CARF
Survey Report
for

The Life Enrichment Center, Inc.

Organization

The Life Enrichment Center, Inc.
1111 North Jefferson Street
Milledgeville, GA 31061

Organizational Leadership

Barbara A. Coleman, M.Ed., Center Director

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Survey Dates

March 14-15, 2016

Survey Team

Lynne Stokley, LPC, CRC, NCC, Administrative Surveyor

Megan Bergen, Program Surveyor

Programs/Services Surveyed

Community Integration

Previous Survey

April 22-23, 2013
Three-Year Accreditation

Survey Outcome

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: May 31, 2019

Three-Year Accreditation

SURVEY SUMMARY

The Life Enrichment Center, Inc. has strengths in many areas.

- Leadership is dynamic and mission driven. The director and board are approachable and solicitous of input on a continual basis to enable The Life Enrichment Center to better meet its mission.
- Staff is caring, dedicated, and skilled in its area of the organization's operations. The organization has little turnover, which provides continuity for the persons served. The staff members exhibit genuine concern for the persons served and conduct their work with the consumers' best interest in mind.
- The personnel files are organized and maintained with up-to-date information. It is obvious that time and attention are given to these records.
- The organization maintains a sound financial position and continually monitors the revenue streams to ensure the stability of funding and service provision.
- The organization strives to ensure that the consumers have input to their programming and their environment. The recent renovation of the Day Activity room was designed, furnished, and set up based solely on the consumers' input. This new room is something that both the staff members and the consumers are proud to have in their building.
- The Life Enrichment Center has a newly launched website that is both informative and visually appealing. The website does a good job of featuring the organization's services, community involvement, and outcomes. It will serve it well in the future.
- The Life Enrichment Center is a valuable resource for Milledgeville and the surrounding area. It enjoys a positive reputation in its community and works to engage the community in appropriate ways.
- The Life Enrichment Center has created a work environment that fosters respect and appreciation for staff members who are young, are energetic, and bring fresh eyes as well as staff members who are more seasoned with organizational and industry history and wisdom; as such, the mix of staff members creates a magnificent synergy.
- The Life Enrichment Center has fostered multiple community collaborations that have resulted in a win for the persons served, the organization, and partnering organizations.
- The community partnerships in which The Life Enrichment Center engages have resulted in a substantial number of options for the consumers.
- The Life Enrichment Center maintains comprehensive records on each person served that clearly demonstrate excellence in service delivery.
- The "Do Something" Group affords the persons served a chance to give back to their community through volunteer community service activities. This group challenges the notion that people with disabilities must be on the receiving end of services.

In the following area The Life Enrichment Center demonstrates exemplary conformance to the standards.

- ■ The Life Enrichment Center has built a strong relationship with Georgia College & State University (GCSU). This utilization of the college's students in practicum and internship experiences is exceptional. The students from the college are leading music therapy sessions and art lessons, and are also directly assisting persons served in participating in the activities. The organization's consumers benefit through their participation in these experiences both at The Life Enrichment Center and on the college campus. One example is that many of the persons served are in a choir that performs once a semester. They go to the college for practice each week, and students attend these practice sessions to support the learning of new songs. In addition, some faculty members have served on the organization's board of directors. This is a unique partnership that models best practices of both GCSU and The Life Enrichment Center, as is demonstrated by the two organizations presenting their partnership model to other colleges, universities, and other entities, such as a presentation at the National Association of Qualified Developmental Disability Professionals conference in New Orleans August 4-7, 2015.

The Life Enrichment Center should seek improvement in the area identified by the recommendation in the report. Consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, it is evident that The Life Enrichment Center provides excellent services to the persons served and is dedicated to ongoing quality improvement. The organization is respected in the community. The referral sources, persons served, and their families all express satisfaction with the services provided. The organization has areas for improvement, including the development of a complete accessibility plan. The Life Enrichment Center appears to have the ability and willingness to make improvements in the areas identified in this report.

The Life Enrichment Center, Inc. has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The organization is recognized for its efforts to provide quality community integration services and is encouraged to continue to remain current with the CARF standards as it addresses the areas for improvement noted.

