1. **DVR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS IN MAINE**
	1. **Population Characteristics**

**Findings:**

Maine is a geographically large state with a current population of approximately 1.3 million people. While most of the population resides in the southern counties of the state, the rural nature and low population density across the state present unique challenges for effective service delivery of Vocational Rehabilitation services. Maine’s demographics are also changing over recent years. Historically, Maine was one of the least racially diverse states in the country – with over 95% of the population identified as White. Recent data reveals that Maine is becoming more diverse and that this is due in largest part to in-migration of individuals from other parts of the country as well as from asylum-seekers and refugee resettlement.

Data from Maine’s Disability Dashboard (Center for Workforce Research and Information, 2022) confirms that while much progress has occurred for people with disabilities in Maine – much work remains to be done. There is a significant disparity in bachelor’s degree attainment – with only 19 % of Maine people with disabilities achieving that credential compared to 37% of those without disabilities. Additionally, less than 37 % of people with disabilities in Maine are employed, in contrast to 80% of those without disabilities. Furthermore, workers with disabilities in Maine earn over $15,000 less in median earnings compared to workers without disabilities.

The impacts of COVID-19 were serious for individuals with disabilities and continue to be felt. People with disabilities that put them at high risk were limited in how they could interact in their communities, and some were unable to continue in employment. Individuals who received supports for residential or transportation services experienced additional barriers as those services limited public interaction. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was able to pivot to virtual services quickly and was continuously open for services and this allowed some current clients to take advantage of ongoing support through tele-counseling appointments. Consumer satisfaction surveys a year in to the pandemic revealed that nearly half of those surveyed felt that COVID-19 had negatively impacted their Vocational Rehabilitation services – but 11% reported a slowdown in services and 16% found it more difficult to reach their VR counselor.

Elimination of the subminimum wage for individuals with disabilities in Maine in 2020, coupled with earlier passage of Maine’s Employment First law and implementation of the Home and Community Based Services rule has increased the numbers of individuals with significant disabilities who are considering employment – many for the first time. DVR has begun to see a resulting growing percentage of individuals who are applying for DVR services and who have Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities.

Approximately 40% of DVR clients are transition-age youth. Despite this high percentage, DVR still is only reaching a small percentage of students with disabilities with Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). While this number may be artificially deflated by limitations in historical reporting of no-cost services delivered by DVR Transition VR counselors, it indicates that there remains a need to better deliver (and capture) how schools and VR are working together to coordinate Pre-ETS delivery.

DVR continues to see the benefits of partnership with other core programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In PY 2022, these programs served significant percentages of individuals with disabilities. This indicates that individuals with disabilities are having access to a wide range of programs and services in addition to Vocational Rehabilitation. It also indicates that there are opportunities for co-enrollment to increase outcomes through additional resource availability.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PY22 | SERVED | IND w/DIS | % |
| ADULT | 712 | 133 | 18.67 |
| DISLOCATED WORKER | 138 | 18 | 13.04 |
| YOUTH | 367 | 211 | 57.49 |
| WAGNER PEYSER | 6779 | 627 | 9.25 |

 (Table A: WIOA Core programs and percentage of individuals with disabilities served in PY 22)

