

# The Common Protocol: An Overview

The CMHS Employment Intervention Demonstration Program Common Protocol was developed to elicit data for a multi-site study evaluating services designed to help persons with severe mental illness become gainfully employed. It consists of four major sections: the *Client Baseline Interview*; the *Client Six Month Interview*; the *Clinical Reporting Form*; and the *Employment Tracking Forms*. The *Baseline Interview* is completed with each client as he or she enters the study. The *Six Month Interview*, as its name suggests, is completed at six month intervals after the *Baseline Interview*. It assesses the occurrence of any changes in the areas evaluated at baseline as well as aspects relevant after the client receives services for a period of time. The *Clinical Reporting Form* collects diagnostic information and information on alcohol and drug use. This form is completed at the onset of the client's study participation, outside the interview setting. Data for this form is obtained only through case records and a clinician's assessment. The *Employment Tracking Forms* are completed weekly by the staff member most knowledgeable about the respondent's employment situation. These forms track employment starts, changes, and terminations. The following instructions for completing the four sections of the Common Protocol are detailed and explicit, so that they meet coding standards for research, evaluation, and reporting.

## **Section I: Client Level Baseline Assessment**

The Baseline Interview is the first instrument of the Common Protocol that study subjects will complete. At this point you should have had at least one or two previous meetings with the client in which you will have explained the purposes of the study, discussed what the client's participation will involve, responded to any questions, and obtained a signed consent form. *Before beginning, you must have completed these responsibilities.* Many items in this interview are of a personal nature and may seem intrusive to some participants. Taking this into account, it should be clear that developing a good rapport with the client is very important. Additionally, emphasizing the study's strict level of confidentiality will help some respondents feel more comfortable in sharing this information with you. You should tell the clients how long the interview will last and let them know that you will take breaks if necessary.

Make sure you write the client's ID number and the date at the top of every page of the interview. Each person participating in the research project will be assigned a unique research ID code. This number may or may not match the client's program ID. Make sure you provide the client's *study ID number*. If you do not know what this is, get it from the person in charge of the research project at your location. Additionally, on the first page of the Baseline Interview, you must indicate whether the respondent is in the Control condition, the Experimental 1 condition, or the Experimental 2 condition. Again, if you are unsure about the Intervention condition, check with the individual in charge of research.

Note that for almost every item in the Baseline Interview, the responses "don't know" and "refused" are offered as coding options. *These should be used for coding purposes only and should never be offered to a respondent as response categories. Nor should these categories ever appear on the 3x5 response cards used by the respondent throughout the interview.* (The only exception to this rule is for item # 6 in the Physical Health section. "Don't know" is part of this item's five point response scale. In this one situation, you may read "don't know" as a response option to the

respondent.) Use these codes as sparingly as possible. If a respondent isn't sure about a certain item, make sure you repeat the question and give him or her ample time and encouragement to respond. Do not use "don't know" or "refused" as a fall-back to make the interview easier or quicker. Circle these codes only when respondents absolutely refuse to provide the information or insist that they do not have an opinion.

### **Demographics**

The first section of the Baseline Interview consists of six simple demographic questions. Note that if respondents refuse to provide or do not know their birth date, you should code this as 99/99/99 or 88/88/88 respectively. Use this coding method throughout the Baseline Interview for *any* item requesting dates. With the exception of item number two, you *must ask* the respondent each of these questions. Make sure you circle only one response for each item. In regard to the client's gender, you may simply record your observation. Keep in mind though, that if you cannot easily identify the individual's gender, you either must ask this question or check the client's case file.

### **Residential**

Next you will find a section in which you will code the client's residential status. You must first ask the respondent to describe his or her current living situation. This open-ended question will provide you with the information needed to code the client's residential status using the categories listed in the second question. Be familiar enough with these categories so that you know immediately whether you need to elicit more information from the client in response to the first question.

The next series of residential questions asks about children and others who may live with the client. First you must ask the respondent how many children they have. The number of children indicated should reflect *all living children*, whether they share a residence with the respondent or not. Adult children and children not in the custody of the client should still be included in this number.

Individuals who share an apartment or house with the respondent should be indicated in response to the next item. If the client lives in a group home, find out if he or she shares a room or bedroom with another individual(s). If this is the case, you may count this person(s). Otherwise, don't

count others residing in the group home as living with the client. These guidelines also apply when you ask how many individuals living with the respondent are under the age of 18. If the children share an apartment or house with the respondent, you may count them. If, on the other hand, the children are just other residents in a group home, do not count them.

### **Finances and Entitlements**

The next section asks the respondent to report his or her monthly income in a number of categories. These include earned income, SSI/SSDI, unemployment compensation, illegal income, and several others. Before asking these questions, let the respondent know you are only interested in their income over the past month. It may be helpful to give them a date range (e.g., “So that would be from January 17th until now.”).

On the first line, indicate the client’s net (i.e., take home) earned income for the past month. If the client is working two jobs, indicate the earned income for the second job on the next line. Additional job incomes should be indicated in the margins along with labels (e.g., “third job” or “fourth job”). You may need to spend some time helping respondents reconstruct their income information for each category, especially if the respondents receive income from several different sources. For job income, it might help to ask if the respondent knows the amount he or she takes home each week. Make sure that each of the last four weeks were average weeks for the client and then you may multiply the weekly rate by four. If the client can only provide you with an hourly rate, you will need to work through each week, day by day. Bringing a calendar with you to the interview will be extremely helpful in this case. Come up with a daily total for each day worked in the last month, and then add these together. If the client is not working, leave these lines blank.

