

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Developmental Services  
Research Review Committee Meeting Minutes  
Date: April 7, 2023**

**By Teams:** Erin Brown (Chairperson), Kathleen Gallagher, Joshua Greenberg, Janet George, Patricia Shook, Joseph Weru, Deborah Dreyfus, Rosalie Edes, and Freddy Torbey (observer/minutes)

Additional Attendees:

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**Agenda Items**

1. Administrative matters.
2. “Treatment of Countercontrol Behaviors in a Residential Setting,”  
Dr. John O’Neill & Mr. Joseph Tacosik
3. “Psychotropic Medication Reduction and Applied Behavior Analysis,”  
Drs. John O’Neill, Dawn O’Neill, & Nathan Blenkush
4. “Effectiveness of Interventions to Improve Resiliency & Burnout in Behavioral Health Residential Staff,”  
Drs. Stephen J. Bartels & Giselle K. Perez

**HOUSEKEEPING**

- ☐ Chair established quorum.
- ☐ Chair discussed retirements and new additions, welcoming Dr. Dreyfus from UMass to the Committee.
- ☐ Chair summarized requirements for approval of research proposals pursuant to 115 CMR 10.08.

**Review and Vote on June 3, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Outcome

- ☐ Chair moved for a vote and a majority of Committee members agreed to adopt the June 3, 2022, meeting minutes (previously absent RRC member abstained).

**“Treatment of Countercontrol Behaviors in a Residential Setting,”  
Dr. John O’Neill & Mr. Joseph Tacosik**

Discussion

- ☐ RRC discussed the purpose of the research and application
- ☐ RRC discussed necessity of obtaining consent for use of historical records
- ☐ RRC discussed “historical records,” as defined by regulations, and its applicability to this proposal, and when the forms were completed and how
- ☐ RRC discussed small “N”

### Issues

- ☐ Unclear definition of “historical records”
- ☐ Unclear what timeframe of records the researchers are specifically seeking to use
- ☐ Small “N” impact on privacy and de-identification; small “N” identification in context of ranges of behaviors may be identifying information regardless of the anonymity of participants
- ☐ Consent form presented does not include statement of voluntariness and/or that opting out will not result in lack of service provision
- ☐ Whether this project is an administrative records review or new research
- ☐ Change of status for participants from minor to adult, and requirements for updated consent for those who were minors at the time but are no longer (in context of “historical record” review)

### Outcome

- ☐ Chair moved, and RRC members unanimously agreed, to defer discussion pending receipt of additional information

## **“Psychotropic Medication Reduction and Applied Behavior Analysis,” Drs. John O’Neill, Dawn O’Neill, & Nathan Blenkush**

### Discussion

- ☐ RRC discussed the purpose of the research and application
- ☐ RRC identified consent issues arising from records review
- ☐ RRC discussed hypothesis vis a vis N of 1000

### Issues

- ☐ Whether proposal meets criteria for abbreviated consent procedures vis a vis “archival records”, “historical records” and “existing records”
- ☐ Use of “archival records” terminology, unclear differentiation with “historical records”
- ☐ What purpose the inclusion of 1,000 participants serves; what is, concretely, the hypothesis being researched for large N
- ☐ Proposal appears intended to collect as much data as possible in order to then subsequently determine what the research will be given the range of ages and large N

### Outcome

- ☐ Chair moved, and RRC members unanimously agreed, to defer discussion pending receipt of additional information

## **APPROVED RESEARCH**

None

## **NON-APPROVED RESEARCH**

None

## **CLOSING MATTERS**

The next meeting, including discussion of the third research proposal, is scheduled for Friday, May 5, 2023.