**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Department of Developmental Services**

**Research Review Committee Meeting Minutes**

Date: January 5, 2024

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

Additional Attendees: Sofia Langman

**Agenda Items**

1. Administrative matters.
2. Modification Request for“Understanding accessibility barriers in virtual reality (VR) environments for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,”Krishna Venkatasubramanian, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Statistics, University of Rhode Island
3. “Assent in Applied Behavior Analysis: A Proposed Assessment Tool,” John O’Neill, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA Director of Research, Judge Rotenberg Educational Center (JRC)

## HOUSEKEEPING

* Chair established quorum
* Chair discussed quorum and noted the participation of Patricia Shook by audio only
* Chair summarized requirements for approval of research proposals pursuant to 115 CMR 10.08
* Chair presented proposals for discussion

### Review and Vote on December 1, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Outcome

* Chair moved for a vote and Committee members agreed to adopt the December 1, 2023, meeting minutes (Kathleen Gallagher abstained due to absence)

**“Technology Innovation in Adult Service Programs for Individuals with IDD: A Feasibility Study”**, Sarah Weddle, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Divisional Director of Clinical Services and Training, Adult Services Division, May Institute

Discussion

* RRC lauded proposal for innovative nature and applicability of proposed research to DDS’ existing practices and efforts
* RRC discussed proposed hypothesis and research intention
* RRC discussed that Department’s cooperation with researchers and provision of financial resources ties the Department to this research to a level unseen in other proposals submitted to RRC, and would require DDS to pay significant attention to results and processes

Issues

* Proposal requires further clarification regarding privacy rules, data retention, and data deidentification to ensure it is meeting most rigorous standards possible
* Proposal requires independent and individual consent forms for the subgroup of individuals participating in research, and clarifying that refusal to participate does not affect services provided
* Proposal does not present an explanation or example of the explanatory materials they intend to provide to individuals and guardians invited to participate in the study
* Proposal collects protected health information without clarifying hypotheses, and with no justification for the breadth of data collected, nor does it describe the methodology required to maintain confidentiality

Outcome

* Chair moved, and RRC members agreed, to defer proposed study pending additional clarification regarding issues noted by RRC

### APPROVED RESEARCH

None

**DEFFERRED RESEARCH**

**“Technology Innovation in Adult Service Programs for Individuals with IDD: A Feasibility Study”**, Sarah Weddle, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Divisional Director of Clinical Services and Training, Adult Services Division, May Institute

### NON-APPROVED RESEARCH

None

### CLOSING MATTERS

The Committee did not discuss proposal**,** “Understanding accessibility barriers in virtual reality (VR) environments for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.” The next meeting, including discussion of said research proposal, is scheduled for February 2, 2024.