



Performance Improvement Guide

Fiscal Year 2002

Purpose of the Guide: This instrument is used on an annual basis by the ICON Management Team to assess program accomplishments. Asking the same questions each year fosters consistency in our approach to data analysis and provides us with information on our program that may be compared over a long period of time. We share these program outcomes with our customers, our staff, our funders, and the general public. This and related documents may be found on our website at <http://www.iconservices.org/pig.html> or requested by phone at 703-548-4048, ext. 101. We also use this information internally as a part of our ongoing quality improvement process.

Overview of ICON's Services

This section is intended to give the reader a basic understanding of the major activities of ICON and the source of funding for these services.

1. What sort of services does ICON deliver?

ICON was founded in 1985 to further the opportunities for people with disabilities to work in real jobs in the community; until 1997 our services and other projects were primarily focused on employment.

In July of 1997, ICON acquired the assets of Shared Housing of Virginia, Inc., a provider of community living services. The acquisition of the community living program enabled ICON to expand its sphere of activities in pursuit of the long-term goal of full inclusion of people with disabilities in the life of the community.

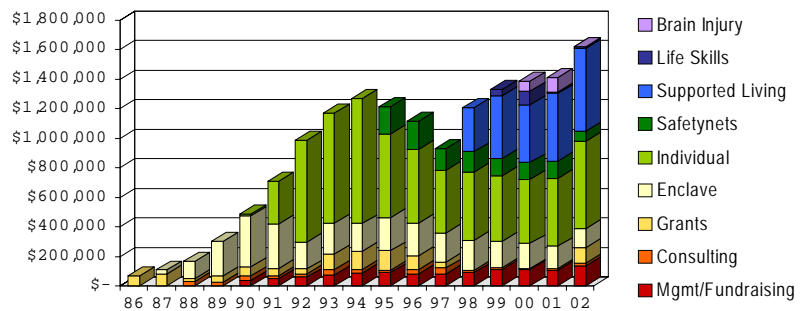
During FY '99, ICON began its Life Skills Training program: an intensive, short-term service designed to provide survivors of brain injury with the compensatory strategies they will need in order to meet the demands of the workplace.

From its inception, ICON has engaged in demonstration grants and other projects funded by government and private sources. A complete list of these projects may be found on our website at <http://www.iconservices.org/www.html>. During FY '02, we received a grant from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities to both survey and improve public awareness of the contributions of people with disabilities, focusing on four communities across the state. Print and online materials were developed which highlight Virginians with disabilities who have achieved remarkable success in their chosen fields.

2. Who does ICON serve?

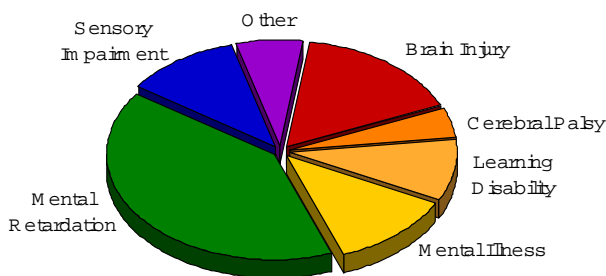
During FY '02, we served a total of 219 people: 73% received employment services, 19% received community living services, and 8% received life skills training.

Fig. 1 – Program Expenditures by Type of Service



Of those receiving employment services, 56% were people who receive long-term support; the remainder received short-term 'place and train' services (43%) or other employment-related services such as assessment or travel training (1%). Long-term support is typically provided either through local Community Services Boards (for people with developmental disabilities) or through state-funded Long Term Employment Support Services (LTESS), administered through the Department of Rehabilitative Services, for people who need ongoing support and have no other source of funding.

Fig. 2 – Primary Disability of ICON Consumers



The primary disability of approximately 55% of ICON's consumers is a developmental disability, 16% are survivors of brain injury, 12% have long-term mental illness, and 11% experience one or more sensory impairments. The remaining 5% experience a variety of other disabilities such as epilepsy or mobility impairments. Almost 50% experience multiple disabilities.

3. Who pays for this?

In FY '02, 94% of ICON's revenue came from fees for services delivered. The relative percentages of persons and dollars from the various funding sources are illustrated in Figure 3. The reason the Community Services Boards account for well over 75% of revenue, but less than 50% of persons, is that they supply long-term

Fig. 3 – Number of Persons Served and Revenue, by Funding Source



funding, while DRS and most other sources provide only short-term employment services. The Fairfax-Falls Church CSB also funds nearly all of the people served in community living services, which again are long-term services, and can be fairly intensive especially for those with medical issues. Figure 4 shows the actual numbers on which these graphs are based.