**CSNA DVR – TABLE 1**

**Individual Characteristics for Closed Cases for FFY 2019 and FFY 2023**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FFY 2019** | **FFY 2023** | **% Change in # of Closures****(C-A)/C** | **Change in % of Closures****(D-B)** |
|  | **Number****(A)** | **Percent****(B)** | **Number****(C)** | **Percent****(D)** |  |  |
| **All Closures** | **3,396** | **100.0** | **2,891** | **100** |  |  |
| *Primary Disability* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| No Impairment | 494 | 14.5 | 509 | 17.6 | **2.9** | **2.2** |
| Sensory\* | 666 | 13.7 | 225 | 11.6 | **-196.0** | **-2.1** |
| Physical | 437 | 12.9 | 309 | 10.7 | **-41.4** | **-2.2** |
| Mental Illness | 1,104 | 32.5 | 890 | 30.8 | **-24.0** | **-1.7** |
| Cognitive | 1,012 | 29.8 | 848 | 29.3 | **-19.3** | **-0.5** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Age at Closure* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than 23 | 1,113 | 32.8 | 886 | 30.6 | **-25.6** | **-2.2** |
| 23-54 | 1,727 | 50.9 | 1,526 | 52.8 | **-13.2** | **1.9** |
| 55-65 | 443 | 13.0 | 345 | 11.9 | **-28.4** | **-1.1** |
| Over 65 | 113 | 3.3 | 134 | 4.6 | **15.7** | **1.3** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Education\** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than HS | 667 | 19.6 | 772 | 22.7 | **13.6** | **3.1** |
| HS or Equivalent | 1,754 | 51.6 | 1,908 | 56.2 | **8.1** | **4.6** |
| Some College | 351 | 10.3 | 513 | 15.1 | **31.6** | **4.8** |
| College or More | 624 | 18.4 | 203 | 6.0 | **-207.3** | **-12.4** |
| *\* FFY 2019 Education information was collected at application; FFY 2023 Education information was collected at plan development* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Gender* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Does Not Wish to Self-Identify\*\* | - | - | 29 | 1.0 | **N/A** | **N/A** |
| Female | 1,486 | 43.8 | 1,176 | 40.7 | **-26.2** | **-3.1** |
| Male | 1,910 | 56.2 | 1,654 | 57.3 | **-15.5** | **1.1** |
| Non-Binary\*\* | - | - | 28 | 1.0 | **N/A** | **N/A** |
| *\*\* Not collected for FFY 2019* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Race* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| White | 3,121 | 91.9 | 2,601 | 90.1 | **-20.0** | **-1.8** |
| Racial/Ethnic Minority | 275 | 8.1 | 254 | 8.8 | **-8.3** | **0.7** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *SSI Income* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Received SSI Income | 886 | 26.1 | 700 | 24.2 | **-26.6** | **-1.9** |
| Did not receive SSI Income | 2,510 | 73.9 | 2,191 | 75.8 | **-14.6** | **1.9** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *SSDI Income* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Received SSDI Income | 701 | 20.6 | 514 | 17.8 | **-36.4** | **-2.8** |
| Did not receive SSDI Income | 2,696 | 79.4 | 2,377 | 82.2 | **-13.4** | **2.8** |

*DVR client characteristics data is for ALL cases closed during the Federal Fiscal Year. Characteristics are based on information recorded at time of application, unless otherwise noted. Some totals do not equal the number of clients served because the information was not available for all cases as applicants.*

Sources:

* biAdaptor DVR Cases\_VR Query
* Aware Case Management System
	1. **Process Flow**

**Chart 1**

**Total Applications, Plans Developed, and Closures between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **The number of new applications has rebounded to meet or surpass pre-pandemic levels**
* **The number of new Individualized Plans for Employment has also significantly increased in keeping with the number of new applicants**

**Chart 2**

**Active Caseload Status End of Fiscal Year Snapshot for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **The number of clients who were actively engaged in an Individualized Plan for Employment nearly doubled between FFY 2022 and FFY 2023**
* **DVR continues to work at reducing the numbers of individuals who close without an employment outcome (“early exiters”), while the number remained stable between FFY 2022 and FFY 2023 – percentage of early exiters to overall participants significantly decreased – indicating progress.**

**Chart 3**

**All Case Closures by Closure Type between FFY 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **The increase in individuals exiting from Delayed status reflects an effort to contact all individuals on the wait list in preparation for reopening Order of Selection categories 3 and 4.**
* **The decrease in numbers of individuals exiting while in an active Individualized Plan for Employment (Service Status) is a positive indicator.**
* **With days from application to eligibility improved, DVR will examine other factors that may be influencing closure while in application status. Early information from the Intake Unit points at some applicants having applied or having someone apply on their behalf - without an understanding of VR services. DVR is now offering an (optional) monthly virtual orientation session to help increase awareness of VR services pre-application.**

