Providing Rural Interdisciplinary Services for Youth with Mental Health Needs (PRISYM)
Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions
Quentin Burdick Program for Rural Interdisciplinary Training

Organization: Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), Department of Occupational Therapy
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A. Purpose, Needs, and Rationale
The purpose of PRISYM is to train 76 psychology, social work, and occupational therapy students to provide interdisciplinary services to rural Appalachian youth with mental health needs. Eastern Kentucky is clearly rural, has a prevalence of Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), and shows an even more dramatic prevalence of Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (MHPSA), as shown below. PRISYM will create sustainable interdisciplinary training experiences in partnership with two Kentucky mental health service regions, the Cumberland River and Kentucky River Regions, in order to prepare graduates likely to enter rural practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Counties</th>
<th>Number--Percentage of MUA Counties</th>
<th>Number--Percentage of HPSA Counties</th>
<th>Number--Percentage of MHPSA Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachian Kentucky</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47--92%</td>
<td>18--35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EKU Service Region</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19--86%</td>
<td>8--36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland River</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8--100%</td>
<td>3--38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky River</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8--100%</td>
<td>3--38%</td>
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</table>

Rural Appalachian adolescents with mental health needs are a particularly complex and underserved population. Services to adolescents with emotional, behavioral, and psychiatric disorders requires strong interdisciplinary and inter-agency skills, since their needs commonly require the simultaneous involvement of educational, criminal, social service, and health care systems.

One focus of PRISYM will the preparation of rural practitioners who are culturally competent to appreciate, negotiate, and successfully communicate within a proud and stigmatized Appalachian culture. EKU is especially well-positioned to prepare practitioners for rural practice to underserved populations, since a large proportion of EKU students are from Appalachian communities and wish to return there to practice.

B. Objectives
1. Initiate and develop new, innovative, and sustainable rural training experiences to prepare occupational therapy, psychology, and social work students to provide culturally sensitive services to Appalachian youth with mental health issues.
2. Demonstrate and evaluate innovative interdisciplinary methods/models to provide rural Appalachian youth with mental health needs access to cost-effective comprehensive care.
3. Deliver health care services to rural Appalachian youth with mental health needs.
4. Enhance the amount of relevant research conducted concerning issues in the provision of services to rural Appalachian youth with mental health needs.
5. Increase recruitment and retention of health care practitioners from rural areas and make rural practice a more attractive career choice for health care practitioners.

C. Methodology

PRISYM uses an approach that rests on the following. A Leadership Team meets frequently over the Kentucky Tele-Link Network (KTLN). The Leadership Team includes the Project Director, Coordinators for each Trainee discipline, a Research Coordinator, Directors from the Two Rural Partners, a Representative of the Kentucky Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (KDMHMRS), and Director of the Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, an advocacy group for children and youth with mental health needs.

PRISYM focuses on the following Trainee Competencies: interdisciplinary collaboration, culturally sensitive services to rural Appalachian clients, examining the advantages and disadvantages of rural practice as a personal career choice, and collaborating within an action research approach to training and service program development. Trainees complete all aspects of the following PRISYM Plan of Study together, in three annual cohorts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRISYM Semester</th>
<th>PRISYM Courses and Credits</th>
<th>Other Credits (not PRISYM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fall             | OTS 520/720 Providing Health Services in Appalachia (3)  
OTS 875 PRISYM Seminar I (1) | OT: 9  
Psychology: 10  
SW: 9 |
| Spring           | Interdisciplinary Rural Immersion Practice Experience:  
OTS 847 Professional Fieldwork (2)  
PSY 899 Internship (6)  
SWK 490 Final Social Work Field Practicum (12)  
OTS 875 PRISYM Seminar II (1) | OT: 7  
Psychology: 3  
SW: 0 |

The PRISYM Plan of Study, as shown above, fits into the last academic year of the occupational therapy, psychology, and social work programs. OTS 520/720 Providing Health Services in Appalachia and PRISYM Seminars I and II are provided over KTLN, to enable students in different rural locations to be included in the cohort. In the spring semester, all Trainees in the cohort are placed in one of the two KDMHMRS Regions in interdisciplinary groupings for a rural immersions service experience: psychology and social work students fulltime for a full semester and occupational therapy students fulltime for three weeks.

The Leadership Team will collaborate in an action research process for continually improving PRISYM’s effectiveness, which will produce publishable research. Each year’s training cohort will also collaborate with the leadership Team in a qualitative interview study: in Year One, on the advantages/disadvantages of rural practice; in Year Two, on the barriers to services to rural Appalachian adolescents with mental health needs, and in Year three, a topic to be determined by the Leadership Team. Research will be disseminated through presentations and publications in disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and rural health conferences and journals.

D. Evaluation

Evaluation of PRISYM will be two-pronged: an action research process and a more traditional outcomes tracking plan. An action research process will be used by the Leadership Team for continual improvement of PRISYM’s effectiveness in reaching its objectives and creating sustainable rural interdisciplinary training opportunities. Throughout the three years of the project, an action research cycle will repeat: establishment of a research question during a
Leadership Team meeting, data collection, data analysis, recommendations for improvement by the Leadership Team and based on the data, and completion of the recommended changes. One action research cycle should last approximately six months. Multiple cycles will be ongoing simultaneously. An audit trail of the action research process and its results will be created and monitored by an outside evaluator.

The PRISYM Outcomes Tracking Plan provides more traditional collection of measurable indicators of PRISYM’s effectiveness in meeting its objectives. The Project Director, assisted by the Grant Coordinator, Evaluator, and Leadership Team, will initiate, track, and complete the steps of the evaluation plan, which includes mid-year and annual review and recommendations for change. PRISYM objectives and sub-objectives are all evaluated on multiple measures, both qualitative and quantitative.

E. Name and Description of Co-Applicant and Designated Rural Healthcare Agencies for Clinical Practicum

PRISYM partners the occupational therapy, psychology, and social work programs of Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) with two regions of the KDMHMRS. Kentucky River Community Care (Region XII) and Cumberland River Mental Health and Mental Retardation Board (Region XIII) both provide community-based mental health services for children, adolescents, and adults in two 8-county, impoverished, underserved Appalachian areas. Adolescent services include school-based day treatment programs, counseling, residential care, wrap-around services, crisis clinics, and substance abuse programs. Unique opportunities in interdisciplinary services to adolescents are offered by these rural partners through their initiation of Bridges, IMPACT, and the Robert Wood Johnson’s Reclaiming Futures programs.

F. Projected Number of Project Participants for Each Year and the Entire Project Period and Date Participants Will Begin

A total of 76 students will complete PRISYM Traineeships, as shown below. Trainees will begin and complete Traineeships in interdisciplinary cohorts over the last academic year of their entry-level programs, typically from mid-August to mid-May. One cohort will complete training each year. Fewer students will be in the first cohort, in order to pilot the first offerings of PRISYM courses and rural immersion training experiences with fewer Trainees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: 76</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
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G. Statutory Funding Preference

The Statutory Funding Preference is requested. Eastern Kentucky University has a strong record of placing graduates in its rural, underserved Appalachian service region.

H. Budget (Includes Indirect): $992,143

Year One $298,018; Year Two $343,666; Year Three $350,459