Fig. 4 – Persons Served and Revenue Data

Funder	People	\$	Avg. \$ per Person
Fairfax CSB (ES)	55	519,983	9,454
Fairfax CSB (CLS)	42	628,181	14,957
Arlington CSB	7	40,948	5,850
Pr. Wm. CSB	3	21,098	7,033
DRS	39	135,867	3,484
DVH	8	37,445	4,681
Other Public	50	108,999	2,180
Private	15	22,992	1,533

Customer Choice and Satisfaction

ICON is strongly committed to ensuring that our customers have the support and the tools they need to exercise real choice in all aspects of the services they receive, and that they are satisfied with the quality of the services. While ICON understands that employers, family members, and funders are also customers, the primary focus of this section is on individuals with disabilities.

4. How do customers participate in planning their services and supports?

All consumers referred to ICON begin their services with an initial meeting with ICON staff; other interested persons such as family, funder representatives, etc. may be included if the consumer desires. The outcome of this meeting is an individual service plan (ISP) outlining the consumer's preferences, strengths, and needs, and a plan of action for achieving the consumer's goals.

For those receiving short-term services such as life skills training or 'place and train' employment services, the ISP is the primary document which determines the form and extent of the services ICON will provide. It may be revised over the course of time to reflect changes in the individual's situation and the outcome of assessment or career development opportunities.

For those receiving long-term services, the ISP typically describes the services ICON will provide initially to help the consumer identify personal goals, strengths, and needs. Later a formal statement of goals and objectives is drafted, reviewed with the consumer, revised as necessary, and forwarded to the CSB or other funding agency. The individual's progress in meeting the objectives is monitored throughout the year and goals and objectives are revised if necessary based on the consumer's input. Quarterly reports on goals and objectives are reviewed with the consumer before being submitted to the funder.

In either case, constant informal feedback is solicited from consumers, funders, family members and others. This feedback is monitored, recorded, and acted upon as appropriate throughout the period of ICON's relationship with the consumer.

5. Describe ICON's system for assessing customer choice and satisfaction.

Over the years ICON has experimented with many different systems for assessing customer satisfaction. At present, our approach consists of various formal survey instruments combined with ongoing solicitation of customer opinion, comments, and suggestions, as well as a substantial database of outcome measures.

A formal survey was conducted in July and August, 2002, with consumers of employment, safetynet, and community living services, the families of these groups, and funding agents. During June of 2002, ICON conducted a survey of all Fairfax-Falls Church CSB consumers as requested by the CSB.

In addition to these surveys, our database captures many measures which can be used to judge customer satisfaction, such as length of time from referral to job placement and whether the person was placed in the type of job they had initially requested. These and other measures are presented later in this report.

6. What have we learned from this?

The fact that we now have an eleven-year history of many different measures of our employment services lets us graphically see our progress and change over time. In addition, we can use this historical data to measure the effectiveness of our efforts to improve in specific areas. We are working to build a similarly useful set of measures for our other services.

We are still experimenting with an effective, useful survey of consumers' responses to our services. We believe fairly strongly that surveys should be anonymous so that responses will be honest, but the response to this year's mail-in surveys, while up about 5% over previous years, was again disappointingly small (less than 35% overall). The increase may be due to the fact that we distributed the surveys personally to stakeholders and encouraged them to help us with their feedback. We continue to feel strongly that a survey conducted by ICON staff cannot encourage a truly honest response. Next year we plan to utilize an independent surveyor and/or members of our Board of Directors to conduct telephone surveys with at least a representative sample of our stakeholders.

In recent years we have departed from the 'scale of 1 to 5' format, in the hope that a more free-form questionnaire would elicit more meaningful responses. We believe that it does, and plan to continue with this format, even though it makes it more difficult to summarize and present the responses, which ranged from basic yes/no answers to comments which filled both sides of the page. Because of this, the results of our surveys for this fiscal year have been summarized in another document, the *FY 2002 Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys*. This document may be found on our website at <http://iconservices.org/pig.html> or requested by phone at 703-548-4048 ext. 101.

In addition we have established a database for recording individual, anecdotal feedback, although its use has not yet spread throughout the agency.

Employment Services

The desired outcome for these services is that individuals receiving employment or employment-related supports find and maintain jobs in integrated settings and earn a decent wage. The following questions are focused on assessing how well we are accomplishing this:

7. What percentage of supported employees work in integrated settings?

100%. ICON does not have a sheltered workshop or any other segregated facility. The two group employment sites supported by ICON are true enclaves – supported

workers are employed by the host company, work side-by-side with non-disabled employees, receive the same benefits as other employees, and have their own individual jobs.

