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Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) Evaluation Project

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BACKGROUND: Background: This project began in 1998 to evaluate the effectiveness of PCWCP in training future Cabinet workers.

Purpose: Data is collected for the purpose of determining the training effectiveness of the PCWCP program, retention rates of the program, and to solicit feedback from graduates concerning ways to improve the program. This data aids in continuous quality improvement efforts.

Goals: To provide consistent and reliable statistical data to the Cabinet so that it can monitor the effectiveness of the PCWCP program and base program decisions on evidence of efficacy.

Research: Data is tracked longitudinally and graduate cohort opinions and recommendations are compared across time to insure that the PCWCP program is consistently meeting its goals. Personality measures are also utilized which may serve the Cabinet and other state agencies in future employee selection.

Research Questions: Is the PCWCP program adequately preparing graduates to meet the demands of a position with the Cabinet? How satisfied are the graduates with their level of preparedness? How satisfied are supervisors with graduate level of preparedness? What factors may contribute to employee retention rates and job satisfaction? Is the PCWCP program consistent in its preparation of graduates over time

METHODOLOGY:

- Questionnaire given to PCWCP graduates six months after their date of hire with the Cabinet;
- Questionnaire given to the supervisors of these graduates at six months;
- Follow up questionnaire is given to PCWCP graduates two years after their date of hire;
- Data is collected and analyzed to determine satisfaction with the program, preparedness for the job, and how other variables such as personality and overall job satisfaction impact on these variables.

KEY FINDINGS:

- As of December 15th, 2004, there were 309 graduates of the PCWCP program; of those: 282 have been out of school for six months or more and 264 have been placed in employment with the cabinet. This equates to a placement rate of 93.6%.
- Of the 264 graduates who have been working on the job for at least 6 months, 35 are no longer with CHFS. This equates to a retention rate of 86.7%.
- There are 178 PCWCP graduates who have been out of the program for two years or longer, of those, ??? are still with the cabinet. This retention rate of 86% is significantly higher the 54% retention rate of those workers who did not participate in the PCWCP program.
- Overall program satisfaction and feelings of preparedness remain high: Urban recommend PCWCP more highly than rural; no change in satisfaction over time (comparison of cohorts); there is a slight decline in program satisfaction and feelings of preparedness between 6 months and 2 year surveys, (this may be a “honeymoon” effect—After 2 years, they are more realistic about the demands of the job).
- Differences by job position. Clinicians think of leaving the field more often than other workers (they may have more options in clinical practice). Front line workers (FSW II) have more work stress than others
- PCWCP social support is a significant predictor of preparedness and program satisfaction.

USEFULNESS TO CABINET:

- This project is designed to monitor the effectiveness of PCWCP.
- It is an outcome project that can readily be modified and applied to any training program that the Cabinet may wish to longitudinally analyze for effectiveness.
- This research may be expanded and modified to assist the Cabinet to improve: personnel selection, training, training evaluation, job performance, personnel retention, and tracking of outcomes.