Following earned income are spaces for income from Social Security Retirement Benefits (SSA), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Since these benefits are paid once a month, respondents will usually know the amount they receive, if any. Items E through L are relatively self explanatory. Ask the client about each category and indicate any amounts in the lines provided.

In our experience, mental health consumers are not usually hesitant to share this type of information, although it would not hurt to remind the respondent about the confidential nature of this interview. The obvious exception to this is item M, “illegal income.” Rather than simply asking if the respondent receives any money illegally, probe carefully for this information so as not to offend, but also in order to elicit the most honest answer possible. Read the mandatory prompt supplied in the interview. As with all the questions in the Baseline Interview, when reading this prompt, make sure your intonation does not convey any emotion or connote any opinion you may hold about illegal income. Emphasize that you do not want to know about activities they have engaged in, but that you are only asking if their monthly income was increased and by how much. It will help if you remind the respondent that their name is not placed anywhere on the interview schedule and that the information is used for no other purpose than for the research study and will not be shared with the service delivery staff or with Social Security.

Finally, ask the respondent if he or she received money from any other sources not already mentioned. Specify the nature of these sources in the space provided and indicate the amount. Question number two asks for the respondent’s total *personal* income for the past month. This amount should be the sum total of the responses given for question number one. Check this before moving on. Number two also asks for total *household* income for the past month. If the respondent lives in a group home, skip to question number three. The last three items in this section are self explanatory. Ask each question and code the client’s response.

### **SSI/SSDI Scale**

Next on the Baseline Interview is the SSI/SSDI Scale which asks whether the client agrees or disagrees with statements regarding the SSI and SSDI he or she receives. For this and all subsequent attitudinal scales, you should hand the respondent a list of statements and a card containing possible responses so that he or she can follow along as you read each item and elicit each response. Hand the respondent *List of Statements A* and *3x5 card aa* with responses indicating “disagree,” not sure,” and “agree.” If he or she currently receives SSI or SSI and SSDI, read statements one through seven. If

the respondent currently receives SSDI only, read statements eight through fourteen. If the respondent does not receive SSI/SSDI, skip this section entirely and move on to the section on prior employment history.

### **Prior Employment History**

Following the SSI/SSDI Scale is a section that elicits information about the respondent's prior employment history. Note that if the client has *never* held a paying job, you may code a zero for question number one, and then go directly to the section on prior vocational training. If the respondents *have* held paying jobs, spend a moment orienting them to thinking about the longest job they have ever held. Let them know that, if they are currently working, their current job *may* be their longest job. Make sure they are thinking back far enough, and not just considering jobs in the recent past. Probe until you are sure that this is indeed their longest job. Write the job title down in the space provided and then indicate the three-digit U.S. Department of Commerce census code.

You will find a complete list of the U.S. Department of Commerce 1990 Census Codes in Appendix A of this manual. Before you begin interviewing you should spend some time familiarizing yourself with these codes and the system in which they are organized. Jobs are divided into six major occupational categories and are then further divided into several sub categories. In order to code jobs correctly you will need to ask the respondent to describe his or her job duties in enough detail to distinguish between, for example, a registered nurse and a physicians' assistant, or an elementary school and secondary school teacher. You should be familiar enough with the coding categories so that you know whether the client has given you enough information to code the longest job accurately. Never rely solely on the job title given. If you need to ask the respondent for more detail, make sure to note his or her comments in the margins so that you will have this information available when you are coding.

Questions 3 and 4 ask for the start and end dates of the longest job ever held. If the client remembers the month and year but not the day, write in the *first day of the month indicated*. If the client can recall the week the job began, but still does not remember the exact day, write down the *first working day of the indicated week*. If the client is having trouble remembering the month, try

prompting a response by asking if he or she remembers what season it was when the job began (e.g., Was it winter, spring, summer, or fall? Did the job begin around a holiday or an anniversary, personal or public? What was the temperature like outside? Does the client remember wearing a coat to work or was he or she wearing short sleeves?). Looking at a calendar together while working through these questions may be helpful. If the client can remember what season he or she started working, you may then be able to narrow it down to a specific month from there. Follow these same guidelines to elicit the date the job ended. If the longest job ever held happens to be the current job, *code today's date* for question number 4.

After obtaining the job start and end dates, you will need to calculate the total number of months the client worked at this job. Indicate this duration in the space provided. If the respondent is able to recall only vague information regarding start and end dates (e.g., "I worked at one job for two years in the 80's."), record "24 months" in the space provided and write his or her comments in the margins. In this case, you should leave the start and end dates blank.

For questions 5 through 7a, you should use the probes outlined above to obtain information about the client's most recent job. *Keep in mind that if the client is currently employed, you must ask about the job prior to this present employment.* In other words, the most recent job can only be a job that has ended. Remember that the *most recent* job may be in the fairly *distant past*. The respondent may need as much help remembering the dates for this job as they did for the longest job. If, while calculating the total number of months worked, you discover that the client's most recent job was actually longer than the longest job indicated, you must correct the information in numbers two through four.

