

Online Study Focus Groups

Consent Form A

Introduction and Purpose:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a research study about online health information. The purpose of the study is to learn more about how people use online information to make health decisions.

RTI International, a non-profit research organization in North Carolina, is conducting the study. We will be conducting virtual and in-person focus groups in Bethesda, MD; Raleigh, NC; and Chicago, IL. You are one of approximately 100 people being asked to participate in this study.

You are eligible to participate in the study because of your experience using online health information.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate, you will take part in a **group discussion (8-10 people)** about online health information. The discussion will last about **two hours**. In addition, we will ask you to complete a short survey about yourself and your experience using online health information.

Benefits:

There is no direct benefit to you for participating. However, you may find the discussion informative and may learn about new resources for online health information.

Risks:

There are no known risks to participating in this study. While the questions we ask are not meant to be sensitive, there is always a chance that you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions. You do not have to answer any question that you don't want to answer.

Confidentiality:

Everything you share in this focus group is completely confidential. When summarizing the discussion, we will not use any names, and your personal information (name, address, phone number) will not be linked to any of your responses.

With your permission, we will audio-tape the discussion to supplement our notes. Recordings will not include names and will be stored on password protected computers that only project staff can access. At the end of the project, we will destroy the recordings. All hardcopy forms will be kept in a locked file cabinet that only project staff can access.

Observation:

Some project staff may observe the discussion behind a one way mirror. They will not record your name and will keep all of your comments confidential.

Reimbursement:

In appreciation for your time and travel, we will reimburse you **\$75** at the end of the focus group.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can choose to skip or not talk about any topic. You can withdraw from the group for any reason at any time.

Persons to Contact:

If you have questions about the study, you can call the project director, Mr. Doug Rupert, at 1-800-334-8571, ext. 26495 (toll free). He can be reached between 9 AM and 5 PM Eastern Time Monday to Friday.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you can call RTI's Office of Research Protection toll-free at 1-866-214-2043.

Your Consent:

I have read this consent form. I had a chance to ask questions, and my questions were answered. I was given a copy of this consent form. I agree to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date