

Attachment 8

Example Focus Group Guide

IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND DELIVERY OF CDC'S HEART DISEASE AND STROKE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

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Improving the Quality and Delivery of CDC's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Programs

MODERATOR/INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Welcome and Ground Rules (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone. Thank you very much for coming to this group discussion about the 2009 Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention (DHDSPP) Annual State Training. Your ideas and opinions are very important to us.

I'm _____ and I'll be facilitating our group today. That means I have a set of questions and discussion topics that I will be guiding us through. _____ will be helping me and taking notes during the group. We're both from [name of organization], a [description of organization].

Group Objectives

We are holding several of these groups for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the CDC- which is the government agency that works to improve detection and prevention of many different diseases, all over the country. Our goal today is to get your ideas and opinions about the 2009 DHDSPP Annual State Training that occurred in Atlanta this past September. Information will be used by the DHDSPP to improve the Annual State Training and other trainings it delivers. This group discussion will last about one hour.

Here are some ground rules that will help us work together:

1. First of all, I want everyone to know there are no right or wrong answers. We want to know your honest ideas and opinions, and some of you may disagree. This is fine. We are here to learn from you, and we want to hear from everyone and learn what each of you thinks about the issues we will be discussing.
2. If you do not understand a question that I ask, please let me know. I'll try to re-phrase it or explain what we are trying to get at with the question.
3. We would like to audiotape the group discussion. We want to give you our full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. We will refer to the tapes when writing our report. However, your identity and anything you say here will be treated in a confidential manner unless otherwise specified by the law. Your names, addresses, and phone numbers will not be given to anyone, and no one will contact you after this group is over. No one except project staff will hear the audiotapes. When we write our report, we will report on what was said, but not on who said it. Is it ok if I audiotape this session?

[If everyone in group agrees, begin audiotaping]

4. 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. Sometimes I may need to move the discussion along to make sure we cover everything, and I may ask those people who have contributed a lot to the discussion to give others a chance to speak.
5. Please don't hold back from giving us your honest opinions. If you have something negative to say, that's all right. Sometimes the negative things are the most helpful. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to hear your opinions.

Participation Statement

Your participation today is voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable at any time you don't have to answer a question or you can refuse to participate further. You will not be penalized in any way if you refuse to participate or skip any of the questions. As I mentioned, we will write a summary report of the findings from all the groups and interviews we conduct. Your name won't be used. In addition, when you leave this session, we ask that you do not share information that others have said.

(Ask each person in group) Any questions before we start? Are you willing to participate? (If yes, proceed. If no, stop interview and thank them.)

[Interviewer: initial and date, as appropriate:

Willing to participate _____

Not willing to participate _____]

Introductions (5 minutes)

To start things off, let's introduce everyone. Please make up a pseudonym; you will be referred to by this pseudonym for the remainder of the day. Also, please tell us what organization you are from, your current position in your organization, how long you have been in that position, and how many DHDSP State Trainings you have attended.

Great. Now I am going to ask some questions about the 2008 DHDSP Annual State Training that you all participated in this past September.

Relevance (15 minutes)

1. How relevant were the training sessions to the heart disease and stroke prevention work that you do?
 - a. Probe: Which sessions were the most relevant? Why?
 - b. Probe: Which sessions were the least relevant? Why?
 - c. Probe: What could have made the sessions more relevant to the work you do?
2. How appropriate were the training sessions for your skill level?
 - a. Probe: Which sessions matched your skill level? Why?
 - b. Probe: Which sessions did not match your skill level? Why?
 - c. Probe: How could the sessions have been tailored to better match your skill level?
3. To what extent did the training sessions address a specific problem, interest or need that you had?
 - a. Probe: What was the problem, interest, or need? How was it met?
 - b. Probe: What problems, interests, or needs do you still have that the training sessions did not address?

Quality (15 minutes)

1. To what extent did the training sessions have practical utility in your organization?
 - a. Probe: To what extent have you or your organization been able to implement the ideas, activities, or recommendations made during the training sessions?
 - b. Probe: What has prevented you or your organization from implementing the ideas, activities, or recommendations made during the training sessions? (Personnel, time, other resources?)
2. To what extent did the training sessions meet your expectations?
 - a. Probe: What could have been done differently in order for the training to more fully meet your expectations?
 - b. Probe: What could be done next year to improve the training?

Impact (15 minutes)

1. In what areas, if any, did the training increase your knowledge?
 - a. How have you used the information that you received at the training sessions?
 - a. In what ways, if any, have you applied what you learned at the training to the work you do?
2. What were some of the benefits of attending the training?
 - a. In what ways, if any, did the training help to connect you with other organizations or partners?
 - b. In what ways, if any, did the training influence the strategies your organization uses to prevent heart disease and stroke?

3. What other comments do you have about the 2008 DHDSPP Annual State Training?
4. What other guidance or resources do you need to enhance your organization's heart disease and stroke prevention efforts?

Closing (5 minutes)

[Check with observers for final questions and to see if any misperceptions need to be clarified.]

We're all done for today. Thanks very much for your time. We appreciate that you came in here to meet with us for this group. Your comments and insights have been very helpful. Now I want to hand out some information, including the CDC website address that has additional information. Thanks again and we hope you enjoy the rest of the day.