8. What is the general response of people receiving ICON's services with respect to the quality of the services?

In answer to the question "Are you satisfied with ICON's services, overall?" 78% of those receiving employment services responded with an unequivocal "yes"; the remaining people said they are satisfied "most of the time". All of the family members of those receiving employment services indicated they are satisfied with ICON. Detail on this and other direct measures of our consumers' response to services may be found in *FY 2001 Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys* (see p. 5 for information on obtaining this document).

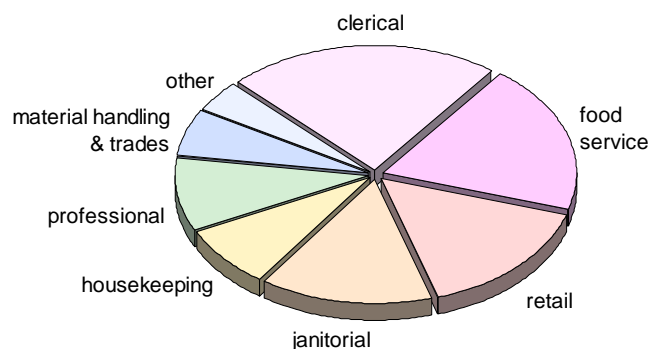
9. How many jobs were obtained in FY '02?

Twenty-one consumers entered new positions this fiscal year. Of the 17 placements made by ICON, 11 were regular paid employment, 4 were volunteer positions, and two were internships – one with the City of Alexandria and one at the Kennedy Center. Of those starting paid employment, five were recipients of short-term 'place and train' services, six were people who will receive long-term support, and four were persons who had obtained jobs without ICON's help but turned to ICON for on-the-job training.

10. Do job seekers obtain the type of job they initially indicated they wanted?

Of the six persons placed in FY '02 who indicated a clear preference, three (60%) got the type of job they initially said they wanted. This is the lowest satisfaction rate since we began tracking this data, and is probably due at least in part to the adverse economic conditions experienced this fiscal year.

Fig. 5 -- Types of Jobs Supported



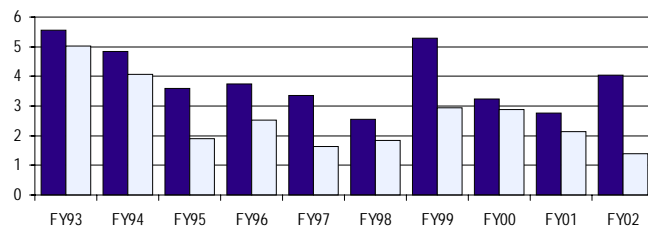
11. What sorts of jobs have been obtained?

Of the 112 paid jobs supported by ICON in FY '02, the most common were clerical (22), food service (19), and retail (15). Fourteen people were working in janitorial jobs, eight in housekeeping, nine in professional jobs, four in the trades and two in materials handling, three in human services, and one as a elevator operator on Capitol Hill.

12. How many FY '02 jobseekers were separated from ICON without getting a job, and why?

Of 73 jobseekers in FY '02, 24 separated from services during the fiscal year without having obtained a job. The reasons for separation varied widely, and most people had more than one reason for deciding to separate from services. Of the primary reasons, some 60% are factors outside ICON's control; the largest categories here are people who were not actually ready to work, and those who refused services. The remaining 40% are situations that ICON might have been able to avoid: all of them are related to our inability to retain staff to provide so that we can provide services in a timely manner (see Question 39 in the Organizational Management section below for a discussion of our staffing problems during FY '02).

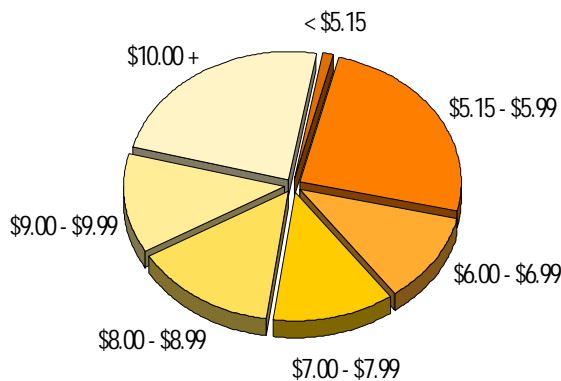
Fig. 6 -- Months in Job Development



13. How long does it take to obtain a job?

For jobs obtained during FY '02, the average length of time from referral to placement was 4.04 months, the median was 1.41, the low was a little over two weeks, and the high was more than 15 months. It should be noted that just one person's experience in job development can have a significant effect on the average for a fiscal year; the median is a more accurate measure of our efficiency in this area. It must also be noted, of course, that each individual has different circumstances; aggregate figures cannot predict what any one person's experience may be.

Fig. 7 -- Hourly Wages Earned in FY '02



14. What are the percentages of people who earn above and below the minimum wage?

Just one person made less than the minimum wage in FY '02; he is a supported employee at ICON's Fairfax Hospital enclave, where employees are paid on the basis of their productivity. The remaining 99% earned at or above minimum wage.

