Task 5: Research Plan

Jade Bayless

Old Dominion University

HMSV 440W: Program Development, Implementation, and Funding

Dr. Silverberg

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Research Plan

**Role**: Evaluator

**Audience**: Stakeholders

**Format**: APA Formatted Paper

**Task**: Develop a research plan

**Stakeholders**

I am choosing to evaluate is the Behavioral Health Group, which is a substance abuse treatment center located in Newport News, VA. This group focuses on treating opioid use disorder patients by way of providing medicated-assisted treatment to patients suffering addiction. “Medication-assisted treatment, also known as MAT, is used to treat substance use disorders as well as sustain recovery and prevent overdose” (SAMHSA, 2022).

I have chosen this agency because as a human service major, I have taken various courses on substance abuse and substance use, and I have taken a particular interest in the treatment of opioid use disorder treatment through medicated assister treatment programs. This agency specifically, aids in providing medicated-assisted treatment which holds some benefits to sobriety in clients, the agency, and the community in which they service, the stakeholders of the agency. The stakeholders of this particular agency include the community, counselors, nurses, clinical supervisors, the physicians, and most important the patients. For the purpose of my evaluation, the stakeholders I will be relying on is a supervisor counselor, a clinician in the clinic, and the supervisor of the clinic. Due to HIPAA and patient protected health information, I am unable to speak directly with patients of the clinic, however, the supervisor counselor has advised me of statistics they will be able to share, that does not include patients personal information. It is important to identify the stakeholders of this evaluation as these individuals and groups will benefit the most or suffer the most as a result and at the conclusion of this evaluation.

  I believe my evaluation can benefit the agency because this evaluation can shed some light on whether there is a more effective way of treating opioid use disorder patients or the evaluation can determine if this is the most effective way of treating opioid use disorder patients. Many times, organizations may not be able to see if they have defects in their programs and if they work effectively so I believe program evaluations can benefit agencies such as Behavioral Health Group, BGH.

**Type of Evaluation**

“Evaluation provides a systematic method to study a program, practice, intervention, or initiative to understand how well it achieves its goals. Evaluations help determine what works well and what could be improved in a program or initiative” (Rural Health Information Hub., 2002-2022). There are several ways to evaluate an agency. Specifically, there are three main types of evaluation used throughout agencies: summative evaluation, formative evaluation, and diagnostic evaluations.

Summative evaluations are evaluations conducted at the end of a training or a program. These evaluations assess the knowledge, proficiency, and performance of agencies and those involved or directly impacted. These evaluations compare what those involved know with what they should have learned. Formative evaluations involve processes designed to identify potential and actual influences the agency or program has. These evaluations determine the process of the agency and searches for the effectiveness of the implementation efforts. Diagnostic evaluations simply determine the difficulties while assessing the problem accurately.

After conducting further research, I believe the type of evaluation that is the most beneficial to the agency that I have chosen to evaluate is a formative evaluation. The Behavioral Health Group is an established treatment facility that focuses on the health, safety, and sobriety of their patients while providing medicated assisted treatment plans. This facility offers medication in the form of methadone or suboxone, a narcotic, to opioid use disorder patients to assist them in their quest to sobriety. A formative evaluation is beneficial to this agency as this will allow stakeholders to identify potential influences and to determine if this treatment is in fact effective to those who suffer from opioid use disorder.

**Two Evaluation Questions**

* Are the outcomes of the program beneficial?
  + Behavioral Health Group is a treatment facility that focuses on medicated assisted treatment for patients who suffer from opioid use disorder. While evaluating this group, it is beneficial to determine if medicated assisted treatment in fact leads to more sobriety in patients who suffer from opioid use disorder, than patient who do not participate in medicated assisted treatment. By learning the outcome of these cases, and evaluating the agency’s success cases, it can be determined if this treatment facility is effective.
* What is the agency’s social and economic impacts?
  + Medicated treatment facilities specialize in offering medication as a form of rehabilitation. However, is this beneficial to the community in which these facilities are located and what impact do they have on social status of these areas. Are these programs an economic hardship or is enough funding provided for these facilities that they do not pull from other local resources? By conducting a formative evaluation, these questions should be answered to determine the effectiveness of the programs and agency.

**Type of Evaluation Selected Aligned with Questions**

The type of evaluation I have selected for the Behavioral Health Group is a formative evaluation. A formative evaluation includes a series of formal and informal assessment procedures to modify or improve practices and services offered to a community, individual, or group. A formative evaluation would be best used to identify the questions of impact and benefit because a series of assessments and interview can determine the effectiveness of the treatment. For example, interviewing a patient or a clinical supervisor could provide information about the effectiveness of treatment to determine what should be revise, canceled, added, or adjusted. Data and information will be collected and at the conclusion of the formative evaluation, it will be determined what should be kept the same and what should be changed, if anything.

**Data Collection Methods**

Data collection is a process of gathering and measuring information, in an established systematic order, to use for decision-making, research, planning, and other purposes. Data can be collected by way of observing, experimenting, and simulation. This is partially how I plan on collecting data for the purposes of the evaluation I will conduct on my agency. My plan is to first observe the staff throughout the first portion of the day, and then I will interview the stakeholders chosen for the purpose of this evaluation, and lastly, I plan on observing again. I want the stakeholders to feel comfortable and know their interviews will be confidential, therefore they can be completely open and honest when sharing with me. Data can also be collected by surveys, transactional tracking interviews, focus groups, online tracking, forums, monitoring and more. Collecting data can include the use of human subjects, or it can involve reviewing existing documents to gather existing information.

**Research Method**

“As qualitative and quantitative studies collect different data, their data collection methods differ considerably. Quantitative studies rely on numerical or measurable data. In contrast, qualitative studies rely on personal accounts or documents that illustrate in detail how people think or respond within society” (Hoover, 2021). For the purposes of this evaluation for the Behavioral Health Group, the best method of collecting data and research is by qualitative and quantitative measure. Although, numerical and measurable data is important, as I am hoping to gain insight on the effectiveness of the program, personal accounts and logical thoughts are equally important. In fact, I believe I may receive better and more accurate results with qualitative studies as parts of this evaluation relies on stakeholders’ beliefs of the effectiveness of this program and the good or bad it does for opioid use disorder patients and the community. To avoid collecting confidential information, I plan on asking situational based questions that may pertain to the group and agency as a whole and not one individual client or clients.

**Why This Research Method Works Best**

Interviewing is a process in which individuals, usually two people, exchange information. Observation is the process of acquiring information from someone or something typically by only sight and experiencing. While evaluating the Behavioral Health Group, these two methods will work the best as this will give understanding to the process, outcomes, and benefits of a facility that specializes in medicated assisted treatment facilities. Sources of collecting data for the evaluation of the agency included the stakeholders of the agency. Stakeholders provide the most adequate and useful information, as these are the individuals or groups who are most directly involved and benefit the most from the evaluation, such as the patients, the clinical supervisors, the nurses, the physicians, and the members of the community. It is important to gain multiple perspectives to understand the negative influences as well as the positive influences that a medicated assisted treatment facility has on all that is involved.

# **References**

Hoover, L. (2021, June 1). *Grand Canyon University*. Retrieved from Qualitative vs. Quantitative Data Collection: https://www.gcu.edu/blog/doctoral-journey/what-qualitative-vs-quantitative-study#:~:text=As%20qualitative%20and%20quantitative%20studies,think%20or%20respond%20within%20society.

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