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ARMY FAMILY HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOR AND SATISFACTION

ANNUAL REPORT

OTTO VON MERING

JULY 15, 1988

Supported by

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMAND
Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland 21701-5012

Contract No. DAMD17-87-C-7132

University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611

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Army Family Health Seeking Behavior and Satisfaction:
A Life Course Perspective

This is the formal first annual report of the research contract with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research entitled "Army Family Health Seeking Behavior and Satisfaction: A Life Course Perspective," for which the official budgetary starting date was June 1, 1987. Actual funds for this project were not available to the University of Florida Division of Sponsored Research for disbursement until June 9, 1987. These funds consisted of an initial first year contract authorization release of \$200,000, including 47.5% indirect costs in the amount of \$61,848.00. The second release in the Spring of 1988 (040488) amounted to \$246,232.00, including a 45% indirect cost amount of \$76,417.00 for continuation of contract. The official duration of this project has been set contractually from June 1, 1987 to November 15, 1990.

The actual 4-quarterly cumulative first year, reimbursable expenditures have amounted to \$211,979.92, of which \$65,845.60 represented overhead. In addition, a total cumulative, first year University matching contribution in the amount of \$3,561.26 was expended for contractual costs. Consequently, the actual total first year contract costs have amounted to \$215,541.18. (See attachment: PUBLIC VOUCHER REPORT from UF-Division of Contracts and Grants, Headley B. Taylor, Accounting Services Supervisor #1)

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This report is to be viewed as an in-process summary of activities relating to this project in fulfillment of stated research goals and objectives during the initial or first year of research operations. As such, it covers the period of mid-June of 1987, when money was formally available for use, until mid-June 1988. In line with the contract proposal, Dr. David Marlowe, WRAIR, has been briefed on a quarterly basis and a semi-annual progress summary was submitted on November 1987 to LTC Joel Teitelbaum, Family/Community Research Coordinator, WRAIR. (Document #1)

In addition, an intermediate briefing or executive summary of project progress was made on 12/21/87 and submitted to Dr. David Marlowe. (Document #2) A further quarterly briefing report was made in the shape of an in-process summary to Dr. David Marlowe, LTC James Martin, and Dr. Joel Teitelbaum in mid-March 1988, entitled "In-Process Summary of WRAIR-Sponsored UF Study." (Document #3) Furthermore, a special report on the justification of the survey, the background of the interview survey, including planning and coordination, recent research, the target population, administration, etc., was submitted for review and approval in early April 1988 to USA Army Soldier Support Center, Alexandria, VA, at the explicit instruction of LTC James Martin, Deputy Chief of Military Psychiatry, WRAIR. (Document #4)

Formal approval of the basic patient/client interview instrument was received on April 15, 1988. (Document #5) The approved interview instrument for designated client/patient

samples at targeted clinics of the Fort Stewart MEDDAC/DENTAC health service catchment is presented in Document #6. The field interview sampling procedures which have been designed to obtain a targeted total of 780 interviews is to be found in Document #7.

✓ The original stated objective of visiting two geographically separate Army Community Hospital sites in the USA was strategically modified to concentrate on one primary representative service catchment area, namely the Fort Stewart WINN Hospital Clinics, the Hunter Army Air Base clinics and the PRIMUS Army Contract clinic site in Savannah, GA. This decision was made on December 21, 1987, on the basis of a formal review and debriefing by Dr. David Marlowe with the project staff. It is recorded in the executive summary to Dr. David Marlowe, dated December 21, 1987. This restructuring of the interview program has resulted in the revving-up of the total number of client/patient interviews from the original target total of 600 to the present total of 780. This decision is deemed advantageous in promoting reliability and validity of data obtained via the scheduled personal interview on-site procedure.

The project secured the assistance of four (4) advanced graduate student interviewers during the initial project budget year. They participated in the preparation of the client interview survey instrument to assure optimum interviewer performance throughout 780 interviews. They were formally trained to administer the interviews in the appropriate manner, as well as to conduct supervised field testing of the instrument

in different clinic sites of Fort Stewart/MEDDAC/DENTAC catchment area. To recapitulate this process, together with the P.I. and Co-P.I., they engaged in the naturalistic construction and step-by-step finalization of the Client/Patient Interview Proforma, or C/PIP. The sequenced construction of this question instrument is reported on in detail in Document #8.

Between April 14 and the present time,--using field data from 140 interviews with on-site health personnel, and in concert with the Co-P.I., as well as with help from research assistants and with a professional provider review panel from WINN/THC/PRIMUS--the P.I. has been developing the basic companion Health Provider Interview Instrument or HPII. It will be field-tested between August 16-17, 1988, by the P.I. and Co-P.I. Formal interviews of providers will commence upon completion of field-testing the elicitive power of individual items in the HPII. This work will cover the entire personnel complement at each targeted clinic setting (i.e. where all the client/patient interviews have been conducted) during October 1988.