In response to numbers 7b and c, try to elicit figures representative of what was typical of the job. By typical we mean characteristic of the job experience during most of the time period worked. It may be the case with many consumers that the end phase of a job was atypical because of symptom exacerbation, poor job evaluations, etc.

To calculate the number of jobs held in the past five years and the total number of months the client held a paying job during those five years, you should work with the client to create a list indicating each job held, along with start and end dates for each of these. It will probably be easiest to work backwards chronologically. Use seasons and holidays as landmarks in time if this is helpful to the respondent. Calculate the number of jobs held and the total number of months worked before moving on.

### **Prior Vocational Training**

The next section asks about vocational training the client may have received before entering the study. Note that these questions address *the past five years only*. Some issues to keep in mind are: Job skills training can be paid or unpaid. The client may have worked on generic skills (e.g., timeliness, accepting feedback) or specific skills (e.g., word processing, maintenance). For item number 5, it will be helpful to the respondent if you use the *actual name of your state's vocational rehabilitation agency*. In the state of Arizona, for example, this agency is named the Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration. Be sure that you know the name of your state's agency before beginning the interview.

### **Current Labor Force Status and Work Interest**

Following the section on prior vocational training are two questions about the respondent's current labor force status and his or her degree of interest in working. For question number one, read each of the nine responses and circle *all* that apply. If the respondent refuses or responds that they don't know, circle "other" and write the response on the line provided. Then ask the respondent if he or she currently is interested in working. This question should be asked *even if the client is currently working*.

### **Work Motivation Scale and Future Work Motivation Item**

The Work Motivation Scale is the next section of the Client Baseline Interview. This scale was specifically developed for the CMHS Employee Intervention Demonstration Program from a focus group interview with employed mental health consumers as well as several standardized instruments. Give the respondent *List of Statements (B)* and *3x5 card bb*. If the client is not currently working,



ask him or her to respond with past jobs in mind. At the end of the scale you will find an additional question about future work motivation. Have the client use the same response card (bb) for this one item.

### **Physical Health**

The next section on physical health is relatively self explanatory. Ask the respondent each of the questions and circle the appropriate response code. Note that most of the questions in this section address the *past four weeks*.

### **Quality of Life Scale**

The Quality of Life Scale is the next section of the Baseline Interview. You will have already received formal training on administering this scale which will have included watching taped interviews and conducting practice coding. You will be using *3x5 card cc* for several parts of this instrument. This card will have the Delighted-Terrible Scale (D-T Scale) printed on it in three forms: text, numbers, and happy/sad face graphics. Familiarize the client with the seven response categories on this card before beginning. It is our experience that presenting respondents with three modes of response categories for the D-T Scale usually raises no problems or concerns. In the unlikely case that the respondent is offended or insulted that he or she has been handed a card with pictures on it, explain that they can use whichever set of response categories they choose. Let them know that you do this interview with all different types of people and that some like to use the faces, some like to use the worded responses, and others use the numbered categories, and that you use the same card for everyone.

### **Self Esteem**

Next you will have the client complete the Self Esteem Scale. Hand him or her *List of Statements D* and *3x5 card dd*. Let the client know that you will read each of the statements and ask him or her to let you know how they feel about each item. The introspective nature of these items

sometimes makes them feel intrusive to respondents, especially those with disabilities. Let the respondent know that you realize how personal these questions are and that you appreciate them sharing their responses.

### **Respondent's Rating of Level of Functioning**

The Level of Functioning item following the Self Esteem Scale is relatively self explanatory. If the respondents ask what is meant by the word “functioning,” explain that this is how well they currently feel they are able to take care of their daily responsibilities in home, social and school settings.

### **Clinical**

The main purpose of the clinical section is to obtain information about the client's psychiatric inpatient history. Keep in mind that the respondent may have had a long hospitalization history, making it difficult to remember lengths and dates. Employ strategies similar to those described in the section on Prior Employment History to help the client reconstruct his or her hospitalization history. You also may refer back to client records to verify or supplement the information you obtain from the client. Estimates are better than nothing, however, only use them when all other means have failed. Regarding question number 2, if the respondent has been in the hospital less than one month, code “1.” *You should only code “0” if the client has never been hospitalized for a psychiatric reason.* Also, keep in mind while completing this section, that discussing hospitalizations may not be easy for some respondents. Make sure that you are sensitive to how the client is feeling.

### **Medications**

The next section requests information about prescribed psychiatric medications. If the client does not take medications for psychiatric reasons, code “0” for question number one and then skip to the section on alcohol and drug use. Otherwise, complete questions two through four after reading the mandatory prompt reminding the respondent that you may not share this information with anyone. Note that in question #2, you are probing for information to help you code the respondent's level of

medication adherence. You will need to average together quantity and frequency of medications taken. Code your best estimate based on the information given. To complete question #4, use the list of medications provided to assist you. Be sure to read the medication *names* to clients who are unsure of what *class* of drugs they are prescribed.

### **Alcohol and Drug Use**

As you begin the next section on alcohol and drug use, be sure to remind the client that all of his or her responses are completely confidential. Reassure respondents that agency staff, employers, family, and friends will not have access to this information. Remind the client that this agreement of confidentiality was confirmed through the signing of the consent form and that this will not be violated. Be aware that many respondents who use alcohol or drugs will want to report that they don't. Try to elicit honest answers by explaining the importance of this information. Let them know that you are asking these questions so that we may determine whether drug or alcohol use affects employment in any way. Emphasize that there are no negative consequences for sharing this information. Never simply accept a client's denial of alcohol or drug use without probing to make sure that this denial is accurate.

