Info Sheet for CMHW Staff

Community Conversations with Clients and Guardians

Partnership is at the heart of this work

The trust you have built with clients and families is invaluable. This work is designed to honor that trust and support you in sharing an opportunity.

This work uses a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach. We are working with communities, not studying them from the outside. Researchers from the same cultural communities have designed the process and will lead the conversations. Our goal is to listen deeply, do no harm, and strengthen the relationships you have built.

What this work involves

Wilder is hosting small group conversations (focus groups) with CMHW clients and families from the following cultural communities: Black/African American, Karen, Burmese, Cambodian/Khmer, Hmong, Latino/Hispanic, Vietnamese.

Why this work matters

We believe the people most affected by services should help shape them. By listening directly to clients and families, we can better understand what is working well, what can be improved, and how services can be more responsive to cultural communities across Ramsey County. This work centers the wisdom, experiences, and strengths of the communities we serve.

How this will take place

- 14 total groups (2 per community)
- One group with adult clients and one with parents/caregivers/guardians of youth clients under 18 years old
- 6–8 participants per group
- Groups will last 1.5-3hrs
- Led by a Wilder community researcher from the same cultural community
- A second research staff will take notes

What comes after

We will:

- Reflect on themes from the conversations
- Work with the Staff Advisory Council to help interpret what we hear
- Share findings in ways that can inform and strengthen services

Key details for participation

✓ **Choice**: participation is voluntary
✓ **Incentive**: $100 thank you for participants
✓ **Language**: groups are held in the preferred language
✓ **Dates**: Summer/Fall 2026
✓ **Location**: In-person at a Wilder location or a preferred culturally appropriate location

Materials to support our work together

To support this work, we have gathered a range of materials, tools, and resources in one place: wilder.org/ccbhc

These resources are intended to make it easier to share information and connect us with client and families. They include:

1. Info sheet for CMHW staff
2. Staff FAQ
3. Flyers for client and family (multiple languages)
4. FAQs for client and family (multiple languages)
5. Video invitations (multiple languages)
6. Information about each community researcher

1. wilder.org/ccbhc

Your role as CMHW staff

Wilder Research is asking for your partnership in sharing this opportunity with clients and guardians of youth clients under age 18. We deeply respect the trust and the relationships that you have built and want you to support this work in ways that feel comfortable for you and the people you serve.

Your role is to offer the invitation to eligible clients and guardians and give them the space to decide if they are interested. Because this is completely voluntary, there is no pressure to convince clients and guardians to participate.

Who to consider inviting (eligibility)

We encourage you to share this focus group opportunity with all clients and guardians on your caseload who meets the eligibility criteria below.

- Are 18+, or are parents/caregivers/guardians of clients 17 or younger
- Identify with one of the seven cultural communities (Black/African American*, Burmese, Cambodian/Khmer, Hmong, Karen, Latino/Hispanic, and Vietnamese)
- Are not currently in crisis or experiencing an emergency**
- Have received Wilder services for at least 3 months and/or have completed or "graduated" from a Wilder program within the last 6 months (ex. Participants who have completed the Wilder Recovery Services program)
- Would feel comfortable sharing experiences in a small group setting

*We recognize the importance of African immigrant perspectives; they will be centered in future work
**Crisis looks different for each person. We rely on your clinical judgment to assess whether participation would feel safe.

How to share this opportunity

1. Share the Client & Family recruitment flyer and FAQ
2. Use the suggested script below or adapt to your own words
3. Help clients and guardians view the video invitation using the QR code on this info sheet
4. If clients and/or guardians are interested, offer a warm connection with any or all of the following:
    a. Have clients and/or guardians contact the community researcher directly via phone or email
    b. With permission, share their contact info with Wilder Research (all current clients should have a signed research authorization form on file)

Once a client and/or guardian is connected with the research team, we will take it from there.

> **Space is limited.** If more people are interested than there is space, we will use a random selection process to choose participants.