SECTION 1. ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE®

A. Leadership

Description

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

Key Areas Addressed

- Leadership structure

- Leadership guidance

- Commitment to diversity

- Corporate responsibility

- Corporate compliance

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

C. Strategic Planning

Description

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

Key Areas Addressed

- Strategic planning considers stakeholder expectations and environmental impacts

- Written strategic plan sets goals

- Plan is implemented, shared, and kept relevant

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

Description

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Ongoing collection of information from a variety of sources

■ Analysis and integration into business practices

■ Leadership response to information collected

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

E. Legal Requirements

Description

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Compliance with all legal/regulatory requirements

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Financial Planning and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and annual performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Budget(s) prepared, shared, and reflective of strategic planning

■ Financial results reported/compared to budgeted performance

■ Organization review

■ Fiscal policies and procedures

- Review of service billing records and fee structure

- Financial review/audit

- Safeguarding funds of persons served

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

G. Risk Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

Key Areas Addressed

- Identification of loss exposures

- Development of risk management plan

- Adequate insurance coverage

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

H. Health and Safety

Description

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Inspections

- Emergency procedures

- Access to emergency first aid

- ■ Competency of personnel in safety procedures

- ■ Reporting/reviewing critical incidents

- ■ Infection control

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

I. Human Resources

Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources. It should be evident that personnel are involved and engaged in the success of the organization and the persons they serve.

Key Areas Addressed

- ■ Adequate staffing

- ■ Verification of background/credentials

- ■ Recruitment/retention efforts

- ■ Personnel skills/characteristics

- ■ Annual review of job descriptions/performance

- ■ Policies regarding students/volunteers, if applicable

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

J. Technology

Description

CARF-accredited organizations plan for the use of technology to support and advance effective and efficient service and business practices.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Written technology and system plan

■ Written procedures for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in service delivery, if applicable

■ Training for personnel, persons served, and others on ICT equipment, if applicable

■ Provision of information relevant to the ICT session, if applicable

■ Maintenance of ICT equipment in accordance with manufacturer recommendations, if applicable

■ Emergency procedures that address unique aspects of service delivery via ICT, if applicable

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Rights of Persons Served

Description

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Communication of rights

■ Policies that promote rights

■ Complaint, grievance, and appeals policy

■ Annual review of complaints

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

■ The Life Enrichment Center has a comprehensive policy on the rights of the persons served and communicates these rights regularly and in a manner that appears to be well understood by the persons served. However, it is suggested that The Life Enrichment Center combine and consolidate all necessary state and organizational documents into one easily accessed collection to ensure continued compliance with state regulations and the protection of each consumer's rights.

L. Accessibility

Description

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Written accessibility plan(s)

■ Requests for reasonable accommodations

Recommendations
L.2.a.(1) through L.2.c.

Although The Life Enrichment Center solicits input and examines accessibility issues, it is recommended that the organization's accessibility plan delineate specific timelines and actions to be taken. Additionally, the accessibility plan should be reviewed at least annually for relevance, including progress made in the removal of identified barriers and areas needing improvement. The plan should be updated as needed.

M. Performance Measurement and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations are committed to continually improving their organizations and service delivery to the persons served. Data are collected and analyzed, and information is used to manage and improve service delivery.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Information collection, use, and management

■ Setting and measuring performance indicators

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

■ It is suggested that The Life Enrichment Center explore the possibility of asking the GCSU faculty to assist in developing a comprehensive performance measurement and management system. The organization gathers a great deal of information and has indicators to measure; however, it is still striving to make this a useful tool. Given the strong partnership with GCSU, this could be a beneficial endeavor for the organization.

