**Task 1: Agency Selection**

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**Description of the Agency Chosen**

 To start off the first task on the long road to developing an evaluation plan, the agency that was chosen to be assessed is a mental health and family services provider called Intercept Health, or Intercept Youth Services. Before it became what it is today, the agency was founded in 1996 as a group home service. Now, an incredibly wide range of care is available at their multitude of facilities or outpatient help. This includes just about everything human services have to offer: crisis intervention, foster care, community homes, independent living, addiction and recovery treatment, mental health counseling, assessment and diagnostic programs, and education on parenting skills. After briefly contacting them through email, permission has been granted for there to be a future evaluation on the agency at a later, non-specified date by both a talent acquisition and integration manager as well as a supervisor from Intercept Health.

**The Agency’s Purpose and Mission**

 According to their website, Intercept Health’s purpose is to “help people grow and live their healthiest lives” through their services (*Mental health and family services: Virginia*). Already, this sentiment seems prevalent due to the wealth of resources they provide to their clients, all of which is easily accessible and quick to find on the website’s homepage. As for the agency’s mission, they state a desire to reach the most people possible while delivering their best efforts (*Mental health and family services: Virginia*). Going by the number of offices they have within the state of Virginia and how easy it was to find this agency to conduct an evaluation on, their ability to reach the masses is probably working out well for the agency’s objectives. Overall, it looks like their mission and purpose run hand in hand; by offering clients the best possible care, they will hopefully achieve in giving those in need the chance to live life to the fullest.

**The Population Served by the Agency**

 Intercept Health is an agency that serves clients of all ages and walks of life throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Certain programs may be more suited for specific age groups, but there is always something available at a range from toddler to adulthood. For instance, there is a program for applied behavior analysis catered towards the ages two to five in helping them reduce behaviors that disrupt their ability to communicate and learn, while there are programs for adults who require guidance in parenting in biological or foster families. However, when looking into this agency, Intercept Youth Services gave an initial impression of being targeted towards at-risk youths; this idea was further encouraged by its inclusion of community homes, independent living, and foster care services. It is clear now that their help extends further than youths.

**Geographical Location of the Agency**

 There are a total of 12 office locations throughout Virginia, Intercept Health’s main branch residing in Richmond. When searching for potential agencies to evaluate, it was with the condition that the office would be within a drive shorter than 20 minutes; this led to the location in Chesapeake on Volvo Parkway. Though not viewed in person, the office appears to be near a fairly well-populated neighborhood in Greenbrier based on what is shown using Google maps. Another great way to be more accessible to the public is by placing the services at walking distance to its future clients. The first point of contact was from the Richmond office, but quick communication introduced connections at the Chesapeake site as well. The evaluation plan will most likely be conducted on the closer of the two offices only. However, if further research at other facilities proves useful or more insightful for the evaluation, then considerations will be made. Furthermore, this would only be acted upon if the assignment allows for it.

**Reasons Behind Choosing This Agency**

 As stated previously, I believed that Intercept Health was a human services agency that served at-risk youth, which was not helped by their other name, Intercept Youth Services. I found this site by using Old Dominion University’s list of potential internship sites for the human services program. Although I have not made concrete plans yet, my goal at the moment is to become an art therapist; I figure that this occupation most likely gets a lot of children as clients, some of which could be at-risk youths. This population would certainly benefit from art therapy because children often struggle to put their emotions into words. I wanted to see how an agency caters to the needs of at-risk youths. Another reason why I chose this agency is because I wanted to know what services were available near me in Chesapeake. Having an awareness of the agencies around me would be advantageous for future clients, because I would be able to give an abundance of options and they can choose what they feel is best for themselves. One of the human services practitioner’s jobs is to keep the client informed of what is available to them as much as possible because they deserve to make choices based on a full scope of knowledge.

**References**

*Mental health and family services: Virginia*. Intercept Health. (n.d.).

<https://www.intercepthealth.com/>