client equipment!
“DME…or not to DME?”

- Individual with MH/SA
- Change in condition (cancer)
- Services Interrupted (SI)
- Family needs WC for medical appointments
- Taken out of SI moving forward to working toward Vocational Goals
- Good Re-gifting!

**Solution:** VR Counselors access the Reuse program to help a Client get equipment not in the Employment Plan!
Virginia Reuse Locations
Established in 1999 and Pioneer in DME Reuse!

F.R.E.E.’s Medical Model sets the standards for Reuse Process

- Qualification based on medical and financial need (Up to 200% above poverty level and prescription)
- Equipment inspected by qualified professionals
- Equipment matched to clients by qualified medical professionals
IMPACT on Individuals Served

- Consistent Quantitative Outcome Measurements are key to measuring success

- Direct causal relationship between falls and a cascade of costs and negative consequences. The equipment we give to people gives them mobility and helps them to avoid falling – in bathrooms, showers, around their homes and out in public.

- Falls before and after gifting of equipment are therefore the starting outcomes measures that F.R.E.E. follows.

- Since 2004, F.R.E.E. has conducted telephone surveys with gift recipients to determine outcomes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Decreased Falls</th>
<th>Decreased ER Visits</th>
<th>Decreased Hospital Stays</th>
<th>Greater Independence</th>
<th>Ability to Stay at Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<td>2005</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s take it a step farther:

COST SAVINGS

Lastly, F.R.E.E. has made an effort to estimate the economic impact of its work.
Economic Impact

When individuals in need and at risk fall, the resulting costs are numerous and dramatic:

- Increased hospital stays
- More emergency room visits
- More doctor’s office visits
- More or longer stays in Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs)
- Lost wages of individuals who cannot return to work
- Lost wages of family members forced to leave jobs to become caregivers
Calculating the costs:

• Average cost of ER visit = $1,896
• Typical doctor’s visit = $155
• Average daily cost of hospital stay = $1,149
  (Typical stay is five days = $5,745.)
• Average annual of cost of stay in SNF = $74,095
  (Average stay for recovery is 50 days = $10,150.)
• Average annual cost of stay in ALF = $35,616.
  (Average stay for recovery is 50 days = $4,879.)
• Financial impact of a job loss to a family of three at the poverty level = $17,170.
Analysis of Cost Savings

For every 100 persons served:

- 26 hospital stays were avoided.  
  \[ 26 \times \text{average 5 days} \times $1,149 = $149,370 \]

- 29 Emergency Room visits were avoided.  
  \[ 29 \times $1,896 = $54,984 \]

- 11 moves to skilled nursing facilities were avoided.  
  \[ 11 \times \text{average 50 days} \times $10,150 = $111,650 \]

- 11 moves to assisted living facilities were avoided.  
  \[ 11 \times \text{average stay 50 days} \times $4,879 = $53,669 \]

- 112 falls were avoided (1 in 4 falls results in doctor’s visit)  
  \[ 28 \times \text{average cost, doctor’s visit } = $4,340 \]

- 16 family members avoided quitting jobs to stay home and care for recipients.  
  \[ 16 \times $5,723 = $91,573 \]

**TOTAL SAVINGS FOR EACH 100 PERSONS SERVED:** $465,586
Steps Employers can take to ensure that AT is reutilized!

Reclaim employment-related equipment: Video Cameras, computers, assistive listening devices, other items used by an employee who no longer works at Business Y.

- Contact State AT Program for assistance in locating a Reuse program in your state at [http://www.resnaprojects.org/statewide/index.html](http://www.resnaprojects.org/statewide/index.html)

- Check the Pass It On Center Reuse Locations Database at [www.passitoncenter.org](http://www.passitoncenter.org) to locate a reuse program in or near your state.

- Check with your statewide public vocational rehabilitation program.

- If you don’t find a local program for reuse of computers, laptops and peripherals, contact the National Cristina Foundation at [http://www.cristina.org/welcome.html](http://www.cristina.org/welcome.html)
Questions???
Webinar Evaluation

Please take a moment to complete our survey:

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