**Chart 4**

**Average Months in VR Process for Successful Closures between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **Time for Application to Eligibility continues to decline. Research has demonstrated that rapid engagement correlates to more successful employment closures.**
* **With over 40% of clients transition-age youth, it is not unexpected to see case lengths increase (as they apply in high school and stay engaged with DVR through post-secondary education and training and first employment)**
* **Use of Career Pathways (such as Registered Apprenticeship) may also extend case length as clients focus on achieving credential attainment before DVR exit.**

**Chart 5**

**Average Months in VR Process by Closure Type between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **Receiving appropriate and timely IPE Services is critical to engagement and employment success**
* **Delays in IPE development increase the likelihood of unsuccessful closure and early exit. Clients who were successful in employment moved to Service status in half the time, on average, of unsuccessful closures.**
	1. **Outcomes**

**Chart 6**

**Rehabilitation Rate by Primary Disability Type between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

**Findings:**

* **Increased strategies are needed to assist individuals with mental health disabilities to reach rehabilitation. DVR is increasing training on Motivational Interviewing and is partnering with the Office of Behavioral Health on the evidence-based Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) training and awareness for VR counselors – as two possible strategies.**
* **The rehabilitation rate has remained relatively flat for individuals with cognitive disabilities. With increasing numbers of individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD) seeking employment, DVR has added four (4) new Targeted Caseload VR counselors who will have special training and will work closely with the Office of Aging and Disability Services to focus efforts increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for this population.**
* **The decrease in the rehabilitation rate for individuals with sensory disabilities is concerning. Individuals with hearing loss are overrepresented on the waitlist for services (Order of Selection categories 3 and 4), and this is one of the factors in DVR’s goal of opening all categories by July 1, 2024. DVR and DBVI are also revisiting current guidance on shared cases to ensure this process is well understood by VR counselors in both Divisions.**

**Chart 7**

**Average Quarterly Earnings at Application and Closure for All Successful Closures Federal Fiscal Year 2022**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference Period** | **Number with Wages** | **Median Wage (of those with wages)** | **Average Wage (of those with wages)** |
| Quarter of Application Date | 224 | $4,876 | $7,887 |
| Quarter After Closure | 203 | $8,121 | $9,209 |

**Findings:**

* **More study is needed on wage data for successful closures**
* **Median wage nearly doubled from application to closure, reinforcing the value of VR services to economic security for people with disabilities**

**Chart 8**

**Average Weekly Wages and Hours for Successful Closures in Federal Fiscal Year 2023**

**Findings:**

* **Individuals with Hearing Loss continue to work the greatest number of hours on average and have the highest average weekly wage**
* **Individuals with cognitive disabilities are often successfully closed at a lower number of hours worked per week compared to other disability groups. With the support of benefits counselors and education for family members, case managers – and VR counselors, DVR will work to challenge misconceptions about the ability of individuals with cognitive disabilities to engage in meaningful employment. This will be aided by the addition of four(4) new targeted caseload VR counselors across the state.**
	1. **Services and Expenditures Costs**

