TASK 5: RESEARCH PLAN

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The stakeholders in my study are, directly, the staff members of the Opportunities Unlimited program at Colonial Behavioral Health I have chosen to conduct the evaluation. Indirectly, the stakeholders in my study are the program participants of Opportunities Unlimited, their families, the community, and the collaborative medical practices the participants are involved in. When looking even deeper into the stakeholders, I could include the insurances companies that program participants utilize to pay for their services at Opportunities Unlimited, the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the neighboring Community Service Boards.

My evaluation questions are as followed: “What are the two most successful aspects of your program that provide to the client’s overall growth and development within the program? Which area in your program could be improved to further impact the clients/program participants? What additional program(s) could benefit those currently participating in the Opportunities Unlimited program?” I originally planned to complete a Process Evaluation; however, when finalizing my questions, I have decided to conduct an Improvement-Focused Evaluation as I feel it is more appropriate when relating it to my evaluation questions. My questions aim to receive data from the staff members of Colonial Behavioral Health who work in the Opportunities Unlimited program. Opportunities Unlimited is a day support program for individuals with developmental disabilities who focus on two areas: Community Engagement and Group Day Services. A Improvement-Focused Evaluation allows me to take the response from staff and report them as areas of improvement for the program. I am most interested on the result of my first question. The reason I am asking the staff what they feel is most successful is because most evaluations look only at what is suffering- I thought to go a different route and look at what is excelling, so that Colonial Behavioral Health can use that information to excel even more. To still have data on areas that are not excelling, I am asking in my second question areas of improvement so that staff can feel empowered to provide information of where they feel that the program may be suffering or need more support. With the Improvement-Focused Evaluation, I will be able to report on what is excelling, and how it could excel more, and what is suffering, and how it could be improved to excel.

I had the privilege of meeting with the Director of Rehabilitative Services at Colonial Behavioral Health, as she oversees the leadership team of the Opportunities Unlimited program, and the Coordinator of the Opportunities Unlimited program, where the data collection method that seemed most feasible, after conversation, was a survey questionnaire with both multiple choice answers and written responses. The survey questionnaire will be presented online via SurveyMonkey, so that it is accessible to the staff as all staff at Colonial Behavioral Health regularly use a laptop or computer.

The research method I will be using is survey questionnaires. I will be presenting my survey questionnaire via SurveyMonkey by sending out a link through email to the appropriate stakeholders. This research method works best as it will allow the stakeholders to have accessibility to provide complete and honest responses. The survey will remain anonymous so stakeholders will not have to worry about repercussions if their responses do not favor the agency/program.