

CDC and ATSDR Health Message Testing System (OMB No. 0920-0572)

We would like to submit a request for change to the generic clearance, OMB No. 0920-0572, CDC and ATSDR Health Message Testing System.

This change would add 14 new questions and modify four questions as follows: four new and three modified screening questions to the Demographic Questions portion, seven new questions to the Core Questions portion, three new and one modified questions to the Follow-up Questions portion of the Health Message Testing System Question Bank. The change would not involve changes to the burden hours or any other part of the approved package.

The Environmental Health Tracking Branch, Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects, National Center for Environmental Health submitted a request to use the Health Message Testing System for the study, “Message Testing for CDC’s Environmental Health Tracking Network website” and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion submitted a request to use the Health Message Testing System in formative testing and evaluation of a National Media Campaign to support the ARRA-funded initiative Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW).

The additions and modifications to the Health Message Testing System Question Bank will provide more opportunities for CDC programs to use the Health Message Testing System OMB clearance for future concept/message testing data collection instruments. In this way, CDC initiatives will be able to maximize the health impact of the information directed at specific audience segments, resulting in optimum benefit for public health.

NCEH Justification for Additional and Modified Questions

The currently approved screening questions do not completely address the specific audience segment required for EHTB data collection, nor will they help us fully understand if our questions are most appropriate or if there is content missing. Three additional questions are required to identify members of the appropriate audience segment to participate in focus groups and one additional and one modified follow-up questions are needed to fully understand if the website has the appropriate messaging and content.

Building off of findings from Porter Novelli *HealthStyles* data, we seek to better understand discrete segments of the general public who may be interested in and concerned about environmental public health and who actively seek health information on the internet. We believe these two segments of the general public are the most likely users of the Tracking Network and we want to better understand if the content available is appropriate and complete and if the messages we are using to describe the Network resonate with their perceived interests. This research project is important for our national communications efforts. Results from the message testing will be used to:

- improve content messages on the National Tracking Network
- inform the development of new communications materials and a national communications plan to promote the Tracking Network in a way that resonates with the audience that CDC intends to reach.

NCCDPHP Justification for Additional and Modified Questions

CPPW provides funding and technical assistance for community-based initiatives to achieve broad reaching, highly impactful, and sustainable change to reduce chronic disease morbidity and mortality associated with obesity and tobacco use. The priority audiences for the National Media Campaign are parents and community leaders.

Additional and Modified Demographic Questions

The current question bank has one question about respondent age, which is presented in age categories (Question 2a). For the purpose of this and future initiatives, knowing the exact age is important.

Race and ethnicity are important considerations for effective communication campaigns. Recent research indicates that the wording is important to elicit valid responses. For this reason we suggest changing Question 5a that asks them to identify yourself from “Are you...” to “Do you consider yourself...”

In question 10a, occupational status includes “employment.” A priority group for the CPPW National Media Campaign is concerned, but overwhelmed, parents. Part-time and full-time employment are important distinctions for gauging the amount of disposable time that parents can devote to activities affecting family health, such as grocery shopping, food preparation, and physical activity. We recommend adding full-time and part-time employment as responses.

Question 12a about marital status provides as a response category, “Living as married.” This response was considered offensive by several researchers reviewing the instrument. We suggest rewording this item “Unmarried living with a partner.”

Additional Core Questions

Developing an identity or a brand for communication campaigns can strengthen their effectiveness. We propose adding a Campaign Awareness Section containing seven questions to capture awareness of campaign identities or individual materials.

Additional Follow-up Questions

The existing question bank asks participants behavioral intentions questions. NCCDPHP would like to add a closed-ended question to assess intent to carry out a desirable action suggested by the CPPW National Media Campaign. An objective of CPPW is to broaden parents’ horizons of factors affecting tobacco use and obesity, especially contributions of policy, systems, and environmental change. The proposed additional attitude question would allow this and future communication campaigns to measure changes in attitude toward these important variants affecting health. These additional questions will also benefit other CDC community-based projects and campaigns.