15. What are the hourly wages of the people who have received ICON’s Employment Services?

Hourly wages in the 112 jobs supported by ICON in FY '02 ranged from \$3.37 to \$22.27; the average was \$8.87. The median wage of \$8.00 represents an increase of more than 10% over the median in FY '01.

16. What percentage of persons employed one year or more received a raise in this year?

According to our database, 37% of people with long-term support who have been employed for more than a year received a raise during FY '02 – the average raise was 77¢ per hour, and the median increase was 5.55%. This may be a good place to state that our wage data is not 100% reliable. We try to deliver the minimum level of support based on each individual's need, to maximize both funding dollars and individual independence. For this reason we often aren't aware that an individual has received a raise in pay unless we specifically ask. We do make a point of asking at the end of the fiscal year, but both the employee and the employer tend to forget that a raise has occurred, and both are frequently unsure of current wage rates.

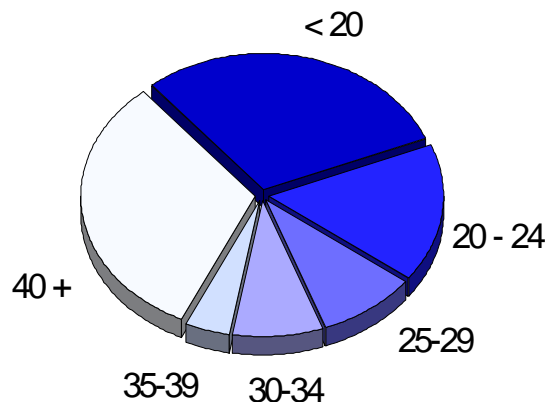
17. How many people received promotions within the same work site, or through changing employers or job sites?

One person received a promotion within the same work site this year, another converted an unpaid work experience into a paying job, and a third, after an economic layoff, was able to secure a better job than the one he'd lost.

18. What is the percentage of jobholders who are working the number of hours they initially asked for?

Of six jobseekers placed in FY '02 who expressed a clear preference, four (67%) got the number of hours they had initially requested. Of the remaining two, one is working fewer hours than requested and one is working more.

Fig. 8 -- Hours Worked Per Week



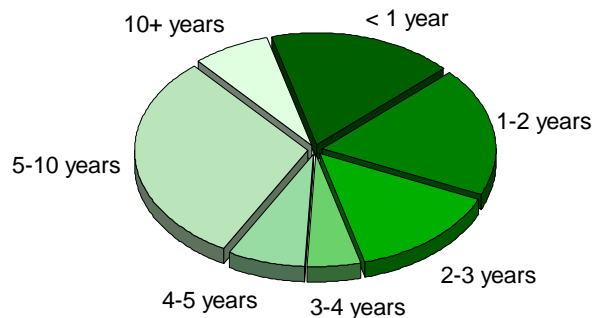
In ICON's Consumer Satisfaction Survey, 85% of respondents said they are happy with their current hours; 15% would prefer to be working up to ten more hours per week. Average hours worked per week by employees supported by

ICON is just over 26, with individual employees working from 2 to 40 hours per week.

19. What is the length of current employment for those individuals receiving long term support?

The average length of employment for the 74 individuals with long-term support working at 6/30/02 was just over five years. Six individuals have been employed in the same job for over ten years and over 47% have been employed five years or more; at the opposite end of the scale, the most recently hired individual in this category started work on May 2, 2002.

Fig. 9 -- Length of Time in Employment for Those Working at 6/30/02



20. How many people have left their jobs and why? What percentage was due to employee issues and what percentage was due to employer issues?

Thirteen people left a job in FY '02; of these, three were volunteer positions. Of the ten individuals who left paid employment, five left for reasons beyond their control, including economic factors and medical issues. Four were terminated for behavioral issues, and one made a personal choice to resign.

Overall, it seems that 30% of the reasons for job loss were employer related, 50% were employee related, and 20% were due to factors unrelated to the workplace (medical issues).

21. What are the barriers to employment for the people we serve?

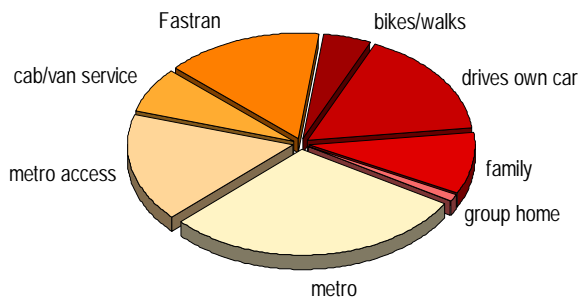
We survey our employment specialists periodically to document what types of barriers they face when pursuing community employment opportunities.

