



Washington University in St. Louis

GEORGE WARREN BROWN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Dear Participant:

As a family member of a person with a mental illness you are invited to participate in a pilot research project conducted by Dr. Kraig Knudsen of the Center for Mental Health Services Research at Washington University in St. Louis. As you are probably aware, estimates suggest that between 30 to 75 percent of persons with severe mental illness reside or have regular contact with a family member. Yet little is known about what families do to help their loved ones in their quest for recovery. The goal of this study is to better understand the methods families use to help their relatives maintain their mental health treatment.

This research aims to have participants participate in a short focus group. During this meeting, you will have the opportunity to share your experiences with and thoughts about caring for a relative with a mental illness in a casual environment and with complete confidentiality. As a family member of a person with mental illness, your views and experiences are extremely valuable in helping improve the mental health care provided to persons with mental illness. I hope that you will agree to participate in this study as your input will greatly increase our understanding of how to help people with mental illness maintain their treatment.

The focus group will last approximately 90 minutes. In appreciation for your time, an assortment of refreshments and pastries will be provided during the study. Although I hope you will participate in the study, participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, it will not affect you or your family members in any way. Please be assured that anything you say during the focus group will be kept strictly confidential and that no identifying information will be used that will be linked to you. Additionally, all audiotapes of the focus groups will be destroyed once transcribed.

If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to contact me at (314) 935-8140 or via e-mail at kknudsen@gwbmail.wustl.edu. Thank you for considering participating in this important study, I hope that you will be able to join me for this important discussion.

With Warmest Regards,

Kraig J. Knudsen, Ph.D.