



Three-Year Accreditation

**CARF
Survey Report
for**

**Waltham Committee,
Inc. dba WCI**

Organization

Waltham Committee, Inc. dba WCI
135 Beaver Street, First Floor
Waltham, MA 02452

Organizational Leadership

Nancy Silver-Hargreaves, President/CEO

Survey Dates

November 20-21, 2014

Survey Team

Renée Janelle Fernandez, M.S., Administrative Surveyor
Mary Shay Hicks, Program Surveyor

Programs/Services Surveyed

Community Integration
Governance Standards Applied

Previous Survey

January 23-24, 2012
Three-Year Accreditation

Survey Outcome

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: January 2018



Three-Year Accreditation

SURVEY SUMMARY

Waltham Committee, Inc. dba WCI has strengths in many areas.

- It is evident that the organization's staff members display compassion and concern for the individuals and have outstanding team work and organization.
- WCI is highly complimented for the well-operated and well-maintained facilities. The environments are businesslike, clean, and pleasant. The organization also operates the administrative services in a beautifully decorated and recently renovated office building.
- The organization's outreach, service delivery, and community integration efforts are complimented. WCI offers individualized choices of community participation ranging from feeding animals in the community, volunteering at animal shelters, assisting with Meals on Wheels®, and many other opportunities to fulfill the individuals' preferences.
- It is evident that WCI's staff members exhibit a work environment that demonstrates a level of trust, respect, hard work, communication, and a shared responsibility, enabling the organization's long-term success.
- It is evident that providing high quality of services is a driving mission for WCI personnel. The individuals have benefited from WCI's programs and enjoyed a positive life change. Individuals and referral sources expressed a high level of satisfaction. In addition, WCI benefits from having many staff members who are fluent in American Sign Language, which assist with ensuring that the needs of the Deaf and Deaf-Blind community are being met.
- WCI is commended for its unique individual preference and skill development delivery practices. The Nature Connections program offers sensory integration, "seasons through senses." The Perkins Design Center program offers adaptive chairs and reading tables that are made, painted, and decorated by the individuals. Design a Garden at Waltham Community Garden offers horticulture skills along with food preparation. WCI's art program offers handmade bracelets made from recycled soda cans and recycled water bottles, tea light candle holders, earrings, ornaments, and a variety of other art work all made by the individuals.
- The organization is recognized for making the human rights manual available in a beautiful picture book to better meet the abilities of the individuals.
- The organization is commended for its dedication to improving services through the use of technology. The use of the Therap® electronic case management system, upgrades to computers, and the use of iPad® devices and Google Chromebooks has clearly enhanced the service delivery.
- The CEO is recognized for her longevity with WCI, for being very connected to the happenings within the organization, and for her advocacy efforts on a legislative level and generally lobbying for the needs of individuals within the community.
- The organization is commended for employing numerous staff members who are deaf and a significant number of staff members, several at senior management levels, who are fluent in American Sign Language.

- WCI has an excellent history of promoting from within and for long-term employee retention. Many of the personnel have been with WCI for over a decade and have worked in different capacities within the organization. In addition, when staff members have separated from the organization, many have returned in a volunteer capacity.
- Funding sources and guardians expressed an extremely high level of satisfaction with services.
- Stakeholders have communicated that the organization's staff members are responsive, accessible, and highly person centered in delivering services.
- The organization enjoys a low turnover rate among direct care staff. The staff members have clearly developed a good relationship with the individuals and ensure that all individuals are engaged throughout the day.
- Management offers ongoing access to organizational policies and information for all employees at work sites through the use of handbooks, manuals, and signage.
- WCI's board of directors is committed to the organization, diligent about meeting frequently, and play an active and involved role in WCI's day-to-day business. The composition of the board includes a variety of professionals and two individuals.

WCI should seek improvement in the areas identified by the recommendations in the report. Consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, WCI provides quality services and demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing the lives of the individuals. The organization continues to be a leader in offering a unique blend of business and rehabilitative services. The day program has a wonderful blend of diverse and multilingual staff members that work creatively with the individuals to engage in a variety of creative and therapeutic programs. Both the leadership and direct care team members work collaboratively within the organization to maintain a high level of services. Individuals, family members, employers, and funding sources all indicated that they are highly satisfied with the dedicated, resourceful, and enthusiastic personnel, especially with regard to assisting the individuals in goal setting and succeeding in achieving their personal and program outcomes. WCI provides a valuable service to the individuals, who clearly benefit from their involvement with the organization. In addition, the organization has considerable support from its major funding source and regulatory organization. Although areas for improvement are noted, the organization appears to have the infrastructure, systems, and supports necessary to continue to meet the CARF standards and address the recommendations contained in this report.