N. Performance Improvement

Description

The dynamic nature of continuous improvement in a CARF-accredited organization sets it apart from other organizations providing similar services. CARF-accredited organizations share and provide the persons served and other interested stakeholders with ongoing information about their actual performance as a business entity and their ability to achieve optimal outcomes for the persons served through their programs and services.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Proactive performance improvement

■ Performance information shared with all stakeholders

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

SECTION 2. QUALITY INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

A. Program/Service Structure

Description

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Services are person-centered and individualized

■ Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes

■ Documented scope of services shared with stakeholders

■ Service delivery based on accepted field practices

■ Communication for effective service delivery

■ Entrance/exit/transition criteria

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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

B. Individual-Centered Service Planning, Design, and Delivery

Description

Improvement of the quality of an individual's services/supports requires a focus on the person and/or family served and their identified strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. The organization's services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons served, are responsive to their expectations and desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affects his or her life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/supports are evident.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Services are person-centered and individualized

■ Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

■ Although The Life Enrichment Center makes referrals to other providers for resources and services, it is suggested that it explore the notion of having staff certified to provide benefits planning and work incentive supports. This additional service could open up the option for work with reduced risk to needed social benefits.

F. Community Services Principle Standards

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of community services assists the persons and/or families served in obtaining access to the resources and services of their choice. The persons and/or families served are included in their communities to the degree they desire. This may be accomplished by direct service provision or linkages to existing opportunities and natural supports in the community.

The organization obtains information from the persons and/or families served regarding resources and services they want or require that will meet their identified needs, and offers an array of services it arranges for or provides. The organization provides the persons and/or families served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions.

The services and supports are changed as necessary to meet the identified needs of the persons and/or families served and other stakeholders. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural needs.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Access to community resources and services

■ Enhanced quality of life

■ Community inclusion

■ Community participation

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Exemplary Conformance
F.1.a.(1) through F.1.c.

The Life Enrichment Center has built a strong relationship with GCSU. This utilization of the college's students in practicum and internship experiences is exceptional. The organization's consumers benefit through their participation in these experiences both at The Life Enrichment Center and on the college campus. In addition, some faculty members have served on the organization's board of directors. This is a unique partnership that models best practices of both GCSU and The Life Enrichment Center, as is demonstrated by the two organizations presenting their partnership model to other colleges and universities.

SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment and community services assists the persons served through an individualized person-centered process to obtain access to the services, supports, and resources of their choice to achieve their desired outcomes. This may be accomplished by direct service provision, linkages to existing generic opportunities and natural supports in the community, or any combination of these. The persons served are included in their communities to the degree they desire.

The organization provides the persons served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions. Although we use the phrase *person served,* this may also include *family served,* as appropriate to the service and the individual.

The services and supports are arranged and changed as necessary to meet the identified desires of the persons served. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural preferences.

Depending on the program's scope of services, expected results from these services/supports may include:

- Increased inclusion in community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance.
- Self-esteem.
- Housing opportunities.
- Community citizenship.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.
- Employment obtained and maintained.
- Competitive employment.
- Employment at or above minimum wage.
- Economic self-sufficiency.
- Employment with benefits.
- Career advancement.

P. Community Integration

Description

Community integration is designed to help persons to optimize their personal, social, and vocational competency to live successfully in the community. Persons served are active partners in determining the activities they desire to participate in. Therefore, the settings can be informal to reduce barriers between staff members and persons served. An activity center, a day program, a clubhouse, and a drop-in center are examples of community integration services. Consumer-run programs are also included.

Community integration provides opportunities for the community participation of the persons served. The organization defines the scope of these services and supports based on the identified needs and desires of the persons served. This may include services for persons who without this option are at risk of receiving services full-time in more restrictive environments with intensive levels of supports such as hospitalization or nursing home care. A person may participate in a variety of community life experiences or interactions that may include, but are not limited to:

■ Leisure or recreational activities.

■ Communication activities.

■ Spiritual activities.

■ Cultural activities.

■ Pre-vocational experiences.

■ Vocational pursuits.

■ Development of work attitudes.

■ Employment activities.

■ Volunteerism in the community.

■ Educational and training activities.

■ Development of living skills.

■ Health and wellness promotion.

■ Orientation, mobility, and destination training.

■ Access and utilization of public transportation.

■ Interacting with volunteers from the community in program activities.

■ Community collaborations and social connections developed by the program (partnerships with community entities such as senior centers, arts councils, etc.).

Key Areas Addressed

■ Opportunities for community participation

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.