

October 2019

## Reaction to Dr. Richard P. Melia's Presentation The Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan

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### Recommended Citation

Sargeant, W. R. (2019). Reaction to Dr. Richard P. Melia's Presentation The Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan. *JADARA*, 12(2). Retrieved from <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jadara/vol12/iss2/7>

## **REACTION TO DR. RICHARD P. MELIA'S PRESENTATION THE INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN REHABILITATION PLAN**

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ADARA, in 1966, established basic principles for casework standards for the deaf, which were also the basic concerns in the legislative history of IWRP provision in the Rehab Act of 1973. We now have an opportunity, with this precedent, for once again showing that Rehab services for deaf clients cannot be second-class if the services are designed to fit a real and immediate need.

Harry Troop's words on rehab process are interpreted to involve total rehabilitation—as opposed to superficial vocational services. Dr. Melia mentioned the “stacked deck” concept as obstacles to this goal being extra time involved in interviewing, explaining VR services, and counseling; inadequately skilled service providers, etc. It includes also to the need to follow policy and budget established for people with other than informational disabilities. As an RCD, I will state, and I'm sure many SCD's will agree, that under these restrictions, *quality* services for deaf clients will continue to falter.

The IWRP form, itself, is an all-encompassing document for VR services. In reality, the only obstacle to the IWRP is limitation of community resources. The form itself was designed for counselor accountability.

The goal of this workshop is to establish quality IWRP procedures and processes. Intermediate objectives to this goal could be to exchange information on what individual states have, and what's needed to overcome the “stacked deck” concept; establish guidelines for presentation to state RSB personnel as suggested amendments or revisions of general policy when dealing with deaf clients' total rehabilitation; and seek to obtain increased funding for deaf services for establishing broader community resources.

As Dr. Melia stated, this workshop can be a starting point for *quality* IWRP procedures and processes. Let us once again present innovations in VR services, for the deaf.