**Figure 1**

**Description of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Groups**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **VR Service Group** | **Examples of Services** |
| Job Development & Placement | Job Development, Analysis, Placement & Referral |
| College or University Training | Tuition, Boarding, Fees, Books, School Supplies |
| Assessment | Community Based Situational Assessments and Disability Related Evaluations |
| On-The-Job Supports | Job Coaching (both at work and off site) and On-The-Job Training |
| All Other Services | Readers/Interpreters, Occupational Tools & Equipment, Services to Family Members, Purchased Counseling & Guidance |
| Pre-Employment Transition Services | Job Exploration Counseling, Work-Based Learning Experience, Counseling on Enrollment Opportunities, Workplace Readiness Training, Instruction in Self Advocacy |
| Occupational/Vocational & Other Training | Business/Vocational Training, Books, Supplies, Boarding, Tutoring, Fees, Adult Education, Literacy, Mobility Training, Truck Driving School, etc. |
| Hearing Aid | Provision of Hearing Aids, Molds, and Repair |
| Transportation | Cab/Bus Fares, Car Repairs, Gas |
| Rehabilitation Technology | Computer Equipment, Software, Training, Home/Building or Vehicle Modifications |
| Maintenance | Clothing, Child Care, Food and Shelter to Enable IPE |
| Diagnosis & Treatment | Medical Exams, Treatment, Therapy & Counseling |

**Table 2**

**Case Costs by Service Group and Federal Fiscal Year between 2021 and 2023**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VR Service Group** | **FFY 2021** | **FFY 2022** | **FFY 2023** | **% Change FFY** **2021-2023** |
| Job Development & Placement | $2,450,183.45 | $3,217,211.74 | $3,793,313.50 | 54.8 |
| College or University Training | $498,307.21 | $432,324.25 | $671,142.62 | 34.7 |
| Assessment | $143,077.14 | $185,905.01 | $120,275.34 | -15.9 |
| On-The-Job Supports | $162,683.30 | $274,540.48 | $398,824.97 | 145.2 |
| All Other Services | $497,077.92 | $625,557.58 | $265,355.22 | -46.6 |
| Pre-Employment Transition Services | $641,811.66 | $897,607.12 | $1,261,393.12 | 96.5 |
| Occupational/Vocational & Other Training | $309,576.61 | $229,390.31 | $236,117.56 | -23.7 |
| Hearing Aid | $365,428.79 | $299,394.57 | $332,200.06 | -9.1 |
| Transportation | $99,307.36 | $124,558.83 | $150,311.91 | 51.4 |
| Rehabilitation Technology | $164,896.73 | $129,395.38 | $106,227.18 | -35.6 |
| Maintenance | $62,358.72 | $35,414.70 | $52,356.23 | -16.0 |
| Diagnosis & Treatment | $69,996.39 | $78,895.99 | $60,122.96 | -14.1 |
| **Total** | **$5,464,705.28**  | **$6,530,195.96**  | **$7,447,640.67** | **36.3** |

**Findings:**

* **As expected, post-COVID 19 reengagement has increased expenditures across many service categories over the last three years. This is particularly notable for Pre-Employment Transition Services. With schools back in session and students able to once again be safely engaged in community and work activities, spending on those services has rebounded.**
* **Costs for services and goods - and salaries for employment support staffing - have all significantly increased post-pandemic. While the numbers of clients participating in services has increased so too has the cost of those services.**
* **Occupational/vocational training is one area where costs have not increased. This may be in large part due to free or low-cost training that was made available across the state thanks to American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds that flowed to Maine.**
* **Spending on Rehabilitation Technology decreased in 2023. While some of that decrease may be due to increased universal design and accessibility in services and goods, Maine DVR will add a strategy to ensure that all VR counselors are aware of and promoting the use of best practices in rehabilitation technology.**

**Chart 9**

**Case Costs by Service Group in Federal Fiscal Year 2023**

**Findings:**

* **Job Development and Placement represent over half of all case service expenditures.**
* **College/University Training spending is impacted by implementation of free community college tuition for recent high school graduates.**
* **VR counselors are trained to use as much existing information as possible to determine eligibility for services. This limits unnecessary spending on assessment for eligibility determination – and also promotes rapid engagement**

**Chart 10**

**Top 6 Service Groups by Federal Fiscal Year**

**Findings:**

* **Hearing aid expenditures remain flat over time. DVR anticipated a decrease in demand for hearing aids due to a requirement that Maine insurers cover some hearing aid costs – but that has not materialized.**