The P.I., the Co-P.I., the Project Coordinator, a social worker, and a nurse practitioner will assume responsibility for the HPII task. A provisional provider interview proforma is attached. (Document #9) --The formal content of this interview instrument focuses on the critical research issue of the variable impact of client-provider interactions on overall health care satisfaction. The individual question items of this provider interview are keyed to the content of the principal question

items in the client/patient proforma or C/PIP.

All graduate student assistants collected field notes which are being catalogued at the present time. A field note example is being reproduced and is available in Document #10. In addition, we are making available four completed Patient/Client Interview Proforma as an illustration of the kind of responses received by different interviewers. (Document #10a) Each of these C/PIP interviews covers the requisite number of quantifiable question items, plus additional open-ended interview information based on selected probes for greater depth of content.

A code book, a procedure manual, and a dictionary of variables (Documents #11, 12, 13) have been completed by the Co-P.I. in consultation with the P.I. The graduate assistants are about to be trained in pairs to enter codes into the computer from the 521 interviews currently available. To assure quality control of data input, the project staff coordinator research associate will assume responsibility for joint inputting with a graduate assistant on a 10% sample of the total C/PIP of 780.

The current total of 521 interviews already covers several entirely completed WINN clinic population samples. This can be seen from a perusal of the "targeted" and "completed" columns of interview totals in Document #16.

A review of productivity has been made and falls within a range of individual interviewer averages of 4.2-4.40 interviews a day. The number of field interview days by interviewer has

ranged from 14-39 days. The fluctuation in number of days in part reflects graduate student availability as well as on-site and off-site rotation, interview duration, and morale reasons. Due to variable field conditions, individual interviewers experienced a range of "one-interviewer days" to "ten-interviewer days" over the course of field trips to date. (Documents #14)

In order to monitor the quality of the interviews, as well as to inform the Primary Point of Contact (PPC) at Ft. Stewart and everyone else at the field sites, and also to build and sustain good rapport, a special "provisional interview schedule" mail-out format has been devised. Three recent examples are attached herewith. (Document #15) These scheduled activities overlapped with intermittent supervisory field visits of either Co-P.I., P.I. or Project Coordinator.

Throughout the duration of this '87/'88 project year, as well as now beyond into the second project year, a continuous flow of sixteen (16) informational and instructional memos were prepared and disseminated to the research group by the P.I. A listing of topics appears with a detailed report which is attached. The titles of these range from a review of content analytical procedures to a reexamination of "efficiency" and "effectiveness" aspects of providing health care. The earliest memo is dated 8/5/87 and the most recent is dated 7/15/88. (See "Notes and Queries," at back of Document Folder.)

In every instance, these documents or "notes and queries" were used to help the graduate interviewer assistants, and the

project coordinator improve their comprehension of the research project as a whole. This effort has been deemed necessary in order to prevent the graduate assistants from feeling they were "piece-workers" or "assembly line" interviewers. One of the benefits of this continuous team-learning activity has been the capable participation of graduate assistants in the development of the interview pro-forma.

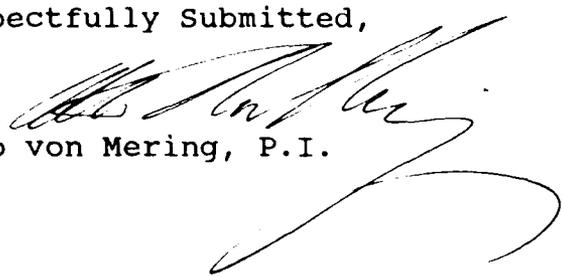
The "notes and queries" approach to the professional development of the research assistants is expected to be equally useful in the pending preparation of steps for the systematic content analysis of a series of four official documents reporting on regular monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly committee meetings: the Marketing/Management, the Community Health Consumer, the Hospital Advisory and Health and Fitness Committee meetings at Ft. Stewart WINN/MEDDAC/DENTAC. In addition, content analytical techniques are being devised to examine significant health-related material in the "Army Times." This material and the committee reports are expected to cover a time frame of nearly two years, to coincide with the field research time table.

The Documents Folder covers 16 individual items ranging from interview productivity count on 8/18 to the section of "Notes and Queries." It is being sent under separate cover. Attached find the list of documents.

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In conclusion, the research work is essentially within the original proposed time frame of activities.

Respectfully Submitted,


Otto von Mering, P.I.

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