Over the three years that we have been doing this, it seems that attitudinal barriers among the general population have been increasing. This year's respondents indicate that between 75% to 80% of potential employers are perceptibly hesitant to hire a person with a disability. Commonly heard attitudes are "we have to have a person who can do ..." and "a mistake on this machine could cost me \$20,000". A frequent undercurrent, both before hire and after, is the expectation that hiring a person with a disability means that co-workers will have to take on additional work to support the disabled employee. Job coaches estimate that they spend between 15% and 20% of their time after a person has been hired addressing the attitudinal issues of co-workers and supervisors.

Architectural barriers are rated ‘fairly common’, ranging from completely inaccessible workplaces to small things such as doors which are too heavy, which can render an otherwise accessible worksite impossible to navigate for some of our consumers. We have experienced some success in convincing employers to make the workplace more physically accessible, especially in small ways such as rearranging furniture or purchasing a draftsman’s stool; but it can require constant reinforcement to keep the furniture rearranged, and while employers usually don’t have a problem with small purchases, it can take months to actually get them made. A couple of people lost their jobs for architectural reasons in this fiscal year, but each was able to find a better job to make up for it. Architectural barriers continue to cause a good deal of ‘interview loss’ in the sense that many places of employment aren’t even considered as possibilities because of lack of accessibility.

Job coaches estimate that between 60% and 70% of our consumers experience some sort of difficulty with verbal communication, ranging from inability to speak, to difficulty in understanding verbal instructions, to inability to keep from speaking in inappropriate situations. Somewhat less than 10% also face the difficulty that English is not their native language. Virtually none of the people referred to us are using any type of assistive technology or structured compensatory strategies at the time of referral. In rare cases we have been able to assist the consumer in obtaining assistive technology. More often, we have helped by introducing compensatory strategies, such as creating picture task maps for those who cannot read. A significant amount of our effort in this area is spent in teaching employers and co-workers new approaches such as using simple language and pacing their speech, effective ways of phrasing criticism, and specific techniques such as using keywords consumers have developed for themselves. In a more general sense, getting employers to talk directly with the consumer, rather than through the job coach, is a persistent problem. This problem works the other way too, in that many of our consumers initially don’t know how to initiate interactions with co-workers, and as a result can remain isolated from the life of the company.

Fig. 10 -- Transportation To Work



Without question, transportation is a major barrier for our consumers. While acknowledging that without Metro Access and other paratransit opportunities, many of our consumers would not be able to work at all, job coaches still rate Metro Access as the #1 problem with respect to transportation. Because the service is unreliable, other arrangements must be made to ensure that consumers aren’t stranded at work; this task often falls on the employers, who

rightfully find it a burden. Metro access personnel are very often rude or at best unhelpful, and their procedures are difficult for people with cognitive disabilities to follow. We have found that employers are generally tolerant up to a point since they understand that individuals are dependent upon a service which is outside their control. For those who can use public transportation, barriers include lack of buses especially in outlying areas, and commute times which are measured in hours. We have also found it difficult in recent years to get authorization for travel training to ensure that consumers can accurately and safely negotiate a commute on public transportation. Because of these barriers, a huge number of potential job opportunities are never even considered.

The unstable funding climate of recent years has had a significant effect on our ability to deliver services. Job coaches estimate that at least 30% of our job development efforts are severely disrupted because of difficulties with funding. In nearly all cases job development takes longer than it has to because of the time and paperwork required to request the authorization of a few more hours (typically less than ten hours per authorization), rather than being able to make an estimate of what will be required when services begin and receiving authorization for that amount. This has been an ongoing problem for at least ten years now, and only promises to get worse as Virginia must make even deeper cuts to balance the budget in the wake of the 'car tax' fiasco.

Other barriers noted were:

- Vocational training opportunities, particularly in the public schools and at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center in Staunton, where a number of ICON consumers have been sent for vocational training, aren't targeted toward the types of jobs currently available in the Northern Virginia area. Individuals spend months and sometimes years in programs which fail to give them marketable skills.
- Some parents erect barriers, especially parents of young people just entering the job market. It must be emphasized that this affects only a small percentage of our consumers, but for those affected the barrier can be a significant one. Parents who insist on accompanying their children to the jobsite, or who feel they must advocate with the employer as they are accustomed to doing in the educational system, are almost always a direct or indirect cause of job loss. The parent who was persistently found on the jobsite doing the consumer's job is an exceptional example, but several more have made life more difficult for their adult children during the past year. A more subtle way in which parents and family members exert a detrimental influence is through excessive communication with the job coach. Of course we expect that keeping parents informed, especially during the job development process, is an essential part of our job. But in the present funding climate, when the expectation is that ten or twenty hours at most will be spent on job development, even an hour a week in communication with parents means that very little time is left to do the actual work of finding a job.