**Chart 11**

**Average Cost per Closure between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

(Including Potentially Eligible Students with a Disability)

**Average Cost per Closure between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023**

(Excluding Potentially Eligible Students with a Disability)

\* Work-based Learning Wages are not included in overall costs for 2021 and 2022

**Finding: For FFY 2023, average cost per person was nearly equal across all closures**

1. **ESTIMATING POPULATION ELIGIBLE FOR DVR SERVICES AND UNMET NEEDS**
	1. **American Community Survey (ACS)**
	2. **ACS Disability Characteristics**
	3. **Are DVR Services Reaching the Eligible Population?**

**Table 3**

**Client Characteristics and Selected Comparisons to ACS Population**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DVR Clients, FFY 2023\*** | **Comparison Population\*\*** |  |
|  | **Percent** | **Percent** | **Difference** |
| **Primary Disability Type (DVR)** |  |  |  |
| No Impairment | 17.6 | Disability type information is not comparable. | N/A |
| Sensory | 11.6 |
| Physical | 10.7 |
| Mental Illness | 30.8 |
| Cognitive | 29.3 |
| **Disability Type (ACS)** |  |  |  |
| Self-Care | Disability type information is not comparable. | 1.7 | N/A |
| Cognitive | 5.2 |
| Ambulatory | 4.4 |
| Hearing | 2.0 |
| Visual | 2.1 |
| Any Disability | 3.9 |
| **Age at Closure** |  |  |  |
| Less than 18 | 5.2 | N/A | N/A |
| 18 to 64 | 94.8 |
| **Education** |  |  |  |
| Less than HS | 19.6 | 12.0 | -7.6 |
| HS or equivalent | 51.6 | 39.5 | -12.1 |
| Some College (includes AA degree) | 10.3 | 29.0 | 18.7 |
| College or More (BA or higher) | 18.4 | 20.0 | 1.6 |
| **Gender** |  |  |  |
| Does not wish to self-identify | 1.0 | -- | -- |
| Female | 40.7 | 50.7 | -10.0 |
| Male | 57.3 | 49.3 | 8.0 |
| Non-Binary | 1.0 | -- | -- |
| **Race** |  |  |  |
| White | 90.1 | 93.9 | -3.8 |
| Racial/Ethnic Minority | 8.8 | 6.1 | 2.7 |
| Does Not Wish to Identify | 1.1 | -- | -- |
| **SSI Income** |  |  |  |
| Received SSI income at application (ACS: in past year) | 24.2 | 30.0 | -5.8 |
| Did not receive SSI Income | 75.8 | 70.0 | 5.8 |
| **SSDI Income** |  |  |  |
| Received SSDI income at application (ACS: in past year) | 17.8 | 60.5 | -42.7 |
| Did not receive SSDI income | 82.2 | 39.5 | 42.7 |

\* DVR client characteristic data is for all cases closed in FFY 2023, including both successful and unsuccessful closures. Characteristics are based on information recorded at application unless otherwise noted.

\*\* Comparison population defined as individuals ages 18 to 64 with a non-visual disability who do NOT report working in the past week (or being on temporary leave). Source: Maine DVR Data; CWRI Website Reports; 2022 Disability Status Reports from ACS

**Findings:**

* **DVR serves a higher percentage of male clients in comparison to the broader population**
* **DVR clients are more diverse in comparison to the overall population of people with a disability in Maine.**
	1. **Social Security Recipients in Maine**

