

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FEDERAL STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE SAPT BG PROGRAM****Estimates of Burden for the Collection of Information.**

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this project is 0930-xxxx. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per interview, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to SAMHSA Reports Clearance Officer, 1 Choke Cherry Road, Room 7-1044, Rockville, Maryland, 20857..

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Study ID No: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction**

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. We know that you are extremely busy, and we greatly appreciate your input. As you know, the Centers for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and Prevention (CSAP) have contracted with Health Systems Research, Inc. to conduct an evaluation of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program (SAPT BG). The purpose of our discussion today is to learn how the SAPT BG is implemented at the Federal level and to understand the impact of the SAPT BG within States.

Your agency's name and location and your general job title (e.g., Public Health Advisor) may be identified in reports prepared for this study and in data files provided to CSAT and CSAP. However, none of your responses during the interview will be released in a form that identifies you or any other Federal staff member by name. Please remember that this study is not part of an audit or management review of Federal operations. Your participation in the interview is completely voluntary.

The estimated total time to complete this interview is 90 minutes.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

**Background**

1. What is your title, and how long have you been in this position?
2. Briefly describe your responsibilities with regard to the SAPT BG.

**Federal Funding Distribution**

3. How do CSAT and CSAP allocate SAPT BG funds to States?  
Probes:
  - a) Is there an allocation formula? If so, on what is the allocation formula based?
  - b) Who is involved? What roles do they play?
  - c) What is the time frame for the allocation process?
  - d) What role do State Project Officers (SPOs) play in the allocation of SAPT BG funds?
  - e) Do you feel the allocation formula can be improved? If so, in what ways?
4. What administrative activities are supported by the SAPT BG 5 percent set-aside?

**Development of Application Template and Guidance for States**

5. What is the intended purpose of the application template and guidance?
6. What is the process for the development of the application template and guidance for States?  
Probes:
  - a) Who is involved?
  - b) How are changes to the template and guidance communicated to stakeholders (e.g., other Federal staff members, State stakeholders)?
  - c) What is involved in order to make changes to the application template and guidance?
  - d) What have been some of the most recent changes, and why? What future changes are anticipated?
  - e) What is the time frame for the development and distribution of the application template and guidance each year?
  - f) Are there challenges related to adhering to the time frame? If so, please describe.
7. What are the strengths of the application template and guidance document?
8. What are the weaknesses of the application template and guidance document?
9. Is the application template and guidance used by States beyond its intended purpose? If so, what are other uses?
10. How would you improve the application template and guidance document?

11. How would you improve the process of developing the application template and guidance?

### **Application Review and Approval**

12. How are SAPT BG applications reviewed and approved?  
Probes:
  - a) What role do SPOs play in the review and approval of applications?
  - b) Is the Block Grant Application System (BGAS) used in this process? If so, how?
  - c) How is approval status communicated to other Federal staff members and to the States?
13. What are the strengths of the application review and approval process?
14. What are the weaknesses of the application review and approval process?
15. How would you improve the application review and approval process?
16. Have there been any unintended positive or negative results of the application review and approval process? If so, please describe.

### **Use of Application Information**

17. How do you use States' application information?
18. How is BGAS used in this process?
19. What reports are generated from BGAS:
  - a) On a regular basis?
  - b) On a one-time basis?
20. Other than the SPOs, who requests information that can be obtained from States' applications?

### **Annual Synar Report (ASR)**

21. What is the intended purpose of the ASR?
22. What is the process by which guidance is given to States on developing their ASR?
23. How is the ASR reviewed and approved?
24. How are the ASRs used?
25. Other than SPOs, who requests information obtained from the ASRs?

26. What are the strengths of the ASR process?
27. What are the weaknesses of the ASR process?
28. How would you improve the ASR process?
29. Have there been any unintended positive or negative results of the ASR process? If so, please describe.

## **Program Monitoring**

### ***Technical Reviews***

[Interviewers: The following questions should be administered to Federal staff members who work in substance abuse treatment. If you are not speaking with any treatment staff involved with CSAT Technical Reviews, skip to the next section.]

30. Please describe your role in the Technical Reviews.  
Probes:
  - a) What is your role in the Core Elements Technical Review?
  - b) What is your role in the State Requested Technical Review?
31. What is the purpose of the Technical Reviews?  
Probes:
  - a) What is the purpose of the Core Elements Technical Review?
  - b) What is the purpose of the State Requested Technical Review?
32. Are there policies governing the technical review process? If so, what are they?  
Probes:
  - a) How are States selected for Core Elements Technical Reviews each year?
  - b) What is the process for handling a State-Requested Technical Review? Who decides what issues will be addressed?
33. Who conducts the technical reviews?
34. How are the reviewers identified?
35. Do the reviewers receive training about how to conduct the technical reviews? If so, what training do they receive? What is the time frame for this training (e.g., how long before the actual technical reviews does the training occur)?
36. What guidance do you provide to States concerning the technical review process?  
Probes:
  - a) What materials are provided?
  - b) What instructions are provided?

37. What products result from the technical reviews (e.g., technical review report and recommendations)?
38. What is the timeliness of the submission of technical review products?
39. How do you (program staff and grants management) use technical review products?
40. Do States receive the technical review reports? If so, do you know what States do with the reports?