Waltham Committee, Inc. dba WCI has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The board, executive leadership, and staff members are recognized for their achievements and encouraged to continue to use the CARF standards and resources to further improve the quality of services. The staff members and leadership team are encouraged to carry over their dedication and enthusiasm when addressing the recommendations in this survey report.

SECTION 1. ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE®

A. Leadership

Principle Statement

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

A.5.b.(2) through A.5.d.

Although WCI recently developed a cultural competency and diversity plan, it is recommended that the plan be expanded to include age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, and language. The plan should also be reviewed at least annually for relevance and updated as needed.

B. Governance

Principle Statement

The governing board should provide effective and ethical governance leadership on behalf of its owners'/stakeholders' interest to ensure that the organization focuses on its purpose and outcomes for persons served, resulting in the organization's long-term success and stability. The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization is managed effectively, efficiently, and ethically by the organization's executive leadership through defined governance accountability mechanisms. These mechanisms include, but are not limited to, an adopted governance framework defined by written governance policies and demonstrated practices; active and timely review of organizational performance and that of the executive leadership; and the demarcation of duties between the board and executive leadership to ensure that organizational strategies, plans, decisions, and actions are delegated to the resource that would best advance the interests and performance of the organization

over the long term and manage the organization's inherent risks. The board has additional responsibilities under the domain of public trust, and as such, it understands its corporate responsibility to the organization's employees, providers, suppliers, and the communities it serves.

Key Areas Addressed

- Ethical, active, and accountable governance
 - Board composition, selection, orientation, development, assessment, and succession
 - Board leadership, organizational structure, meeting planning, and management
 - Linkage between governance and executive leadership
 - Corporate and executive leadership performance review and development
 - Executive compensation
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

C. Strategic Planning

Principle Statement

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

Principle Statement

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

Principle Statement

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

Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with all legal/regulatory requirements
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Financial Planning and Management

Principle Statement

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.

Consultation

- It is suggested that the finance officers consider consolidating the financial trends, challenges, opportunities, and management information into one location so that stakeholders and the executive team can compare its performance and goals year.
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G. Risk Management

Principle Statement

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

Principle Statement

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

H.12.b.

Although WCI shows some evidence of regularly reviewing driving records, it is recommended that this be done consistently for all drivers.

Consultation

- WCI is encouraged to consider relocating the first aid boxes and fire extinguishers into main corridors, rather than maintaining these items in staff offices. This may provide more immediate access when there is an emergency.
-

I. Human Resources

Principle Statement

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

I.6.b.(5)

As recommended in the previous survey report, performance evaluations for all personnel directly employed by WCI should be performed annually.

Consultation

- Because there is a section of the employee handbook that indicates that WCI is a drug and alcohol free workplace, it is suggested that WCI consider the benefits of preemployment and random drug testing.
 - Because the staff members work in multiple locations, it is unclear if and when every staff member in every location has completed required trainings without checking multiple records. It is suggested that the organization take greater efforts to ensure that every staff member has received each training at regular intervals, rather than organizing training documentation by site.
-

J. Technology

Principle Statement

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
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Rights of Persons Served

Principle Statement

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

K.3.a.(1)

The organization should implement a policy and written procedure, by which the individuals may formally complain to WCI, which specifies that the action will not result in retaliation or barriers to services.

L. Accessibility

Principle Statement

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

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- Although the organization has not received any requests for reasonable accommodation, it is suggested that a section be added to the accessibility report to document this.
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M. Performance Measurement and Management

Principle Statement

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.

N. Performance Improvement

Principle Statement

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

Principle Statement

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
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

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

Principle Statement

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.

C. Medication Monitoring and Management

Key Areas Addressed

- Current, complete records of medications used by persons served
 - Written procedures for storage and safe handling of medications
 - Educational resources and advocacy for persons served in decision making
 - Physician review of medication use
 - Training and education for persons served regarding medications
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Community Services Principle Standards

Key Areas Addressed

- Access to community resources and services
 - Enhanced quality of life
 - Community inclusion
 - Community participation
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Principle Statement

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.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.
- Employment obtained and maintained.
- Competitive employment.
- Economic self-sufficiency.
- Employment with benefits.
- Career advancement.

P. Community Integration

Principle Statement

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
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

PROGRAMS/SERVICES BY LOCATION

Waltham Committee, Inc. dba WCI

135 Beaver Street, First Floor
Waltham, MA 02452

Administrative Location Only

Governance Standards Applied

Life Skills Day Habilitation Program

45 Rumford Avenue
Waltham, MA 02453

Community Integration