



OMB No. 0915-0212  
Exp. Date: XX/XX/20XX

## Attachment B: Focus Group Moderator's Guide

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### I. WELCOME (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone. My name is [MODERATOR NAME], and I work for the Academy for Educational Development. Thank you for coming for this discussion. Before we begin, I'd like to explain a few things about this room and how the discussion will work.

1. We are not trying to sell or promote any product or service to you.
2. There are **no right or wrong answers** -- We want to know your honest opinions.
3. Don't feel like you need to answer every question. But if I haven't heard from you in awhile I may call on you occasionally.
4. There are microphones in this room that we are using to **audiotape** the discussion. Afterwards, I have to write a report and by having the tapes it will help me to do this.
5. Because we are taping, it is important that you try to **speak one at a time**. I may occasionally interrupt you when two or more people are talking at once in order to be sure everyone gets a chance to talk and that responses are accurately recorded.
6. Behind me is a **one-way mirror**. Some of the people working on this project are observing this discussion so that they can hear your opinions directly from you. However, your identity and anything you personally say here will remain **private**. When

I write my report, I will not refer to anyone by name.

7. The group will last for **one hour and fifteen minutes**. I want to be sure not to keep you here any longer, so I may occasionally interrupt the discussion to move us along.
8. Please turn off your **beepers & cell phones**. Should you need to go to the restroom during the discussion, please feel free to leave, but we'd appreciate it if you would go one at a time.
9. I do not work for the people who are sponsoring this research, and I was not personally involved in the development of any of the ideas and items that I am going to share with you today. If you have something negative to say, it is all right. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to hear your opinions.

## II. INTRODUCTIONS (5 minutes)

1. Let's go around the table and introduce ourselves to each other including:
  - your first name;
  - where you're from; and
  - what type of health care provider you are, or are training to be.

## III. PERCEPTIONS OF NHSC (10 minutes)

1. Let's talk a little about what the National Health Service Corps (NHSC or the Corps) is. I'd like to hear from you about what you know about it. What is it? What does it do?
  - a. [IF NO ONE HAS HEARD OF IT] Hearing the name of the program – National Health Service Corps – What do you think it is? What do you think it does?
2. Have you looked for ways to get help paying back your student loans, or do you anticipate that you will be looking for help to pay back your student loans?
  - a. What programs are you aware of that help health care providers pay back their student loans?
3. So that we are all on the same page about what the National Health Service Corps is and what it does, since what we will talk about today relates to this program, I am going to read you a description of it.

[READ THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF NHSC ALOUD]

*The National Health Service Corps is a network of more than 10,000 clinicians and health care sites that provide primary care to underserved communities. Clinicians receive loan repayment, or some receive scholarships, in exchange for serving as a primary care provider—for at least 2 to 4 years—in needy communities.*

Sometimes, the National Health Service Corps name is shortened and referred to as the “NHSC” or “the Corps, so there are times when I may refer to it this way during our discussion today. I wanted to mention this so that you are not confused.

#### **IV. REACTIONS TO BRAND ELEMENTS (20 minutes)**

The government agency that runs the National Health Service Corps is developing some materials to let people know what it is, what it does, and why it is important. Your feedback on these materials will be used to refine and finalize the materials for future promotion of the program for the purpose of recruiting new clinicians and health care sites into the program. Now, I would like to show you some materials and get your reactions to them.

1. **Mission Statement.** First, I would like to get your reaction to a draft mission statement for the National Health Service Corps. A mission statement is a short, written statement about the purpose of an organization that explains why it exists and what it hopes to achieve. A mission statement also should articulate the organization’s values and its work.

[DISTRIBUTE A HANDOUT TO EACH PARTICIPANT THAT INCLUDES THE DRAFT NHSC MISSION STATEMENT. ASK PARTICIPANTS TO READ ALONG, AND READ THE HANDOUT TEXT ALOUD TO THE GROUP.]

- a. What is your initial reaction to this NHSC mission statement?
  - b. What words or phrases do you particularly like about the statement?
  - c. What don’t you like about the statement?
  - d. What would you change in the statement?
  - e. Are there any words or phrases that are confusing or hard to understand? What are they? [PROBE SPECIFICALLY ON KEY PHRASES AND WHAT THEY MEAN TO THEM]
2. **Logos.** Now that we have talked about the mission of the National Health Service Corps, I am going to show you some logos that have been developed for the program.

[SHOW THE 3 LOGOS TO PARTICIPANTS ONE AT A TIME AND DISCUSS. ROTATE ORDER LOGOS ARE SHOWN IN BETWEEN GROUPS.]

- a. What is your initial reaction to this logo?
- b. What words come to mind when you see this?
- c. What do you like about it?
- d. What don't you like about it?
- e. What would you change about it?
- f. Is there anything in the logo that is confusing or hard to understand? What?

[REPEAT QUESTIONS V.2 a.- f. FOR EACH LOGO. AFTER ALL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED, ASK:]

Now I'd like to take a quick vote. When I show you the logo that you like the best, please raise your hand. Based on the mission statement, which logo do you think best depicts the National Health Service Corps? Logo A? Logo B? Logo C?

