



New Reinforcement Program to Help Youth Succeed!

ViaQuest outlined a new program at our annual company-wide training in October that enhances our youth services by ten fold. The clinical team at ViaQuest developed a thorough and planful reinforcement program that mixes skill development, trauma informed care and behavioral principles in order for youth to earn badges. These badges allow other honors, such as inclusion on a special residential advisory committee, as well as act as tangible proof of the effort and success a youth has had in our residential programming. ViaQuest calls this the “Future in Focus” program and it is being implemented as we write this article.

We spent several months creating the flow of this program and how it blends skill development and target behavior data with interactions and responsibilities of our direct support

staff. One of the key ingredients to the program is a file of material located in each residential program that is filled with topics and exercises that, once completed, earn the youth their coveted badges. The exercises fall in line with the badge names which are; Freedom Badge, Value Badge, and Treatment Badge. Not only will this program provide a more purposeful reason for Direct Support Staff to engage our youth on an on-going basis, it will also offer more concrete positive reinforcement that is viewable and can easily be commented on by all staff involved with the care of that youth.

In another effort to reinforce positive behaviors, ViaQuest has added ViaQuest Bucks as a way for staff to catch youth working hard toward their goals. Staff provides a “ViaQuest Buck” to a resident and they in turn can go to the “ViaQuest store” to pur-

chase items of interest. By adding this behavioral concept, ViaQuest has established both long term and short term reinforcement elements for the “Future in Focus” program.

By encouraging and supporting a high level of interaction and engagement between support services and our youth through the new “Future in Focus” program, ViaQuest believes the resulting relationships will help youth succeed in meeting their behavioral goals. In order to achieve this, training requirements around Trauma Informed Care were increased significantly for both orientation and on-going staff development. ViaQuest has been committed to a Trauma Informed Care model for almost four years now, and continues to stress the importance of the national work that is being done around this critical model of care for youth.

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ViaQuest Behavioral Health Certified to Provide CPST

ViaQuest is certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health to provide Therapy, Assessment and CPST services. All services are reimbursable through an individual's Medicaid card. After receiving a three year accreditation from CARF for our treatment services, the Ohio Department of Mental Health conducted a survey and certified us as a Medicaid provider for the state of Ohio.

ViaQuest programs have the benefit of employing licensed clinicians to be part of treatment planning and development, and have used this level of expertise to develop more extensive training around Trauma Informed Care, Cognitive Behavioral treatment environments, and reinforcement models that address not only the behavioral needs of an individual but their mental health needs as well.

In December, Director Tamara Calderwood will be presenting at the County Board Association conference on our cognitive-behavioral program for adults with developmental disabilities and a history of offending. Tamara will outline the training program and treatment methodology that we have within our newly named T.R.U.S.T (Thinking, Responsibility, Understanding, Safety, Trust) program. She also will be able to speak to how ViaQuest's mental health certification has allowed us to access mental health dollars for this unique population which has enhanced our treatment resources in serving adult sex offenders in several counties in northern Ohio.

ViaQuest Enters Third Year of Outcomes Data Project

ViaQuest has been an active member of the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies for many years now and its employees have a presence on the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, as well as several of the OACCA Advisory Committees. This long term relationship led to a decision made three years ago, to become part of a pilot group of OACCA members engaged to improve the measuring of treatment outcomes for youth in our care. ViaQuest is excited to be moving through its third year as a participant in the "Outcomes Data Project" that will soon be rolled out to all OACCA members.

The Outcomes Data Project, or ODP, provides ViaQuest with the ability to measure its outcomes and track treatment improvement in the

youth that we serve throughout the state. During the pilot phase we have been working to create and implement training and resources in order to assure a smooth and continuous process improvement system that will allow ViaQuest to provide information to referral sources, as well as to internal groups that monitor care.

The ODP is accepted by national accrediting bodies, such as CARF (by whom we are accredited), as meeting their outcome measurement requirements. ViaQuest looks forward to our continued relationship with OACCA, as well as the enhancement that this level of information and data trending will provide for the care and treatment of youth in our programs.

Day Habilitation Program for Dually Diagnosed –MH/DD

ViaQuest has created a unique approach to Day Hab programming. Utilizing our Quest for Independence program, ViaQuest is in discussions with several county boards of DD to develop environments and programs for individuals who are normally limited by the choices they have for day programming.

ViaQuest has a unique opportunity to work with those individuals who are dually diagnosed and in need of daytime habilitation or vocational services. By combining its pro-

gramming and certification through the Department of Developmental Disabilities, and the Department of Mental Health, ViaQuest is working diligently with local county boards to create services that will be offered in a single location in order to provide a choice for these men and women.

It is our hope that very soon, we will have the first Dually Diagnosed Day program with treatment services provided by way of Medicaid funded programming.

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LOCATIONS AND REFERRALS

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