First you will ask how many days in the past month the respondent has used alcohol. Write "0" on the line provided if the client has not used alcohol at all in the past month. If the respondent is not sure, ask them to give you an estimate rather than coding "don't know." If alcohol use is indicated, ask how many days the client got high or had three or more drinks in an hour. Next, ask for the number of days in the past month in which the respondent used drugs that were not prescribed for him or her, other than over-the-counter medication. Probe for number of days in the same manner as you did for alcohol use. If the respondent indicates drug use, ask about the use of each specific drug in the list provided. Drugs marked with an "\*" are prescribable and should only be coded if they are *not* prescribed for the respondent.

### **SCI-PANSS**

The SCI-PANSS is another instrument for which you will have received extensive formal training to administer. As part of this training you will have watched and coded taped interviews. You

should have completed many live interviews and will have compared your scores with other interviewers. Remember, the key to accuracy and reliability is that you use the manual when doing your ratings. No matter how comfortable you become with this scale, make sure you *always* refer to your manual while coding. Keep in mind that if any relevant information came up during the initial non-directive phase of the interview, you must still ask *all of the questions*. However, you may acknowledge that you heard the information the first time it was mentioned to you by the respondent.

### **Social Skills Ratings**

The final section of the Client Baseline Interview is the Social Skills Rating. *After the interview is complete and the client has departed*, code his or her overall levels of social skill and nonverbal-paralinguistic skill using the categories and definitions listed. However, *before the client leaves*, it is important that you ask yourself whether you have enough information to complete these ratings. If not, you should engage the client in a few minutes of informal conversation so that you have a better basis upon which you can code these skills.

When you complete the Client Baseline Interview, make sure you *immediately go back through all pages to check for completeness and readability*. Assign census codes in the Prior Employment History section if you have not already done so. Make sure everything is legible and double check your conversions and arithmetic. Finally, print your name in the space provided on the last page.

## **Section II: Client Level Six Month Assessment**

Approximately every six months after the Baseline Interview you will complete the Client Six Month Interview. The purpose of this interview is to assess any changes occurring since the Baseline assessment (e.g., residential status, income, alcohol and drug use), as well as to assess some aspects that will only be relevant after the receipt of services (e.g., satisfaction with agency services, job satisfaction). Make every effort to schedule this interview exactly six months after the previous interview. *Note that under no circumstances should you complete this interview before the six month anniversary of the Baseline Interview.* A week or two after this date is acceptable, but you must never complete this interview early.

As you become familiar with the Six Month Interview, you will realize that much of the information requested is identical to that in the Baseline Interview. When this is the case, please refer back to the instructions on filling out the Baseline, as the guidelines will remain the same. Of course, there *are* several new items in this instrument. The following instructions will address these new

sections. Make sure you put the client's study ID number and the date at the top of every page of the interview.

As is the case in the Baseline Interview, the responses "don't know" and "refused" are offered as coding options throughout the Six-Month Interview. *These should be used for coding purposes only and should never be offered to a respondent as response categories. Nor should these categories ever appear on the 3x5 response cards used by the respondent throughout the interview.* (The only exception to this rule is for item # 6 in the Physical Health section. "Don't know" is part of this item's five point response scale. In this one situation, you may read "don't know" as a response option to the respondent.) Use these codes as sparingly as possible. If a respondent isn't sure about a certain item, make sure you repeat the question and give him or her ample time to respond. Do not use "don't know" or "refused" as a fall-back to make the interview easier or quicker. Circle these codes only when respondents absolutely refuse to provide the information or insist that they do not have an opinion. Note that there are a couple cases in which "don't know" and refused are not offered as coding options (e.g., #2 in Demographics section, #2 in Residential section) because the item already has eight or nine response categories. In the unlikely event that a respondent would not know or refuse answers to these questions, you should just note this in the margin.

### **Demographics**

Although this is not a new section on the Six Month Interview, only two of the original six demographic items are repeated. Marital status and level of education are the two items most likely to change over time. Code the respondent's answers regarding their current status in these two categories.

### **Finances and Entitlements**

The Six-Month Interview has an additional item in the Finances and Entitlements section. This item asks whether the respondent has received any form of cash assistance to help him or her work, such as tokens or passes to travel to and from work, money to buy work uniforms or supplies, etc. Code the respondent's answer in the space provided.

### **Employer Disclosure Item, Job Satisfaction Scale, and Job Impact Item**

The first new sections on the Client Six Month Interview are the Employer Disclosure Item, the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, and the Job Impact Item. These sections are to be completed *only if the respondent is currently working*. All three sections are relatively self explanatory. First you must ask about disclosure to the employer. If the client asks for clarification on who is meant by employer, respond that this refers to anyone in a supervisory position. This can be the respondent's direct supervisor or someone in a more senior position. After coding this response, give the respondent *List of Statements E* and *3x5 card ee*. Have the client tell you how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with each of the listed features of his or her present job. Make sure you are reading each of these statements aloud, even though the client has the list in front of him or her. Finally, read the Job Impact question and code the client's response.

