

To: Dr. Erika Paterson

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Subject: Proposal for Improving Data Collection Accuracy at Fairview Behaviour Consulting Inc.

Introduction

Fairview Behaviour Consulting Inc. is an incorporation that supports clients diagnosed with Autism. Ms. Pun is the directing behaviour consultant and she designs programs and goals for each client to correct their unexpected behaviours. She employs behaviour interventionists to support clients on a day-to-day basis and each client typically have a team 2-3 behaviour interventionists supervised by a behaviour consultant. Behaviour interventionists receives training and program checklists from a behaviour consultant and runs corresponding programs on clients and records data after every session. Programs will be adjusted when the behaviour consultant reads data showing mastery on some of the programs. Without accurate data collection, behaviour consultants would have inaccurate judgements for programs to alter and sessions would be less efficient.

Statement of Problem

An issue I have noticed is that data collection is not very accurate. This is because a child often has 2-3 behaviour interventionists and each interventionist may have slightly different judgements and some are unsure of how to run a specific program. As sessions are run individually, it becomes an issue when the whole team gathers for a meeting (which usually happens monthly) and notices that there is consistent successes with one interventionist and consistent incorrect trials with another interventionist. This affects the behaviour consultant as it leads to inaccurate judgements on whether programs need to be altered or not. Furthermore, clients would receive inconsistent requirements which also increases the time it takes to correct unexpected behaviour. Specifically, inaccurate data collection affects Ms. Pun because situations of creating programs that are too difficult or too easy have occurred before and parents have subsequently complained. Therefore, in order to mitigate parents' complaints, solutions are needed to improve data collection accuracy.

Proposed Solution

To improve data collection, it would be useful to have program information available prior session. Currently, information is exchanged offline and program information is only within a binder that remains in the client's house. Therefore, my proposed solution would be to have an online folder to store program information, instructions and an online daily log. Understanding the importance of confidentiality, I propose the online folders to be secured with passcodes only shared with the parents, behaviour interventionists and the behaviour consultant. With an online folder, behaviour consultants could revise each session data whenever needed and interventionists that were unable to join a team meeting could still learn of the updated program instructions prior arriving to the session. Furthermore, difficulties that interventionists experienced could be reviewed and feedback could be given immediately. In addition, I propose for interventionists to film each program once per month and share it with the behaviour consultant. In consideration to confidentiality, filming would only be conducted with the consent of the clients' parents. By doing so, the consultant could ensure that the program is run correctly and the standards are being maintained amongst the team. Another proposed solution would be to increase team meetings to bi-weekly. Currently, meetings are scheduled every month or every other month. However, this becomes an issue as it would be at least a month long until programs are revised and for consultants to notice inconsistent data trials. With information being available online, programs filmed and more frequent meetings, data collection errors could be identified earlier. This means consultants would be able to adjust varying presentations and standards of programs and sessions would be more efficient and beneficial for clients

Scope

To reach my proposed solution, I will use these questions to guide my progress:

- Are parents willing to have their children's information shared with their interventionists and consultant?
- What other factors contribute to inaccurate data collection? (such as difficulties in gathering data)
- What do behaviour interventionists think about losing freedom in choosing their intervention style?
- Is it manageable to have additional components (filming, daily logs and practice trials) added to the sessions?

Methods

In terms of data collection, I will be mainly conducting surveys and interviews. I will conduct surveys on parents and behaviour interventionists that I currently work with. In consideration to confidentiality, questions would not ask about specific programs or mention client names. Survey questions would focus on understanding the causes and impacts of differing data and to understand their viewpoints on my proposed solutions. These participants were chosen as I currently work with these clients therefore I have consent to view program checklists and program data. I will also conduct an interview with Ms. Pun in hopes to receive insights on causes and impacts as well as the possibility to implement these proposed solutions.

My Qualifications

I am currently a fourth year psychology student, therefore I have taken classes about conducting research and creating good questions for unbiased results. I have learned about various sampling methods and have had experience in using various sampling methods for research. Furthermore, I have been a behaviour interventionist with Ms. Pun for over a year so I am familiar with session structures and where to seek for resources needed for this report.

Conclusion

Without accurate data collection, it could affect a behaviour consultant's judgements on program alterations leading to a less efficient session. By addressing the five questions above, I shall have insight as to whether my proposed solution would be a plausible change. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.