**Table 4**

**Open Maine DVR Cases with SSI and SSDI Recipients in Federal Fiscal Year 2023**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Open DVR Cases** | **SSI Recipients** | **SSDI Recipients** |
| **VR Region** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** |
| **Region I** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Counties: Cumberland, York | 201 | 28.5% | 8,213 | 24.1% | 16,025 | 27.7% |
| **Region II** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Counties: Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, Sagadahoc | 133 | 18.9% | 7,136 | 20.9% | 11,540 | 20.0% |
| **Region III** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Counties: Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Somerset, Waldo | 198 | 28.1% | 8,330 | 24.4% | 14,025 | 24.2% |
| **Region IV** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Counties: Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Washington | 143 | 20.3% | 7,976 | 23.4% | 12,375 | 21.4% |
| **Region IV** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| County: Aroostook | 30 | 4.3% | 2,436 | 7.1% | 3,875 | 6.7% |
| **TOTAL** | **705** | **100%** | **34,091** | **100%** | **57,840** | **100%** |

Source: Social Security Administration, Master Beneficiary Record and Supplemental Security Record, 100 Percent data; and U.S. Postal Service geographic data

File available from:
U.S. Social Security Administration • Office of Retirement and Disability Policy • Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics
*SSI Recipients by State and County, 2022*
<https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/2022/>

[OASI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2022 (ssa.gov)](https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/index.html)

<https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2022/me.xlsx>G

**Findings:**

* **DVR presumes eligibility for individuals who receive SSI/SSDI**
* **In any given year only a small percentage of individuals who receive SSI/SSDI in Maine receive services through DVR**
* **Individuals who receive SSI/SSDI may or may not be in need of Vocational Rehabilitation services. Some individuals do seek and receive services through Maine’s CareerCenter network (American Job Centers).**

**Chart 12**

**Distribution of Open Maine DVR Cases with SSI and SSDI Recipients in Federal Fiscal Year 2023**

**Findings:**

* **The percentage individuals with SSI/DI benefits who are open DVR cases in each region is proportional to the distribution of SSI and SSDI recipients across the state.**
	1. **Minority Populations in Maine**

**Table 5A**

**Maine DVR Minorities Served**

Distribution by minority group for all cases closed between Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2023

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Maine DVR** |
|  | **FFY 2021** | **FFY 2022** | **FFY 2023** |
|  | **Count** | **Percent** | **Count** | **Percent** | **Count** | **Percent** |
| All | 2,599 | -- | 3,064 | -- | 3,007 | -- |
| White | 2,367 | 91.1% | 2,807 | 91.6% | 2,724 | 90.6% |
| Black/African American | 90 | 3.5% | 97 | 3.2% | 109 | 3.6% |
| Native American/Alaska Native | 59 | 2.3% | 70 | 2.3% | 74 | 2.5% |
| Asian | 25 | 1.0% | 34 | 1.1% | 28 | 0.9% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 10 | 0.4% | 6 | 0.2% | 7 | 0.2% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 47 | 1.8% | 50 | 1.6% | 65 | 2.2% |
| Total Number of Minorities | 231 | 8.9% | 257 | 8.4% | 283 | 9.4% |

Note: The total exceeds the number of clients because individuals may list multiple race/ethnicity groups.

 **Findings:**

* Maine DVR continues to serve a population that is slightly more diverse than the general population of Maine residents with disabilities.
* While it appears that the numbers of individuals who are minority groups has increased over the last few years, the small sample size may artificially amplify actual change.

**Table 5B**

**Maine DVR Minorities Served – Closed Cases**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Minorities Served by Region** | **Maine DVR** |
| **Minorities Closed in FFY 2023** | **All Cases Closed in FFY 2023** |
| **Count** | **Percent** | **# Successful Closures** | **Count** | **Percent** |
| Region I*Cumberland and York* | 88 | 31.1% | 12 | 689 | 24.0% |
| Region II*Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, and Sagadahoc* | 95 | 33.6% | 14 | 793 | 27.6% |
| Region III*Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Somerset, and Waldo* | 54 | 19.1% | 9 | 794 | 27.7% |
| Region IV*Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington* | 33 | 11.7% | 4 | 446 | 15.5% |
| Region V*Aroostook* | 13 | 4.6% | 2 | 149 | 5.2% |
| **TOTAL** | **283** | **100%** | **41** | **2,871** | **100%** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Findings:**

