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During my semester at ODU in the HMSV 440W Program Development I have found myself challenged with a lot of things, but I also learned quite a lot. I learned how to do evaluations and why you should conduct it on programs. I never really thought about how programs reflect, learn, and improved outside of feedback. An effective evaluation can depend on so many things surprisingly but importantly on the stakeholder’s willingness to cooperate. It was interesting to hear the client’s firsthand opinions and to hear the founder of LifeWorks BHS when doing my evaluation interviews. I also found it challenging to make sure to ask the right questions of the stakeholders and the interview questions. The feedback I got on our discussion board as the most important and main question needed answering being “Is LifeWorks BHS effective in supporting, educating, and helping recovery and relapses of those with Substance USE Disorder’s?”. I also found it challenging to do the assignment in another city being most of the human services agencies weren’t in Cleveland and my transportation was limited luckily, I found this new upcoming agency.

I feel I have learned something I will need to know in my future as a human service professional whether I am conducting the evaluation, or it is being conducted on me. I found the research into articles difficult. The article more related to my topic is “Peer Recovery Support for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders: Assessing the Evidence” by Braude Reif and Dougherty Lyman. The article gave detailed information on the effects and roles of peer to peer recovery support in groups such as with AA, NA, etc. I feel I can successfully conduct a program evaluation and understand better and know how to research for evaluations and the role of research in an evaluation. I understand the use of an evaluation in that if can help agencies and stakeholders see if a program is necessary and if it is doing its purpose and ways to improve it. I recognize the components of an evaluation being research methods, agency description, understanding population, stakeholders, and research. I now understand the similarities and the differences in the evaluator’s role and stakeholder’s role in the evaluation process, implementing the changes, recognizing who are stakeholders, and how to utilize them in the evaluation process. I also better understand mind role as the evaluator and a human service professional. Task 2, 5, and 8 where the most eye opening to me.

With the research plan having to find weak points, so to speak, in a program and then bring it up to the stakeholders and basically tell them their program was flawed, how, and suggest ways to fix it was very nerve wreaking but I know it is something I need to get used to it due to it being a part of the career field. I think my learning was implemented the most in my recommendations with task 8 and how I think it will positively and negatively affect the program. I think I was most successful in my findings portion and finding the right questions to be asked to get the ball rolling and being assertive with myself when putting myself in an agencies “business”. With me planning on going into mental health social working being able to evaluate my work and the work of my program and to better improve what we do I see it being useful and beneficial to everyone and would give me ore to offer my agency. It has already made me look more and think more into my own job with ways to improve my job as a bartender by interviewing and getting input into improving the bar and our parties and drink and food specials. I can apply evaluations into everything and if I start a business or put into a position to implicate change, I will definably be using what I learned in the course. I do think I was confused a lot during the course and was lost but I got the overall concept of the course which I can use.

References

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