



## Vocational Rehabilitation Best Practices Worksheet

### Facility Operations

- Develop a comprehensive plan** to promote vocational rehabilitation.  
(See *Building Quality of Life: A Practical Guide to Renal Rehabilitation – Employment module*)
- Review your facility's practices** to determine if they are work friendly:
  - ✓ Does your facility prioritize schedules for people who work or attend school?
  - ✓ Does your facility encourage and support home dialysis options?
  - ✓ Does your facility offer evening and weekend dialysis treatments?
  - ✓ Does your facility allow patients to use laptops/phones during dialysis?
  - ✓ Do you and the nephrologists consult with one another regarding patient disability forms?
- Include rehabilitation themes** in newsletters and educational materials.
- Keep brochures** and other materials on rehabilitation in public areas.
- Distribute information on rehabilitation** to all appropriate patients.
- Encourage staff** to attend rehabilitation seminars.
- Use the data** from the Network's annual Vocational Rehabilitation Survey to set facility vocational goals and assess activities.
- Collaborate with rehabilitation and vocational personnel in the community** to educate them on the vocational needs of dialysis patients and transplant recipients.
- Educate employers** and advocate for patients' jobs as requested/needed.
- Include rehabilitation** in assessment and care plan forms.
- Assess health-related quality of life** to use results for care planning.

### Patient Care

- Meet with the patient upon admission** to discuss personal rehabilitation goals including employment, hobbies, school, increased physical activity, increased social activity, and volunteering.
- Encourage working patients** to continue to work.
- Encourage all staff** to reinforce with patients the belief that the patients can work while on dialysis and after successful transplantation.
- Educate patients** about all of the benefits of employment including the following:
  - ✓ Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) pays about 35% of what patients earn at work.

- ✓ People on dialysis who work are more likely to find themselves more physically able, to experience less pain, to have more energy, and to have better general health.
- ✓ People on dialysis who work usually have fewer and shorter hospital stays and tend to live longer.
- ✓ People on dialysis who work are more likely to obtain and keep a kidney transplant.

**Educate patients** about Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and Social Security Income (SSI) work incentives including the following:

- ✓ Ticket to Work Program and Employment Networks.
- ✓ Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE).
- ✓ Continued Payment under Vocational Rehabilitation.
- ✓ Trial Work Period (TWP).
- ✓ Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS).
- ✓ SSI Payments for People Who Work – Section 1619(a).
- ✓ Earned Income Exclusions.
- ✓ Student Earned Income Exclusions.
- ✓ Special Rules for the Blind.

(See the Social Security Administration publication *Red Book*)

**Communicate to every patient** that the care team believes patients are able to work and is committed to doing all it can to support each patient's efforts.

**Meet with the patient prior to each care plan meeting** to ask the following:

- ✓ How satisfied would you say you are with your current level of activity?
- ✓ How has your job or work status changed since the last time we talked?
- ✓ If you went back to school, what would you like to study, and where?
- ✓ What are your personal rehabilitation goals?
- ✓ What can our facility do better to support your rehabilitation goals?
- ✓ Have you considered home dialysis or transplant as modalities that might function to better support your rehabilitation goals?