- g. Those of you that chose Logo A, tell me why you chose that logo.  
[CONTINUE TO PROBE WHY PARTICIPANTS CHOSE LOGO B, and C.]

3. **Taglines.** Now we are going to look at some taglines that have been developed for the National Health Service Corps. Taglines are phrases that are used to define or represent the mission or identity of a program or organization. Taglines are often used in conjunction with a logo, but not always.

[SHOW THE 3 TAGLINES TO PARTICIPANTS ONE AT A TIME AND DISCUSS. ROTATE ORDER TAGLINES ARE SHOWN IN BETWEEN GROUPS.]

- a. What does the phrase mean to you?
- b. How does it make you feel?
- c. What would you change about this tagline to make it more clear?

[REPEAT QUESTIONS V.3.a.- c. FOR EACH TAGLINE. AFTER ALL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED, ASK:]

- d. Of the taglines we discussed, which one do you think best represents the NHSC? Why?
- e. We welcome your creative ideas. Can you think of a better phrase?  
[RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIPCHART.]

**V. FEEDBACK ON TERMINOLOGY, LOAN REPAYMENT OFFER (15 minutes)**

1. **Service Commitment/Obligation** The term of service required to receive loan repayment from the NHSC may be referred to as the “service commitment” or “obligation.”
  - a. What are your initial reactions to these two terms?
  - b. Thinking about what the NHSC does, which is to help clinicians with their student loans in exchange for a term of service providing primary care to the underserved, which term would you recommend they use – “service commitment” or “obligation.” For what reasons?
2. **NHSC Awardee/Member** When talking about the clinicians that participate in the NHSC loan repayment program, HRSA has referred to them as NHSC “awardees” or “members.”
  - a. What are your initial reactions to these two terms?
  - b. Thinking about the clinicians that participate in the NHSC, which term would you recommend they use – “NHSC “awardees” or “members.” For what reasons?
3. **Loan Repayment Offers.** Now we are going to talk about specific offers of loan repayment that could be given to members of the National Health Service Corps, in exchange for a service commitment. I want you to take a look at the following ways a loan repayment offer could be presented.

[SHOW PARTICIPANTS A BOARD WITH ALL 4 LOAN REPAYMENT OFFERS.]

- a. What is your initial reaction to these loan repayment offers?
  - b. Of the three loan repayment offers, which one would make you most likely join the National Health Service Corps? Why?  
[PROBE WHAT THEY LIKE, DISLIKE, OR WOULD CHANGE ABOUT IT.]
4. **Ambassador.** Again, we welcome your creative ideas here. Within the National Health Service Corps, there are many alumni, friends and partners who volunteer to educate, advocate, mentor, recruit and train others about the National Health Service Corps. If we wanted to provide a name for these people, what name would you give them, or what term would you use to describe these people and what they do? [RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART]
    - a. What comes to mind when I say the term “Ambassador?”

- b. Does the term “Ambassador” fit as a name for people who have the role I just described a minute ago? Why? Why not?
- c. Of all the names or terms we just discussed, [RESTATE ALL TERMS, REFERING TO THE FLIPCHART], which one do you like the most? Why?

## VI. REACTIONS TO MATERIALS (15 minutes)

We are almost done. Now, we are going to talk about some materials that the National Health Service Corps is thinking about developing, or has developed, both to support current members or applicants to the program and attract or welcome new members into the program.

1. ***Clinician Toolkit Materials.*** The National Health Service Corps is developing a toolkit to welcome new members into the NHSC community; help them understand NHSC program requirements; and provide tools and information about how to spread the word to other clinicians about joining the NHSC.
  - a. What format for a toolkit like this do you think would be most useful?  
[PROBE: Hard copy binder or folder? Online? DVD? Flash drive? Other?]
2. ***NHSC Web Pages.*** The National Health Service Corps is in the process of redesigning its Web site. I would like to show you the layout of a page about the experience of being part of the Corps, a page about the loan repayment program, and a page about an NHSC Blog and get your reactions to them.

[SHOW THE CORPS EXPERIENCE PAGE FIRST, DISCUSS. THEN SHOW THE LOAN REPAYMENT PAGE, DISCUSS. THEN SHOW THE NHSC BLOG PAGE, DISCUSS.]

- a. What is your initial reaction to the layout and proposed content for this page?
- b. What do you like about it? What do you dislike about it?
- c. Is there something you would like to see on this page that isn't here? What is it?

## VII. CONCLUSION/INFORMATION NEEDS AND PREFERENCES (5 minutes)

1. Thank you for sharing your opinions and feedback on the materials and information we have shared with you today. We will be using your input to finalize these materials for future marketing and promotion of the National Health Service Corps.

2. We have just a couple more questions for you before you leave. As we distribute new information and promotional materials about the National Health Service Corps, how would you prefer to receive this kind of information?  
[PROBE: Email, direct mail, Web site/online, etc.]
  - a. How would you pass along or get information to your friends or others you know who might be interested in the National Health Service Corps?
  - b. What would you want to send them?  
[PROBE: flyer or fact sheet, Web link, brochure, etc.]
3. Is there anything else you would like to share, or do you have any questions for me?
4. Each of you will receive a monetary incentive for participating in today's discussion as you leave the facility. Don't forget to stop by the reception desk on your way out.

**THANK YOU!**