* In Regions I and II, individuals from minority groups were more likely to close out from DVR services compared to the general population of individuals served.
* DVR will engage in DEIA strategies – including the addition of a Rehabilitation Assistant in each region – to learn more about why individuals from minority populations exit DVR services.
	1. **Students with Disabilities**

**Chart 13**

**Anticipated Need for Employment Services among Special Education Students Ages 14-22 from 2020 to 2022**

**Findings:**

* Note: Special education categories differ from disability categories used by DVR
* The numbers of students with Autism continues to grow in Maine. DVR serves a higher percentage of students with Autism than found in special education.
* Conversely, while Learning Disabilities is the largest subgroup of students with identified special education needs, DVR serves a smaller percentage of students with Learning Disabilities. This could be due to less actual or perceived need for VR services.
* Mental Health disabilities represent the largest group of students served by DVR.
* Students with Intellectual Disability make up a greater proportion of students served by DVR than they do as a percentage of all students identified for special education services. This may be due to greater actual or perceived need for VR services.
	1. **Distribution of DVR Transition Counselors**

**Chart 14**

**DVR Transition Counselors and Exceptionality Population by VR Region Students Ages 14-22**

**Findings:**

* Transition VR Counselor numbers have been in flux due to DVR’s ability to recruit and retain staff.
* Transition VR Counselors typically have larger caseloads than counselors serving adults
* DVR now uses a team approach to serve transition-age youth. This includes employing regional and statewide Rehabilitation Counselor Is, business relations staff, and partners to work across regions both for virtual and in-person services.

 **Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened**

**Chart 15**

**Hearing Aid and Audiologist Expenditures**

**Findings:**

* **DVR continues to benefit fiscally from procurement of hearing aids at reduced cost through contractual agreement.**
* **DVR’s waitlist for individuals found eligible in Order of Selection Categories 3 and 4 impacts some expenditures for hearing aids and audiologists as individuals who are late-deafened or hard of hearing are over-represented in these categories.**
* **Availability of insurance coverage for hearing aids has not had a significant impact on related expenditures.**
	1. **Appendix – All Closures**

**Case Closure Status by Disability from Federal Fiscal Year 2021 to 2023**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ALL DVR CLOSURES** | **FFY 2021** | **FFY 2022** | **FFY 2023** |
| **Total Closures** | 2,499 | 2,958 | 2,891 |
| Rehabilitated | 482 | 485 | 401 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 1,223 | 1,490 | 1,410 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 28.3% | 24.6% | 22.1% |
|  |
| **Visual Impairment** | 12 | 8 | 6 |
| Rehabilitated | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 11.1% | 28.6% | 20.0% |
|  |
| **Deaf or Hard of Hearing** | 261 | 241 | 257 |
| Rehabilitated | 164 | 151 | 109 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 60 | 53 | 76 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 73.2% | 74.0% | 58.9% |
|  |
| **Physical** | 283 | 337 | 309 |
| Rehabilitated | 65 | 52 | 56 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 151 | 198 | 171 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 30.1% | 20.8% | 24.7% |
|  |
| **Mental Illness** | 839 | 1,069 | 890 |
| Rehabilitated | 98 | 136 | 89 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 497 | 644 | 569 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 16.5% | 17.4% | 13.5% |
|  |
| **Cognitive** | 757 | 857 | 848 |
| Rehabilitated | 137 | 135 | 134 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 454 | 546 | 542 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 23.2% | 19.8% | 19.8% |
|  |
| **Communicative** | 81 | 67 | 74 |
| Rehabilitated | 19 | 8 | 11 |
| Other than Rehabilitated with IPE | 56 | 48 | 50 |
| Rehabilitation Rate\* | 25.3% | 14.3% | 18.0% |
|  |

\* Rehabilitation Rate = Rehabilitated/Rehabilitated + Other than Rehabilitated with IPE