### **Client Satisfaction With Services**

The Client Satisfaction With Services Scale also is new to the Six Month Interview. Inform the client that he or she should respond with only the past six months in mind, and then provide a time frame to keep in mind (e.g., "That would be since October 15th of last year."). Remind respondents that we are interested in their honest opinions, whether positive or negative. Reiterate that their responses will in no way affect the services they receive and that their honesty is the only way we will know whether the services provided are satisfactory or need improvement.

In most cases, the respondent will be a member of a particular service delivery program. In these instances you should refer to this program as you begin the Client Satisfaction Scale to orient clients to the services you are assessing. In some cases, the respondent may have left the program but is still in the study. Instruct respondents in this condition, to think about all of the mental health services they have received over the past six months. Ask respondents to complete this section keeping in mind either the services they are currently receiving, or those they have received most recently. If the client

has not received any mental health services over the past six months, indicate this in the margin and then skip to the Physical Health section.

### **Clinical**

The Clinical section of the Six Month Interview asks for hospitalization information *since the Baseline only*. You may refer to the instructions for the Clinical items in the Baseline Interview for details on completing this section, as the guidelines are generally the same. The important thing to keep in mind is that we are looking for a list of every hospitalization *over the past six months only* in reverse chronological order. Note that there is only space provided for three hospitalizations. If there have been more than three admissions, indicate the intake and discharge dates for each of these in the space at the bottom of the page. Make sure you label each hospitalization carefully so that the order remains clear (e.g., 4th most recent hospitalization, 5th most recent, etc.).



## **Section III: The Clinical Reporting Form**

The third instrument of the Common Protocol is the Clinical Reporting Form which is completed at baseline. Because this is not an interview, there is no need to have the client present for the completion of this instrument. Make sure to put the client's ID number and the date at the top of each page of this form. The first section of the form requests diagnostic information. This should be gathered from the respondent's clinical records or diagnostic assessments such as the SCID. Realize that case records may be quite extensive and make take some time to read. Remember that it is extremely critical to look through the *entire case file*, making sure that no information is overlooked. You will first indicate any other disabilities the client may have. Secondly you are asked to specify the client's current DSM-IV diagnosis. The only sources you may use for this section are the case record or a research diagnostic interview such as the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV. If you have reason to believe the respondent's file is not complete, talk to the appropriate agency staff about obtaining the missing records. When you have completed this section, print your name in the space provided.

The second section on the Clinical Reporting Form should be completed by the clinician *most familiar* with the client's use of alcohol and street drugs. It is important that you give considerable thought to figuring out who this person is. In some instances you will be looking for the psychiatrist, in other cases the client's caseworker will be the correct person to go to. It may be the case that a job coach, the leader of a substance abuse group, or a residential staff person will have the best information on this topic. Do not assume that the clinician closest to the client will necessarily know about the client's alcohol and drug use. Clients may hesitate to reveal "damaging" information to the clinician or case manager closest to them for fear of "disappointing" staff. When you have chosen the appropriate staff person to complete the Alcohol and Drug use section, make sure they read all of the categories and their definitions before *carefully* coding their response, especially if a few of the categories go onto

the next page and thus, may be overlooked. Have this person print his or her name on the line provided at the end of this section.

# **Section IV: Employment Tracking Forms**

## **An Overview**

The Employment Tracking Forms of the CMHS Employment Intervention Demonstration Program were designed to capture all aspects related to an individual's employment on a week by week basis. These forms will allow vocational staff to log weekly employment information quickly and accurately on all clients participating in the study. This will enable us to recreate a complete work history for every client during the period of the project. It is important to remember that the Tracking Forms must be filled out for *any and all paid employment*.

Purposes of the Employment Tracking Forms. In addition to capturing complete work histories of the participants in this study, the Employment Tracking Forms can serve several important functions. Vocational staff can utilize these forms to record and monitor each client's progress on the job. Clients' gains are often incremental in mental health and rehabilitation settings. In the absence of weekly tracking, staff may be unaware of just how much progress clients have made over time. Employment Tracking Forms also may be useful for communicating important information about clients to the several staff who may provide services to a given client. At many agencies, social service casework, mental health treatment, and vocational services are delivered by different staff or in different departments. The Tracking Forms may be particularly valuable in keeping non-vocational caseworkers apprised of the client's status at the work place.

Description of the Employment Tracking Forms. There are three types of Tracking Forms: the Employment Start Form; the Weekly Employment Change Form; and the Employment End Form. As its name would suggest, the Start Form is completed as a client begins a new job. The Change Form is filled out on a weekly basis as the job is ongoing. When the job terminates, the End Form is completed. These forms are designed so that each form summarizes the client's employment status for

that week. It is important that you complete this paperwork on Friday of each week so that no changes in the job are overlooked. Keep in mind that it is as important that we know that there were *no* changes in the client's employment for a given week as it is that we know that there *were* changes.

**Under no circumstances, when filling out these forms, should you contact staff at the client's place of employment, unless the client has given his or her permission and you are positive that the employer knows of the client's psychiatric disability.** The following instructions for filling out the Employment Tracking Forms are detailed and explicit, so that they meet coding standards for research, evaluation, and reporting.

### **Employment Start Form**

At the very top of the Employment Start Form you are requested to provide the client's ID number. Each person participating in the research project will be assigned a unique ID code. This number may or may not match the client's program ID. Make sure you provide the client's *study ID number*. If you do not know what this is, get it from the person in charge of the research project at your location. The ID number must appear on *every* employment tracking form.

