



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Disability Determination Services

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS

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Medical Review Team (MRT)

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Medical Review Team (MRT) Program

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- **What is MRT?**
 - ✦ The Medical Review Team is tasked with providing medical disability decisions for those applicants applying for the state program, State Disability Assistance. Staff in the MRT are educated professionals, trained specifically in this area.
- **Program Funding**
 - ✦ 65% State; 35% Federal
- **Program Rules & Regulations**
 - ✦ The Social Welfare Act, PA 280 1939
 - ✦ Code of Federal Regulation
- **Workload**
 - ✦ 51,000 cases per year

Background

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- MRT Staffing reduced by 1/3 due to retirements
- MRT process needed improvement
 - Process was inflexible to adjust to staffing changes
 - Process had not been updated in years
- Resulted in
 - High backlogs – 5,800 (now 2,100)
 - Delays to clients in getting a decision
 - ✦ Increase in Standard of Process to 45 days
 - Delays in Clients and Hospitals receiving payment

MRT & Boilerplate Requirements

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- Boilerplate Section 1207, FY 2013, required DHS to conduct a LEAN Process Improvement to reduce the SOP for the MRT process by 15 days.
- Dr. Shannon Flumerfelt, Ph.D, owner, Charactership Lean Publishing and Consulting
- A collaborative team met over several months and provided three recommendations:
 - MRT Specialization
 - Improving the MRT process
 - Incorporating or merging the MRT into the DDS

MRT Specialization

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- MRT Specialization
 - ✦ Target Condition – Improve Front-end Processing by identifying a rubric for documenting the cases.
 - ✦ Strongly recommending specialization of MRT cases in the local office.
 - ✦ Training of DHS county office staff
 - Level I – Nov. 1st through Dec. 15th
 - Level II – Jan. 1st through Feb. 28th
 - ✦ Case Reviews by Business Center Staff
 - ✦ Feedback regarding the process

Improving the MRT Process

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○ Improving the MRT Process

- ✦ Target Condition – make the eligibility decision quickly
- ✦ Elimination of MRT Backlog
- ✦ Standard of Promptness as Shared Goal
- ✦ Priority to Cases allowed by Social Security Allowances/Deferrals
- ✦ Overtime
- ✦ Single Decision Maker
- ✦ Use of Share Point for non-EDM local offices
 - Currently in Jackson, Lapeer, Spectrum Health, and Crowley
 - To come: Macomb, Detroit Medical District, Clinton and Genesee County (Clio Road)
- ✦ Receipting by the oldest application date

Incorporating MRT into DDS

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- Target condition- remove redundancy, make accurate decisions in accordance with Social Security guidelines
 - ✦ Policy changes
 - ✦ Incorporating SSI criteria and standards
 - ✦ Training DDS and MRT staff
 - ✦ Looking at other States processes
 - ✦ Monitoring and evaluation
 - ✦ MOU/Operating Procedures with SSA

Current Accomplishments

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- Backlog Reduction
 - Now at 2,100 (down from 5,800 in June)
- Standard of Promptness
 - Now at approximately 25-30 days (down from 45 days)
- Specialization
- County workers trained
- Increased communication between MRT and Field
- Revision to letters and decision documents

Future Accomplishments

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- Eliminating redundant medical determination processing and costs for clients applying for disability benefits from both DHS and SSA
- Incorporating SSI criteria into all aspects of medical determination at MRT and local offices
- Eliminating development of medical evidence in the field

Advantages to Change

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- The initiatives will...
 - Provide for faster disability decisions
 - Clients and Third Parties will get paid quicker
 - No Medical Development for the county offices