

Appendix C – Letters to Address Compliance Problems

No Treatment

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

It has come to my attention that you never began the therapy to which you were assigned. I understand that there could be several reasons for this. You may be too busy to continue at this time, and perhaps you intend to begin when your schedule is easier. Perhaps you have decided you don't need treatment or that you need a different type of treatment program other than what is offered in our study. However, as you may recall, the therapy phase of the research project is available for only ninety (90) days from the last assessment session.

Please remember that we still consider you a part of the research project even if you receive no treatment at this time. We are interested in what you do for the next 15 months. Many people recover without any professional help. We have no set expectations about what will be helpful for different people. You will help us by telling us what is happening in your life—the good and the bad.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call me at (telephone number). I'll help any way that I can.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Dropped Out of Therapy

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

I has come to my attention that you are no longer active in the therapy to which you were assigned. I understand that there could be several reasons for this change in your status. You may be too busy to continue at this time, and perhaps you intend to continue. However, the therapy phase of the research project is available for only ninety (90) days from the first therapy session.

Your inactivity may also mean you are dissatisfied with therapy or question whether it can help you. We encourage all clients to give the therapy a chance to work by completing the 12 weeks as we originally agreed. If you are not willing to do this, we understand and will wait to contact you until your first research followup appointment at the end of the 90-day therapy period.

Please remember that we are interested in *all* outcomes of therapy. We have no set expectations about what will be helpful for different people. You help us by telling us what is happening in your life—the good and the bad.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call me at (telephone number). I'll help any way that I can.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Unable To Contact for Final Evaluation

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

I am writing to you because I understand that the staff have been unable to contact you to schedule your final evaluation with the research project. I hope that this is just a case of missed communication and that we can complete the interview at your earliest convenience.

I know that a lot can happen to a person in the course of 15 months. If something has come up in your life that makes it difficult for you to follow through with this interview, please let us know. We greatly appreciate your loyalty to the project so far and want to do whatever we can to make it possible for you to complete.

If you need some special arrangements like transportation or a home visit, please call (name of office staff) or myself at (telephone number), and we will make the arrangements.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Thank You for Scheduling Followup Interview (Participant Reinduction)

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

I want to thank you for agreeing to schedule a followup interview with the research team. We are very pleased with your recent decision to come in. Your continued participation in this study is important to its success. We will reimburse you (dollar amount) for your time and travel. This amount is more than the usual reimbursement rate.

For future followup visits, if scheduling at our office is difficult for you, we have some flexibility in how we conduct the followup evaluations. We want to make this as convenient as possible for you, so let us know what your needs are. If you missed one of the scheduled followup appointments, we will attempt to recapture that time missed.

Please feel free to call me at (telephone number) if you have any questions or need some assistance. Part of our commitment to you is to offer support during the 12-month period of the followup. Again, thank you for your willingness to remain a part of the project.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Deter Dropout

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

I am writing to talk to you about our concern about your potential for dropping out of our research study. We understand that during the course of the study some clients will change their minds about being involved with the research project. They may be dissatisfied with the services they received, or their circumstances may have changed, making it difficult to continue. While we understand the reasons why this change may occur, and we respect the individual's right to leave the study prematurely, we want you to know what impact this decision has on the overall quality of the research.

If you recall, at the intake assessment we talked with you about the importance of the long-term followup. In order to say with confidence what treatments have been helpful or not helpful for what kinds of people, we need to have a high percentage of clients complete the full 15 months. Dropouts in a particular client group limit our ability to draw conclusions about the treatment results for the client group. In other words, your decision to stay or not stay with the study may affect other people like yourself seeking treatment in the future.

Our dilemma is to balance out the client's right to choose with our need to keep people in the project. We have several options available to us. If you do not want to come to our office, we can send a research assistant to your home, or we can do the interview over the telephone. If there is some part of the interview that you object to, we can omit it. Remember, we want to make this as convenient as possible for you.

Please help us do the job we've been asked to do. If you are ready to schedule your 3-month interview or willing to consider another option, call (name) at (telephone number). We will continue to attempt to reach you. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Decision to Drop Out

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

I am writing to you about your decision to drop out of our research project. I understand that this is your right, and you have been very clear about the reason why you made this decision: you feel you were not helped by the treatment. Given that fact, I am writing to ask you to reconsider your decision. If you will hear me out, I will tell you why this is so important to us and what we are willing to do to make it worth your while.

If you recall, at the intake assessment we talked about the importance of the long-term followup. In order to say with confidence what treatments are helpful or NOT helpful for what kinds of people, we need to have a high percentage of clients complete the full 15 months of followup. Dropouts in a particular client group limit our ability to draw conclusions about the treatment results for the client group. In other words, your decision to not stay with the project may affect other people like yourself seeking treatment in the future.

The fact that you have not completed your (name the missing followups) followups does not mean you can't help us. If you are willing to talk with one of our research assistants, we can get the information needed for us to count you IN the project. We have several options. We can do a telephone interview and send self-reports to your home. We can do a telephone interview only. Or we can schedule the 15-month interview and see you in person, which will take approximately three hours of your time, including lab and self-reports. I can reimburse you (amount) for that interview.

Please help us to do our job so we can meet the goals of this nationwide, federally sponsored treatment research study. I will give you a week to consider this. If I don't hear from you by (date), I will do a followup telephone call. I hope you will give some careful thought to this matter and allow us to interview you.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Accept Dropout With Respectful Acceptance of Decision to Drop Out

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

You recently spoke with one of our research assistants regarding the additional 2 years of followup interviews. You said you had no interest in continuing with these interviews.

We regret your decision; however, we understand that it is not uncommon for people's attitudes to change over time about their involvement in a study like ours. You had your own reasons for declining at that time, and we will respect your decision. We will not be sending you reminder letters or calling you to confirm your decision.

However, if your circumstances change and you wish to reinvolve yourself, I hope that you will call us at (telephone number) to let us know that you would like to continue in the study.

Thank you for your past involvement and best wishes from all of the project staff.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

39-Month Contact

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

It's been 39 months since you enrolled in our research study. Your final interview is soon due. You gave us permission to invite you to complete this interview.

It would be a tremendous help to us as a site, and to the project as a whole, if you would agree to this interview. It will cover the period of time since your last followup interview. Depending on how much information you are willing to provide, this could take as little as 1 hour, or as much as 2½ hours. We will compensate you accordingly for your time and effort.

I hope you will consider this request. If you have questions, please discuss them with us. If you want more information, or are prepared to schedule this interview, call us at (telephone number). If we don't hear from you, we will assume that it is okay to call you as a followup to this letter.

If I can be of any assistance, please call me at (telephone number). I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)

Reconsider 39-Month Interview

(Date)

Dear (Client's Name):

Some time ago, you said you were not interested in participating in our research study. At that time, it was unclear to us whether or not that was a permanent decision, so I am writing you to invite you for the FINAL (39-month) interview. Like yourself, a number of the original (number) (city) participants dropped out of the research followup at some time. This is not unusual given the amount of time the project has run. What is extraordinary is that almost all of them have become reinvolved. Nearly (percent) of our participants completed the original 15-month project. The vast majority of those people have continued in some fashion with the long-term followup interviews.

If you are willing to consider a final interview, please call any of us at the project office (telephone number) for more information. You will be reimbursed \$50 for a telephone interview and \$150 for an in-person interview. If you are ready to schedule, the interview will cover the last 2 years.

I hope you will consider this request.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Title)