***State Prevention and Synar Systems Reviews***

[Interviewers: The following questions should be administered to Federal staff members who work in substance abuse prevention. If you are not speaking with any prevention staff, skip to the Grants Management section.]

41. Please describe your role in the State Prevention and Synar System Reviews.
42. What is the purpose of the State Prevention and Synar System Reviews?
43. Are there policies governing the State Prevention and Synar System Review process?  
If so, what are they?  
Probe:
  - a) How are States selected for State Prevention and Synar System Reviews each year?
44. Who conducts the State Prevention and Synar System Reviews?
45. How are the reviewers identified?
46. Do the reviewers receive training about how to conduct the State Prevention and Synar System Reviews? If so, what training do they receive? What is the time frame for this training (e.g., how long before the actual State Prevention and Synar System Review does the training occur)?
47. What guidance do you provide to States concerning the State Prevention and Synar System Review process?  
Probes:
  - a) What materials are provided?
  - b) What instructions are provided?
48. What products result from the State Prevention and Synar System Reviews (e.g., State Prevention and Synar System Review report and recommendations)?
49. What is the timeliness of the submission of products?

50. How do you (program staff and grants management) use State Prevention and Synar System Review products?
51. Do States receive the State Prevention and Synar System Review reports? If so, do you know what States do with the reports?

### ***Grants Management***

52. What role does Grants Management play in monitoring compliance with the SAPT BG program?  
Probes:
  - a) Are there specific grants management policies that govern the monitoring of compliance with the SAPT BG program?
  - b) If so, what are they?
  - c) How are they enforced?
53. How would you improve the services provided by Grants Management to States?

### ***Other Program Monitoring***

54. In what other ways do CSAT and CSAP monitor State compliance to the SAPT BG requirements?
55. How are potential issues with State compliance identified?  
Probes:
  - a) Are States' intended use plans compared to States' annual reports and progress reports to assess the degree to which planned activities were implemented? If so, please describe this process.
  - b) Who decides what potential issues require Federal or State action?
  - c) How are issues that require action communicated to States?
  - d) Is there followup from CSAT and CSAP to determine if potential issues have been addressed?
56. What are the strengths of SAPT BG program monitoring?
57. What are the weaknesses of SAPT BG program monitoring?
58. How would you improve SAPT BG program monitoring?
59. Have there been any unintended positive or negative results of SAPT BG program monitoring? If so, what are they?

### **SAPT BG Development and Support**

60. How do CSAT and CSAP provide SAPT BG-related support (e.g., training, technical assistance) to States?

- Probes:
- a) What types of support are provided?
  - b) Who provides SAPT BG-related support to States?
  - c) If SPOs, in what areas do they provide support?
  - d) If contractors, in what areas and through what vehicles do they provide support?
61. What are the strengths of the SAPT BG-related support that CSAT and CSAP provide to States?
  62. What are the weaknesses of the SAPT BG-related support that CSAT and CSAP provide to States?
  63. How would you improve the SAPT BG-related support that CSAT and CSAP provide to States?

**Data Collection (e.g., Treatment Episode Data Set, Voluntary Prevention and Treatment Measures, National Outcome Measures), Analysis, and Dissemination**

64. How do CSAT and CSAP collect data on the SAPT BG program, and for what purposes?  
Probes:
  - a) What types of data are collected?
65. Do CSAT and CSAP solicit feedback from States about SAPT BG data collection? If so, how?
66. Do CSAT and CSAP incorporate State feedback about SAPT BG data collection? If so, please provide examples of State feedback that CSAT and CSAP have incorporated.
67. How do CSAT and CSAP analyze data on the SAPT BG program?  
Probe:
  - a) Who analyzes data on the SAPT BG program?
68. How do CSAT and CSAP disseminate data on the SAPT BG program?  
Probes:
  - a) What are examples of reports that are developed using SAPT BG program data?
  - b) Who are the audiences for these reports on SAPT BG program data?
  - c) Do CSAT and CSAP share SAPT BG data with States? If so, how?
  - d) What other stakeholders receive SAPT BG program data, and for what purposes?
69. Do you use SAPT BG program data? If so, in what ways (e.g., Federal administration and management)?

70. What are the strengths of SAPT BG data collection, analysis, and dissemination?
71. What are the weaknesses of SAPT BG data collection, analysis, and dissemination?
72. How would you improve SAPT BG data collection, analysis, and dissemination?
73. Have SAPT BG program data been used for purposes other than those originally intended? If so, please describe.
74. As a result of data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities, to what extent has the Federal Government improved its ability to describe State BG program outcomes?
75. Have SAPT BG data been used to make improvements in Federal administration and management of the SAPT BG program? If so, please describe the changes.
76. Have there been any unintended positive or negative results of SAPT BG data collection, analysis, and dissemination? If so, please describe.

#### **Federal-level SAPT BG Outcomes**

77. Do the technical reviews, SPSAs, and Synar System Assessments improve State and Federal communication and information exchange? Please explain.
78. Have SAPT BG resources been used to leverage Federal policy and priority changes? If so, please describe.
79. Do CSAT and CSAP play a leadership role in improving the substance abuse prevention and treatment system? In guiding the States in the SAPT BG? If yes, please describe.
80. In what other ways has the SAPT BG had an impact at the Federal level?

#### **Closing**

Thank you very much for your time. Your participation is greatly appreciated. If you think of anything else you would like to add, please contact me by phone or e-mail.