Selection & Assessment Psychometrics

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PSY 720

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To: Senior Leadership, Meridian Health Solutions

From: Nicole Salem, Personnel Assessment Reviewer

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Subject: Legal and Ethical Risk Review of the Client Services Coordinator Hiring Process

Meridian Health Solutions (MHS) is preparing to hire Client Services Coordinators (CSCs) to support increasing demand for patient coordination services across its operations. CSCs are responsible for scheduling services, maintaining patient records, and communicating with clients and healthcare providers to support the delivery of care. Because the role directly supports service operations, the hiring process for selecting CSC employees should be clearly defined, consistently applied, and aligned with established employment law and personnel selection practices. At the request of Meridian Health Solutions (MHS) leadership, this memo provides an initial review of potential legal and ethical risks within the proposed CSC hiring process and identifies areas where additional documentation, review, or consultation may strengthen the process prior to implementation.

1. Identification of Legal Risks

a) **Lack of Job Analysis for the CSC Role:** The hiring materials indicate that the Client Services Coordinator job description was adapted from a similar role used at a previous organization. The information provided does not indicate that Meridian Health Solutions conducted a formal job analysis or documented the essential functions of the CSC role. Without documentation linking the selection criteria to the duties of the position, it may be difficult to explain how screening rules, assessments, and interview criteria were

developed. The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures expect hiring criteria to be based on job tasks and required competencies (Highhouse et al., 2016).

b) **Automated Screening Criteria:** The proposed CSC hiring process automatically screens out applicants with multiple employment gaps, fewer than 3 years of continuous employment, or a prior attendance-related termination. While these rules may be intended to identify reliable candidates, the information provided does not indicate that Meridian Health Solutions has evaluated whether the criteria disproportionately exclude certain applicant groups. Court precedent has established that employment practices that exclude large groups of applicants must be connected to job requirements. In Griggs v. Duke Power Co. (1971), the Supreme Court held that selection practices with a discriminatory impact must be justified by business necessity. Because the CSC role has not been formally analyzed, it is unclear whether these screening rules reflect the position's operational requirements.

c) **Assessment Tools:** CSC candidates complete a commercially available personality assessment and an internally developed judgment test. HR reports that Meridian Health Solutions lacks documentation showing how these assessments relate to performance in the Client Services Coordinator role, and that the internally developed assessment has not been reviewed since its original implementation. When assessments influence hiring decisions, organizations are expected to demonstrate how those tools relate to job performance (Highhouse et al., 2016). Court precedent has reinforced this expectation. In Albemarle Paper Co. v. Moody (1975), the Supreme Court emphasized that employers must be able to provide evidence linking selection procedures to job performance when those procedures influence hiring decisions.

d) **Interview Practices:** CSC candidates participate in a single interview conducted by a supervisor. Interviews are unstructured, interviewer training has not been provided, and interview notes are optional. HR also reports that some interviewers ask questions about family responsibilities and scheduling availability, which may create legal concerns if those factors influence hiring decisions. In addition, the lack of structured interview criteria makes it difficult to demonstrate that candidates are evaluated consistently.

2. Identification of Ethical Risks

Several elements of the CSC hiring process raise ethical concerns related to fairness and transparency. Final hiring decisions are made through informal group discussions focused on interview impressions, schedule flexibility, and how quickly a candidate can start, with no formal scoring system or evaluation criteria. Without clear criteria, it may be difficult to explain how candidates are compared or why one applicant is selected over another. In addition, CSC candidates complete a commercially available personality assessment, yet HR reports that Meridian Health Solutions lacks documentation demonstrating how the tool relates to performance in the CSC role. Even when assessments are provided by external vendors, employers remain responsible for ensuring that the tools used in hiring decisions are appropriate for the specific role and supported by relevant evidence (Nikolaou, 2018; Hunkenschroer & Luetge, 2022).

3. Risk Prioritization

Risk levels reflect an initial assessment of severity, likelihood of challenge, and the organization's ability to explain or document the current practice. High-risk issues include the absence of a job analysis for the CSC role, the use of assessment tools without validation

documentation, and interview questions related to family responsibilities. Moderate-risk concerns include recruitment language such as “digital natives,” automated screening rules based on employment gaps, and reliance on unstructured interviews. Low-risk practices include using standardized rejection emails for unsuccessful applicants.

4. Ambiguity and Need for Consultation

Several elements of the CSC hiring process remain unclear based on the information provided. It is not known whether Meridian Health Solutions has conducted job analyses for similar roles, whether validation documentation exists for the personality assessment vendor, or whether the automated screening rules have been evaluated for potential adverse impact. Before implementing the CSC hiring process, Meridian Health Solutions may benefit from consulting internal stakeholders. Legal Counsel could review the screening criteria and assessment tools, while the Compliance Office and Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) may help evaluate documentation standards and identify whether similar hiring practices have generated complaints or concerns within the organization.

5. Professional Judgment and Communication

Meridian Health Solutions is working to fill CSC positions quickly due to staffing shortages, and pressure to hire rapidly is understandable. Selection processes that rely on informal practices or limited documentation can become difficult to justify if hiring decisions are later questioned. This review identifies areas where additional documentation, review, or consultation may help Meridian Health Solutions strengthen the transparency and defensibility of the proposed CSC hiring process before implementation.

References:

Nikolaou, I. (2018). Artificial intelligence in employee selection: A framework for ethical decision making. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 26*(2), 99–109.

Highhouse, S., Dalal, R. S., & Salas, E. (2016). *Essentials of Personnel Assessment and Selection* (2nd ed.). Routledge

Hunkenschroer, A. L., & Luetge, C. (2022). Ethics of AI in human resource management: A systematic review. *Journal of Business Ethics, 178*(1), 43–61.