- Traffic congestion in our area has worsened to the point that well over 20% of a job coach's day is spent on the road. This eats into the hours authorized for service to individuals. The effect is particularly detrimental in job development, which is travel-intensive by nature and the hours authorized are few.
- Language and cultural differences are a significant barrier for the many individuals we serve who are recent immigrants to the United States – both for the consumers themselves and frequently for family members as well. ICON staff is culturally diverse – more than 20% are multilingual – but it frequently isn't possible to assign staff who are familiar with the language and customs of immigrant consumers. Immigration status (lack of a green card) can also be a barrier to employment of course, as can citizenship status, especially with respect to Federal government jobs.

22. Independent Assessment of ICON's Employment Services

In FY 2000 ICON's employment programs were surveyed by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF certification is now required of all programs which are funded by the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, and FY '00 was the first year we had participated in this process. The outcome of the process was a full, three-year CARF certification for Employment Planning Services and Community Employment Services. ICON will be surveyed again by CARF in February, 2003.

Safetynet Services

ICON's Safetynet service was developed in 1995 as an option for people who are between jobs, so that they will have an opportunity to maintain their job skills and interpersonal skills during periods of unemployment. As initially conceived, the program was to provide participants with substantial individualized support so that they could pursue a variety of activities in the community. Such an individualized program required a lot of one-on-one support, which made it expensive, and few people were referred. Because of the cost, those who were referred were largely those whose disability required that they receive one-on-one support, most often for behavioral reasons – not those who would simply benefit from that support. In subsequent years the one-to-one support component was curtailed; at present the service primarily consists of support in performing volunteer work at a Fairfax County recreation center, and taking advantage of the use of the RECenter facilities and activities available to those who volunteer.

By the end of the last fiscal year, only three persons were participating in Safetynets, only one full-time, and the future of the one remaining site was in doubt. In FY '02, the service was actually used for its original purpose, as a place to go between jobs, and a total of eight people used the service at some time during the year. Still, overall utilization (86%) continued to be well under what is required to pay for the service.

23. What percentage of the day do participants spend in integrated settings in the community?

All participants in ICON's safetynet services are volunteers in community locations; most perform their volunteer service at Fairfax County RECenters. All activities are fully integrated.

24. How many individual objectives were met on service plans, and what percentage is this of the whole?

Consumers supported in Safetynet sites at 6/30/02 had collectively achieved 85% of the objectives related to their goals in this fiscal year. Individual rates ranged from 75% to 100%.

25. What proportion of people have made friends with people at the RECenter other than those who are paid to work with them?

All of the individuals who participate in the safetynet program have made friends among the RECenter staff, patrons, and other non-disabled volunteers.

Community Living Services

The desired outcome for these services is that individuals with disabilities will be supported in developing satisfying lifestyles. This is individually defined and can certainly be difficult to measure. We therefore assist people in developing and accomplishing specific goals that help them to attain competence and choice in the conduct of their daily lives.

26. What proportion of people make choices about their important life decisions? When answering this question, consider decisions such as where they will live, with whom they will live, how they will spend their time, and how they will spend their money.

This is an area which is very difficult to measure objectively, yet it is central to our mission. This year, it appears that 48% of the people we serve have chosen where to live and 56% have chosen who to live with. Those who exercise choice in how to spend their leisure time is high, at 78%, and 70% choose how they will spend their money.

27. What types of activities are supported?

As mentioned, all consumers of community living services set goals and objectives for themselves each year, which serve to determine the types of service they will

receive. Activities relating to these goals appear in the following table, as do other activities such as working on personal finances / budgeting, which may not rate as a goal, but is nevertheless an essential part of independent living.

making choices / setting goals	50%	safety in the community	23%
talk (counseling)	46%	health care	19%
shopping	46%	learning new things	19%
eating out	46%	help with housing	15%
cooking	38%	physical recreation	15%
help with personal finances	38%	individual social activities	15%
housekeeping	35%	computer skills	15%
behavior (manners)	27%	group social activities	8%
academics (reading/math)	27%	special olympics	8%
basic living skills	23%	cultural activities	4%
in-home activities	23%	parenting skills	4%
community access	23%		

28. Are customers satisfied with the supports provided?

Yes -- according to the responses we received to a survey conducted in July, 2002, in which all but one of those responding indicated that they are satisfied. All consumers said they like working with ICON staff, and all indicated that ICON staff treat them with respect. Eighty-eight percent indicated that ICON staff are responsive (returning phone calls, arriving on time); the other 12% indicated that staff are responsive most of the time. All but one indicated that they are getting the support they need; the remaining person felt she could use more support.

