

2011 Group Quarters Population Study: Group Homes for Women

PROTOCOL GUIDE

Focus Group for the Group Homes for Women

A. INTRODUCTION: Purpose of the Focus Group:

Greeting: “Hello. My name is Susan Dewey. Thank you for agreeing to participate in our study. Let me start by telling you a little more about what we’ll be doing. As you may know, the United States Census Bureau counts population in the U.S once every 10 years. Last year, the U.S. Census Bureau counted everyone who is in the United States, including residents at your facility. I’m a researcher studying about facilities like this one where people live and stay. Today, with your help, my goal here is strictly to gather information so we can evaluate how good a job the Census Bureau is doing in counting everyone at facilities like this one and how we can improve on future censuses. I want to learn about what might be the best way to return to this facility to collect information about the residents in order to evaluate whether or not the census operation misses anyone at this facility or counted anyone who were not here. I am interested in hearing your honest opinions about the census and its operation, particularly if you have past experiences filling out Census forms and or assisting in the completion of Census forms or surveys and your impression about the enumeration procedures. So the purpose of our session today is to collect your thoughts and opinions on the Census Bureau and their operations. I just want to remind you that I'm only asking for your feedback, thoughts and opinions and there is no right or wrong answer. Your feedback will be very useful for helping make sure that residents living at your facilities will be counted correctly.

Your participation in this interview and the review of the materials is very important because it will help the Census Bureau in improving their future operations.

Do you have any questions before we begin?”

B. INFORMED CONSENT

“Before we start, I would like you to read over the document in front of you. This document explains a little bit about this focus group and provides information about your rights as a participant. Our session today is completely confidential. Any names you provide will never be used in our

reports, and all of the information you provide will be completely confidential. Also, your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can decline to answer any particular question. Please feel free to ask me any questions at any time. As I mentioned earlier, please be assured that all of your responses will be kept confidential and your name, and any personal information you provide will never be used in any of our reports. Please ask me any questions you have about this document. Once you have finished reading the document, please sign it.”

C. GUIDE TO FOCUS GROUP

- 1) Goal 1: Obtain general background information and impression of the census process
- 2) Goal 2: Diagnose potential non-response issues
- 3) Goal 3: Identify alternative data collection procedures and methods
- 4) Goal 4: Assess potential issues with new methods

Assessing Comprehension

- Observe/document instances of interpretation/understanding difficulty regarding the forms and census data collection procedures

Assessing Respondents' Reactions to the Census Procedures

- Was anything sensitive, alarming or unsettling to respondents?
- What procedures (advance letter, visit etc) would encourage or discourage future cooperation from the staff and residents?
- What did they think about the use of administrative records?
- Any concerns about confidentiality and how can we ensure that.

D. QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Goal 1: Obtaining General Background Information and Impressions of the Census Process

1. Please tell me about your experience with the 2010 Census at your facility.
2. Please describe the way that the Census forms were distributed and collected at your facility. What were your biggest impressions as this process was taking place?
3. How accurate do you believe the Census count was at your facility, and could this level of accuracy have been improved?

Goal 2: Diagnosing Potential Non-Response Issues

4. How were the residents informed about the Census, and did they accept the Census instructions?
5. Could you estimate how many residents did or did not complete a Census form?
6. What do you think made residents decide to complete the form or not?

Goal 3: Identifying Alternative Data Collection Procedures and Methods

7. What other organizations contact you to collect information from your residents?
8. Please describe how that process usually works, and at what time of year it typically takes place. Does it ever create problems for you and your colleagues?
9. If you were responsible for counting the women who live here, how would you do it?

Goal 4: Assessing Potential Issues with New Methods

10. How would you feel about having the Census Bureau count the residents at your facility by using your administrative records, rather than having residents fill out the forms?
11. What could the Census Bureau do to reassure your facility that these records would assure your residents' right to confidentiality?

E. FINAL COMMENTS

- Do you have any final comments or any questions?

F. DEBRIEFING

Thank you very much for talking to me today. I will use what you have told me today to help write a detailed report for the U.S. Census Bureau. This report will discuss how people who live in group quarters such as yours could be better counted as part of future censuses. The report is important because the U.S. Census is used by many government agencies and social service organizations to determine a number of things that directly impact communities, including the number of Congressional representatives and amounts of funds particular states and localities should receive. Census information is important because it can help policymakers decide where to build schools, libraries, and other facilities that many people use every day.