Optional script for inviting clients and families

- I want to tell you about something Wilder is offering and there is no pressure to say yes.
- We are holding small group conversations with [GROUP] clients and guardians of children under 18 years old to learn about your experiences with mental health and/or addiction services, like what has worked well for you and what could be better.
- It is **voluntary**. Saying yes or no will not affect your services in any way.
- The group will be led by a researcher from Wilder who is also from the [GROUP] community.
    - (If applicable) They can speak and understand [LANGUAGE], and can use an interpreter too if you want to.
- You don't have to do anything ahead of time, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to. It's not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. You can talk as much and as little as you like.
- There will be 6 to 8 [GROUP] people in the group and you may or may not know them.
- It will be about 1.5 to 3 hours and it will be at [the Wilder Center or another location].
    - The research team plans to do the group sometime in August or September, and they will let you know the exact date and time.
    - [TBD: If you need transportation, [Wilder Research staff] will arrange it for you – details to come]
- You will receive a $100 giftcard or cash to thank you for your time.
- Would you be interested or do you want to know more before deciding?
- If a lot of people are interested, we will do a random drawing to select people to be part of the group.

FAQ for CMHW staff

1. What is my role in this work?

Your role is simply to share the opportunity and create space for choice. There is no expectation to recruit or persuade participation.

2. How should I introduce this to clients or families?

You can share the recruitment flyer and Client and Family FAQ, and help clients and guardians view the video invitation using the QR code on this info sheet. This way, clients and guardians can hear directly from the researcher and see who will be leading the group discussions.

You can also use the suggested script or your own words. What matters most is:

- Emphasizing that it is **voluntary**
- Reassuring them that **services will not be affected**
- Sharing that this is about **learning from their experiences**

3. What if I'm not sure whether to invite someone?

We encourage you to think broadly about who meets the criteria. At the same time, we trust your clinical judgment to determine:

- Whether it feels appropriate
- Whether the timing is right
- Whether participation would feel safe

4. What if a client is in crisis or going through a difficult time?

Please prioritize their well-being. If participation could feel overwhelming or unsafe, please do not extend the invitation at that time.

Crisis looks different for each person. We rely on your clinical judgment to assess whether participation in a conversation about their mental health and/or addiction in a group setting would feel safe.

5. Will this affect my relationship with clients or families?

Protecting your relationships is a priority. The research team:

- Will not share who participates, declines, or withdraws
- Will not report information back to providers
- This helps maintain trust between you and those you serve.

6. How is confidentiality protected?

- We will not use names in any reports
- Information will be aggregated
- Quotes will not include identifying details
- Participants are encouraged to respect each other's privacy
- However, we cannot promise participants will not share what they hear

7. Will the groups be recorded?

- Audio recording will be requested to ensure accuracy
- Recordings are deleted after transcription
- Participants can say no and still participate
- If anyone declines, written notes will be taken

8. What if clients are not comfortable meeting in person?

While we aim to have these conversations in-person, we will ask participants about their preferences. Groups may be:

- In person at a Wilder location
- Virtual (Microsoft Teams)
- Held in alternative community locations

9. What if too many people are interested?

If interest exceeds available spots, participants will be selected by random drawing. This helps ensure fairness. If this is the case, we will explain this to everyone who expressed interest.

10. What support will participants receive?

- $100 giftard or cash as a thank-you
- Language support (from community researchers and/or interpreters)
- Possible transportation support (as available)
- Food and refreshments (for in-person groups)

11. What if the conversation brings up strong emotions?

Participants can:

- Pause or skip questions
- Take a break or leave at any time
- Research staff may also encourage participants to reach out to the following resources:
    - Their provider (you)
    - Wilder Community Mental Health & Wellness: 651-280-2310
    - Call or text 988 for Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

12. What happens with what is shared?

What participants share will help:

- Identify strengths and gaps in services
- Inform improvements in service delivery
- Guide future decisions
- We will also share findings back in meaningful ways.

13. Who do I contact if I have questions?

You can reach out to the community researcher for your client's community or the project lead.

- **Black African-American** Faith Opakunle faith.opakunle@wilder.org
- Burmese
- **Cambodian Khmer** Sophak Mom sophak.mom@wilder.org
- **Hmong** Miamoua Vang miamoua.vang@wilder.org (Project lead)
- **Latino/Hispanic** Christina Munoz-Pinon christina.munozpinon@wilder.org
- **Karen** Hsa Hsay Hser hsahsay.hser@wilder.org
- **Vietnamese** Tanya Kim tanya.kim@wilder.org

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