

REMOTE SUPPORTS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS: CHRISTINA'S STORY

In 2019, Christina Peritz started part-time work at Bothwell Hospital in Sedalia, Missouri. She is an energetic young employee with the goal of working full-time. Christina receives VR-funded job coaching by the Center for Human Services (CHS).

Enter COVID-19

Christina was receiving job coaching supports when COVID-19 arrived. Despite the dangers, she wanted to continue working and the hospital needed her. CHS was committed to making that happen and did so by providing remote supports.

Thinking Ahead: Remote Supports

Before COVID-19 hit, Kim Anderson, Director of Employment Services at CHS, had already asked local county boards to grant funding to purchase technology for remote supports. The county boards did not hesitate. After the pandemic began Christina was the first person to receive one of the smart devices purchased through the county boards.

Getting Acclimated

With the help of a job coach, Christina quickly acclimated to her new procedures and equipment. The timing was good: within days, the job coach was no longer allowed on site, but remote supports kicked in. This process has not been without challenges. Current funding policy only supports time when the job coach interacts with Christina, so CHS supports the on call availability of the job coach from other resources. Both CHS and Bothwell believe a job coach is critical to Christina's success and that is their priority. Christina's job coach checks in throughout the day using the iPad or iPhone making sure Christina completes needed tasks and is communicating well with co-workers. The remote supports have given her a sense of security as well as independence.

Christina makes a significant impact at the hospital. In a time of stress, her presence is appreciated and valued by her supervisors and fellow employees. She is proud to be an essential employee working alongside her coworkers at the hospital.



"I love the fact I've been remotely supported because I love my job so much. I've even been able to train a new employee."

- Christina

ADVICE TO PROVIDERS

BE INNOVATIVE

Prior to COVID-19, CHS had already implemented the use of remote supports. This forward thinking meant they were ready when crisis hit.

BUILD STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

The strong relationship between CHS and county boards enabled them to purchase the devices. Christina was confident in her job coach. The hospital trusted CHS so they were willing to try something new.

COMMIT TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

Christina's job coaching service is only partially being funded through VR. The agency is committed to her success and provided her with the level of service needed.



Center for Human Services

[Watch this webinar from the Kessler Foundation:
Strategies for Providing Remote
Employment Supports](#)