To the right of the client's ID number you will find the state abbreviations for the eight unique project locations. Circle the state in which your project is located. Below this is a line on which the client's intervention condition should be specified. Each project location will have two or three conditions. If you are not sure what these are, ask the person in charge of research at your location.

Having the client present may be helpful as you complete the rest of the Employment Start Form. If you feel that you already have the information you need, you may fill the form out on your own. The name of the client's employer should be indicated on the third line. List the *name of the organization* where the individual works. If the client does not work for a company or organization, you should write in the name of the person who is his or her employer or supervisor. If the client is self employed, write "self" in the space provided.

Next on the form you will find a space for the employment start date. Here you will enter the month, day, and year in which the client began the current job. If for some reason the client remembers

the month and year but not the day, write in the *first working day of that month*. If the client can recall the week the job began, but still does not remember the exact day, write down the *first working day of the indicated week*. If the client is having trouble remembering the month, try prompting a response by asking if he or she remembers what season it was when the job began (e.g., Was it winter, spring, summer, or fall? Did the job begin around a holiday or an anniversary, personal or public? What was the temperature like outside? Does the client remember wearing a coat to work or was he or she wearing short sleeves?). Looking at a calendar together while working through these questions may be helpful. If the client can remember what season he or she started working, you may then be able to narrow it down to a specific month from there. It may be the case that you have access to agency paperwork that tracks clients' vocational information. If possible, you should verify the job start date by checking these forms.

On the fifth line enter the client's salary. Indicate whether this is per hour or per week by circling the appropriate response. Make sure you indicate the client's *gross salary* (before taxes and/or benefits are taken out). Be very careful that the client does not tell you his or her take-home pay (i.e., net salary). If the client only knows his or her net salary, ask him or her to bring in a pay stub so that you may verify the gross salary. Many clients will have a fixed salary per hour. Elicit this amount, as it will be what they gross. If the client is being paid "off the books" or under the table, his or her net and gross salaries will be the same. This is the only instance in which it will be acceptable to record the client's take-home salary. **If you are indicating weekly salary, it is very important that you indicate on the Start Form how much the client has actually made in his or her first week, not how much he or she will make in a typical week.** For example, if you circle "per week" and the client started work on a Wednesday, you should only write in how much he or she made from Wednesday until Friday, not how much he or she expects to make during a full week of work. If you have access to agency vocational tracking forms, you may find the hourly salary on these forms.

Following salary on the Employment Start Form is a line for hours worked. Indicate, in the space provided, the number of hours the client worked this first week. As with salary, you will write in

the *actual hours worked* this first week, not the amount the client was hired to work. If the client is having trouble remembering hours worked for the entire week, work through it together, day by day (e.g., “On Wednesday you worked from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.? Do you get paid for your lunch hour or do you have to punch out at lunch? You punched out? OK, you worked six hours on Wednesday. What was your schedule like on Thursday?”... etc.). Add up the number of hours worked per day to get the client's weekly total. If this is not successful, you should ask the client to bring in his or her pay stub. Do not get this information from agency forms unless you know that a client did in fact work for a full week his or her first week, as the information on agency forms will most likely indicate hours per week the client was “hired” to work.

Next you will find a listing of various employment benefits. Discuss with the client the types of benefits attached to this new position. If applicable, ask the client to bring in his or her personnel handbook. If you are *positive* that the new employer knows of the client's psychiatric history, you may ask the client's permission to contact the employer regarding benefits offered. You are *not* required to indicate the *level or amount* of these benefits. You need only check off the appropriate selections.

The section following employment benefits requests a detailed description of the client's new job. You will find helpful instructions and category listings for this section on the back of the Employment Start Form. Read these carefully and become familiar with them. They will be helpful to you when prompting the client to describe the new job in detail. First you will need to write about the client's job duties. Glean as much information as you can regarding the client's specific job tasks. Greater detail from the client will increase the accuracy and ease with which you write this description. Following the section for job duties are three lines labeled “people,” “things,” and “data.” Find out what the client's relationship is with other people at the job. This includes supervisors, co-workers, and customers. Next, ask what the client does with objects or things as part of the job. Finally, ask about the client's relationship with numbers, data, and/or information. Examples of possible words you may use to describe these relationships may be found on the reverse side of the Start Form. You may use more than one descriptor to describe each relationship. After discussing the client's duties and

relationships at work, you should be able to fill in the appropriate job industry or occupational group to which this job belongs, again using information provided on the back of the form. If you are still not sure of the industry designation, you may leave this line blank. However, realize that your detailed description of job duties will now be even more important. Talking to a job coach, job developer, or to the employer (only if you receive permission to do so from the client) may provide you with additional information for this section. Keep in mind that the client may not be familiar with all of his or her job duties after only one week of work. If you later learn of additional job tasks the client is responsible for, make note of these on the Weekly Change Form (see below.)