Ninety-nine percent of those responding to the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's FY 2002 Consumer Survey indicated that they are satisfied with ICON's services.

Further detail on the responses to the FY '02 consumer surveys may be found in the *FY 2002 Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys* report (see p. 5 for information on obtaining this document).

29. How many individual objectives were met on service plans, and what percentage is this of the whole?

The 37 consumers receiving active support at 6/30/02 had collectively achieved 159 of 293 objectives; this represents an overall achievement rate of 54%. Individual rates ranged from 29% to 100%.

30. To what extent have we helped people to expand their horizons? Consider the kinds of individual goals that have been chosen and the activities in which people are engaged.

Many of the people we served have been introduced to new activities over the course of the year, and several have found something that they really enjoy. Two men in particular, who have spent practically all their time in their homes for many years, have begun to go out and have found activities that they are choosing to engage in (though one still says “I need my days to rest”).

An individual who was mentioned in this space last year as having overcome a chaotic living situation and achieved enough stability at home to hold a job for the longest time ever has continued to learn and grow; he is making more and more of his own decisions and acting on them more independently.

The theme of helping others has been strong this year. One man has begun to participate in a support group and is beginning to help others in the group who share his situation. Another man who was recently diagnosed with diabetes has worked through the initial fear and uncertainty; he is keeping a journal about his experiences and has a strong desire to form a support group to help others who are living with the condition.

For all these people, a little extra support from ICON has meant that they have been able to take a big step toward becoming fully integrated members of their communities.

Life Skills Training Program

ICON's Life Skills Training program entered its fourth year in FY '02. We continue to find that there is a good deal of confusion among funding agencies over just what this program is and how it may be used. Eighteen people received Life Skills services in FY '02, twice as many as in FY '01. However, of the 18, only two were survivors of brain injury funded by the Department of Rehabilitative Services, toward whom the service was initially directed. Fourteen (78%) were receiving services under a grant to provide intensive services to women receiving TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) funds. Twelve of these have spent less than four months in the program; four dropped out after less than two months.

As a result, we still have few statistics to gauge its effectiveness. In concept, each person receiving this service has the same major goal: to develop personal strategies to overcome the effects of their disability which impact their ability to get or maintain a job. Thus a primary measure of the program's success will be the number of people who go on from the program to get and keep the job of their choice or are able to maintain their present employment. We will continue to track this and other measures, as well as initiating an education program with funders in the coming year.

Organizational Management

The desired outcome here is that ICON maintain an organizational structure that supports its mission and ensures its financial viability.

31. Do the organizational structure, accomplishments, and strategies support the mission of the organization?

Our core mission is to promote the integration of people with disabilities into the life of the community. That goal is a primary factor in every decision we make.

As ICON matures, we continue to refine our organizational structure to ensure that high-quality services are delivered in the most cost-effective manner possible. We continue to believe that a very flat structure is best as it tends to keep those with the most experience and most highly-developed skills closest to the consumer. We also have attempted to keep overhead to a minimum so that we can maximize the salaries of direct service staff and as a result attract and keep quality staff.

32. What are the characteristics of the governing body?

ICON's by-laws call for a Board of Directors of between five and fifteen "civic minded individuals who have an interest and/or capacity in the field of disabilities and/or business expertise and experience." During most of FY '02, ICON's Board was made up of ten members, four from the disability community, two from the business community, and four who have both disability and business connections. At the end of the year, two members resigned, citing the pressures of other commitments. A new member was elected in July of 2002, bringing the total number to nine as we begin FY '03.

33. What have been the primary activities of the Board in FY '02?

At its retreat in June of 2001, the Board decided to establish a service fund to enable ICON to serve individuals who have been denied funding and/or to provide service in ways that are not 'approved models'. Much of the Board's efforts in FY '02 went to fundraising activities; a total of \$6,221 was raised over the course of the year for this fund. Board members also met in Richmond in January to visit with our elected representatives and raise their consciousness about the barriers to service for Virginia's citizens with disabilities.

34. What is the relationship with public funders?

Based on the results of a survey conducted in July, 2002, our relationship with our funders is not as good as in previous years. Only 56% of the funders who responded to our survey indicate that they are satisfied at least "most of the time",

as compared with 94% in FY '01. The structure of our funder survey was modified slightly in FY '02, which may account for a portion of this. Overall comments indicated that funders value us for our individualized approach and the dedication of our staff. They fault us primarily for insufficient communication and the quality of our paperwork. More detail on the survey may be found in *FY 2002 Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys* (see p. 5 for information on obtaining this document).

