

Dear:

The Regional Research Institute for Human Services at Portland State University and the University of Massachusetts Medical School are partnering to conduct a research project in Clark County, Washington. Your agency has been identified as one that may provide services that can include individuals aged 14-25 who have serious mental health conditions and have been served by the Regional Services Network (RSN) as adolescents.

We would like to interview an administrator from every such program in Clark County. We refer to this group of services and supports as the Clark County transition system. The purpose of the study is to describe the changes in the transition system and the interconnectedness of the organizations it contains as a result of the Options Project which was designed to enhance the system. We will ask the administrators questions about the degree to which their organization shares referrals and information with other organizations in the network, their evaluation of the quality of the program and the system, and the degree to which the program's and system's practices are consistent with current guidelines for serving this population as they transition into adulthood. The data collection has two parts: response to an on-line survey which takes about 20 minutes and a face to face interview which takes less than an hour. We would like to interview an administrator who is familiar both with the workings of your program/agency and with its relationship to other program/agencies in Clark County. That administrator will be answering the questions as a representative of your program/agency. The name of each agency or program that participates will appear in the report. Individuals who provide data will be given the option to have their names included in an Appendix. Even if they choose not to have their name listed, it may be possible for some readers to guess who from your agency was interviewed. Participation in these interviews is voluntary.

The end product of this series of interviews is called a network analysis, which will describe changes in the strength and direction of the relationships between all of the relevant agencies in the Clark County area. This information will be used to help the RSN and the Clark County Department of Community Services continue to improve services for youth with serious emotional disturbance as they mature from ages 14 to 25. Results of the study will also be made available to your agency/program.

Lastly, the network analysis will add to the knowledge base about system reform for youth with serious emotional disturbance in transition to adulthood. I (or other staff from the Regional Research Institute at Portland State University) will be contacting you shortly to find out who should complete this face-to-face interview and to make an appointment. The person nominated for the interview will receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card, whether or not he/she chooses to participate. If at any time you have questions please feel free to contact the principal investigators of this project; Nancy Koroloff, Ph.D., at PSU (503) 725-4157 or Maryann Davis, Ph.D. (508) 856-8718, at the University of Massachusetts. If you have questions or concerns about the conduct of this research, you may contact the Compliance Officer at the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, Portland State University, 1-877-480-4400. We thank you in advance for helping us with this important project.

Sincerely,

Nancy Koroloff
Portland State University

Maryann Davis
University of Massachusetts