The next section asks for information regarding the extent to which the client's job occurs in an integrated setting. First you must indicate whether this job is set aside for a person with a disability. Next indicate the opportunity the client has for contact with non-disabled co-workers and then with disabled co-workers by circling "none," "minimal," "regular," or "constant." Finally, indicate the proportion of the person's immediate co-workers who have a disability by circling the appropriate response. You will need to find your best source of information to complete this section. The client may or may not have the answers to these questions. The position you hold at your agency may avail you the most accurate information on this topic. Another agency staff person may know the correct responses to these items (e.g., a job coach or a case worker who has visited the client's job site). *With the client's permission*, you may ask the employer directly about the level of integration at the job site, **only if you know for sure that the employer knows about the client's psychiatric disability.**

You will need to find out whether the client's new job is temporary. A position is considered temporary if the employee knows at the start of the job that it will end (i.e., seasonal work, transitional employment placement, consultant contract, or event-specific employment). Circle "yes" or "no" in this next section on the Start Form. **If the job is temporary, you must describe how it is so in the space provided.**

The following section lists the various ways in which the job may have been obtained. Circle all applicable responses. If the client obtained this job with no assistance from anyone, you will circle

“received no help.” If you choose this category, you should *not* circle any other responses. If anyone other than a service provider (i.e., friend, family member, or stranger) told the client about the position or helped him or her set it up, you should circle “informal contacts.” You may circle “job finding services” and/or “job developed for client” only if *professional* job services were provided to the client.

Next you will indicate whether the job is owned by the client. You should circle “no” if the client is working at a transitional employment placement or any placement owned by an agency, rather than by the client. In most other cases, the job will be the client’s own job and you should circle “yes.”

**If you circle “no” in response to this question, you should have circled “yes” for the section on whether or not the job is temporary, for placements are generally not permanent positions.**

Ask the client if the immediate supervisor knows about his or her psychiatric disability. You also may check on this with another service provider who works with the client. Circle the appropriate response. If either you or the client is not sure about this question, circle “don't know.” **Under no circumstances should you solicit this information from the employer.**

The last section requests that you list any job accommodations made for the client during this first week of work. You will find a definition of job accommodation on the back of the Employment Start Form. Describe any adaptations or adjustments in the client's schedule, job duties, or work space, as well as any support given by a professional, for the sole purpose of the client's success on the job. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be the provision of individualized and extended training in specific job duties. Another might be creating a separate or enclosed work space for a client who has a hard time concentrating around people or other distractions. One more example of a job accommodation would be an employer allowing the client to set his or her own pace at work. Be specific in your descriptions.

Finally, as the person who has filled out the form, you should *print* your name in the space provided. The date should be the Friday of the first calendar week of the client's employment. If you filled out the Start Form without much assistance or information from another individual, you should



leave the last line blank. However, if another person provided a majority of the information on this form (i.e., the client, a friend or family member of the client, or another service provider) write his or her name on the last line.

### **Weekly Employment Change Form**

Each week you will fill out an Employment Change Form on which you will indicate whether there were any changes in the client's position during the past week, and if so, what these changes were. It is as important for us to know that there were *no* changes in the job as it is to know there *were* changes. Make sure you look carefully at each section on this form before checking off that there were no changes. It will be helpful to have a copy of the previous week's form in front of you as you fill out the Change Form.

At the top of the form you will indicate the client's study ID number, the state abbreviation of your demonstration project, the client's intervention condition, the name of the employing organization, and the start date for the current job. For a more detailed explanation of these sections, please refer to the instructions for filling out the Employment Start Form. With the exception of the employing organization, this information on the Start Form and Change Form should be exactly the same. If for "employing organization" you had previously indicated the name of a boss or supervisor and the person in this position has changed, please write in the new name and note "new supervisor" on the same line. Also, in this top section of the form, a space is provided for the date of the job changes. Please indicate the appropriate date. If no changes have occurred in the past week, leave this line blank.

The next two sections ask whether there were changes to the client's gross salary or hours worked per week. If there were no changes, leave these sections blank. If the client has been given an increase or decrease in either of these two areas, write the new level on the line provided. If, during the week in question, the client worked a shorter or longer amount of time than the previous week, even without a formal increase or decrease, indicate this. If the client has an irregular schedule, you may be filling out a change in hours and *weekly* salary *every* week. If you have been indicating hourly, rather

than weekly salary, this amount will not fluctuate with an irregular schedule. It will only change with a formal increase or decrease. Make sure you circle “per hour” or “per week” on the salary line.

In the next section, indicate the nature of any changes in the client's employment benefits during the previous week. On the lines provided, write in “addition,” “deletion,” “increase,” “decrease,” or any other type of change that has occurred. If there have been no changes, skip this section.

Ask the client if there have been any changes in the job duties. In the section provided, give a detailed description of new job tasks or responsibilities, especially in relation to people, things, and data. Refer to the instructions on the back of the Change Form to help with this section. There should not be a change in job industry unless the client has a completely new job. If this is the case, an End Form should have been filled out for the previous job and a Start Form should be filled out for this new job. Leave this section blank if there are no changes in the job description.

The next section asks for information regarding any changes in the level of integration of disabled co-workers at the work place. If changes have occurred regarding the job being set aside for a person with a disability, the opportunity the client has for contact with non-disabled or disabled co-workers, or the proportion of the client's immediate co-workers who have a disability, please indicate this by circling the appropriate response. Please refer to the instructions for completing the Employment Start Form for details on where you may get this information.

The next section asks if the current job is now temporary. Circle “no” or “yes” if there has been a change from the previous week. For example, was the client's position temporary before and has now been changed to a permanent position? If so, circle “no.” If the position was permanent initially, but has now been changed into a temporary or seasonal job, circle “yes.” In the space provided, indicate how this is a change from the previous situation.