35. What are the characteristics of ICON's staff?

At 6/30/02 ICON had a total of 42 staff persons, 30 full-time and 12 part-time; all but one of the part-time staff are Community Living Specialists. Length of employment ranges from over 14 years to less than two months; the average is 3.5 years. More than 40% of staff (and 50% of full-time staff) hold a college degree.

36. How are opportunities for staff job enhancement and advancement promoted by the organization?

ICON believes strongly in enhancing the skills and the horizons of staff. While this has been difficult in recent years due to financial constraints, the easing of these constraints in the last two years has meant that more staff have had the opportunity to attend training and conferences.

In FY '02, none of our staff took advantage of our limited tuition reimbursement program for job-related courses. We were able to help two individuals to expand their computer literacy through our no-interest loan program for the purchase of computer equipment, and we were able to provide two of our staff with refurbished computers from among those donated to ICON by local businesses and individuals.

In FY '01, we implemented a training plan for new employment services staff which we have discussed for several years. This training consumes the better part of the employee's first month on the job and includes formal seminars and workshops offered by both ICON and the Fairfax-Falls Church CSB; informal one-on-one training and orientation with an experienced 'mentor'; and opportunities to meet many of the people ICON supports and learn from them many different approaches to community-based employment support. A training manual was developed by some of ICON's most senior employment staff. This manual is an evolving document which will be added to over time; the content has been made available to all staff on an ongoing basis through our internal website. Losing 11 staff members after less than a year of employment (as detailed below) is very expensive for us given the amount of time we have dedicated to initial training, but we continue to believe that it is essential to ensure that we can deliver high-quality services to our consumers.

The internal website received a major overhaul in FY '02. The staff website provides a source of information and education for staff who are rarely in the office but can connect online. New in FY '02 are web-based email for staff and secure

access to our employment services database and company rolodex. We also maintain a number of electronic mailing lists for information sharing between staff members.

37. Are staff satisfied with job roles, opportunities, and input into the strategies of the organization?

Comments on the occasion of performance reviews and exit interviews indicate that staff are very satisfied with their position in the ICON team. Nearly all feel that they have a voice in shaping the organization and appreciate the autonomy they experience in the workplace.

38. How do ICON staff rate the management staff?

Because of our office move and other considerations, ICON has not conducted a survey of staff assessments of the management team since May, 2001. We are planning to conduct this survey in September, 2002. The *FY 2002 Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys* report will be updated to include the results of that survey. In the last survey, staff rated each of the five members of the management team on a list of 23 measures of effectiveness, management practices, and leadership. Overall average ratings were 4.26 out of 5. Management staff on average scored 4 or higher on all but one question: the one about returning phone calls in a timely manner (two of the management team barely reached 50% on this one, and made improvement in this area a major personal goal). Average individual rankings ranged from 3.83 to 4.60.

39. What has been the effect of funding cuts and the general economic situation on ICON's ability to attract and retain qualified staff?

Funding cuts and restrictions have made it impossible for regional service providers to compete with the salaries being offered by state and local governments and school districts. Many who choose to leave ICON do so to accept positions offering significantly higher salaries, especially in the public schools, which offer salaries that are 66-75% higher with summers off and substantially better benefits. DRS too lures staff away with higher salaries and richer benefit plans which include tuition assistance. Several ICON staff either 'moonlight' part time with other service providers or are 'moonlighting' with ICON in order to pay their bills.

ICON experienced a turnover rate of 36% in FY '02 – 15 staff resigned or were terminated, eleven of them after less than a year of employment. According to exit interviews, the primary reason for loss of staff has been financial. Of the eleven people who resigned by choice, eight cited pay as the primary reason for their decision.

ICON has been very involved with the local Employment Services Organization coalition, the local Alliance of Residential Providers and vaACCSES to address the

issue of funding and low wages for direct service staff. ICON has provided data for three regional staffing surveys to help identify and document the degree to which staffing shortages are affecting our agencies and our ability to provide quality services. The results of these surveys show that ICON's direct service staff wages are among the highest in the region, and management and administrative staff wages are among the lowest, a statistic we find gratifying.

40. What are the outcomes of our financial analysis?

We have not yet received our independent audit for FY '02 but the unaudited financial statement at 6/30/02 shows a year-end excess of \$3,615 on revenues of \$1.6 million.

Fig. 11 -- Fund Balance and Annual Excess (Loss)

FY	Fund Balance	Excess (Loss)
86	10,021	9,680
87	20,889	10,868
88	30,192	9,303
89	80,228	50,037
90	84,582	4,354
91	195,256	110,674
92	209,682	14,426
93	243,918	34,236
94	220,416	(23,502)
95	209,003	(21,860)
96	192,221	(16,782)
97	183,653	(8,568)
98	268,306	10,819
99	324,450	52,537
00	325,792	6,406
01	326,327	2,710
02	327,982	3,615