Next indicate whether the job is *now* owned by the client. If the client was working at a T.E.P., Transitional Employment Placement, and is now performing the same job but it is no longer considered a placement (i.e., he or she is working directly for the employer), circle “yes.” If the client

was working at his or her own job and the position became a T.E.P. with an agency liaison, circle “no.” Leave this section blank if there was no change from the previous week.

Ask the client if the immediate supervisor *now* knows about his or her psychiatric disability. Be careful not to ask the client about this in such a way that would lead the client to believe you are encouraging him or her to tell the supervisor if the client has decided to keep this information confidential. Let him or her know you are only interested in whether or not there has been a change, *not* that there *should be* a change. You also may check on this with another service provider who works with the client. Circle the appropriate response. If the supervisor has just found out that the client has a psychiatric disability, and did not know about this before, circle “yes.” If the client gets a new supervisor and the new person does not know about the client's psychiatric history, circle “no.” If either you or the client is not sure if the new supervisor knows, circle “don't know.” Only circle “don't know” if this is a *change* from the previous week's form. **Under no circumstance should you solicit this information from the employer.** You should skip this section if there have been no changes regarding the supervisor's knowledge about the client.

Next, you will describe any changes, additions to, or discontinuations of previously described job accommodations. Refer to the instructions on filling out the Start Form for a description of a job accommodation. If there have been no changes, leave this last section blank.

Finally, you will indicate whether the client has been hospitalized in the past week. If a hospitalization has occurred, write the number days in the space provided. You may need to check with the client's case worker if you are unsure of the admission or discharge date.

You will find in large, bold letters, a line stating that there were *no changes* in the job. If you have looked *carefully through all the previous sections* and have not made a notation in any of them, place a check here. Remember that at the top of the form you still should have filled out the client's study ID number, the state abbreviation of your demonstration project, the intervention condition, the name of the employing organization, and the start date for the current job.

Finally, as the person who has filled out the form, you should print your name in the space provided. The date should be the Friday of the week in question. If you filled out the Change Form without much assistance or information from another individual, you should leave the last line blank. However, if another person provided a majority of the information on this form (i.e., the client, a friend or family member of the client, or another service provider) write his or her name on the last line.

### **Employment End Form**

Upon termination of a client's job you will complete an Employment End Form. At the top of the form you will fill in the client's study ID number, the state abbreviation of your demonstration project, the client's intervention condition, the name of the previous employing organization, and the start date for the job now ending. Please refer to the instructions for filling out the Employment Start Form for a more detailed explanation of these sections. With the exception of the employing organization, this information on the Start Form, Change Forms, and End Form should be exactly the same. If you had previously indicated the name of a boss or supervisor for "employing organization," this information may have changed at some point during the course of the job. This change should have been indicated on a *previous* Weekly Change Form. Also in this top section of the form, a space is provided for the date the job ended. Please indicate the appropriate date.

Next you will need to indicate the person most responsible for the job ending. You will need to decide who had the *major* influence on the decision to end the job. You should keep several things in mind. First, if the client was fired, it is most likely that "employer" should be checked off. Second, at the natural ending of a T.E.P., "program staff" should be checked. Third, it usually will be the case that if the client quits, the client was the person most responsible for the decision to end the job. However, other individuals (e.g., friends, family, employers, program staff) may pressure, strongly suggest, or otherwise influence the client to make a decision to which the client merely agrees. In this case you should not check "client," but the individual who had the *most* influence on the decision to end the job. If after careful reflection, you believe this was truly a joint decision, check other and explain on the line

provided. In our experience, however, it is almost never the case that two individuals have absolutely equally influence on a decision of this type.

In the next section on the Employment End Form you will indicate the status of the job ending. Overall these are self explanatory, but again there are some things you should keep in mind. If the client quits his or her job, but you are not sure if another position has been arranged, check “other” and explain. If the client leaves the agency while working on a T.E.P., this should be considered quitting. If the client is asked or forced to leave the program while on a T.E.P., you should check “fired.” **Do not assume that you should complete an End Form for a client who leaves the agency while working. If this person continues in the same position after leaving the agency, he or she should still be contacted on weekly intervals to update his or her vocational status. If you are unwilling or unable to continue tracking this client for the study, it is imperative that you inform the research staff at your project so that they can continue this process.**

The following section asks *why* the job ended and lists many possible reasons. Here you will place a “**P**” next to the **primary** reason that the job ended *in your opinion*. **You may only use one “P.”** Then you will place a check next to all of the additional reasons that you or the client believe are related to the job ending. You may check as many additional reasons as you like. Try to fit all the reasons for the job ending into the categories mentioned. If you have a reason that does not fit, check “other” and explain. Please try to use “other” sparingly, as many options are provided.

Finally, as the person who has filled out the form, you should print your name in the space provided. The date should be the Friday of the week in which the client's job ended. If you filled out the End Form without much assistance or information from another individual, you should leave the last line blank. However, if another person provided a majority of the information on this form (i.e., the client, a friend or family member of the client, or another service provider) write his or her name on the last line.

## **Appendix**

**Instructions for Gathering Client Level Data for the  
Common Protocol of the  
Center for Mental Health Services  
Employment Intervention Demonstration Program**

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# **Instructions for Gathering Client Level Data for the Common Protocol of the Center for Mental Health Services Employment Intervention Demonstration Program**

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