

Attachment K: Focus Group Data Collection Tool

Welcome



[Aim to finish Welcome by **xx:xx**] [5-10 minutes]

Good evening everyone. Thank you for coming. My name is _____ and I will be facilitating our discussion tonight. I work for ATSDR—the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. ATSDR is a government agency that works to protect people from harmful substances in the environment.

One of the things ATSDR does is publish Public Health Assessments and Health Consultations to help people understand environmental issues in their community. We'd like to get your opinions on how to improve these documents. This will help us make the products as helpful and understandable as possible.

You each have a booklet with some documents in them. We are going to look at them one at a time, so please look at each one when I tell you – please don't look ahead!

Before we begin, I want to go over a few ground rules for our discussion tonight, which will last about 2 hours.

- Speak freely – there is no right or wrong...we're interested in your thoughts.
- Respect other people's opinions, even if you disagree.
- Wait until someone finishes talking before you talk. You can signal me to let me know you'd like to talk next.
- Tonight's discussion will be audio and video recorded. The recordings will help me write the final report. No names will be mentioned in the final report created from these interviews.
- Some of my coworkers are viewing our discussion from behind the glass. They're watching to make sure that I ask you all of the questions I have for you today. Near the end of our conversation, I'm going to go into the back and see if they have any last minute questions for you.
- Please silence your cell phones
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 120 minutes per focus group, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information

Part 1. Warm-Up



[Aim to finish Part 1 by xx:xx] [5-10 minutes]

You are here tonight because we would like to hear your thoughts about ATSDR documents. Not so much what you like/didn't like about ATSDR's site work but specifically your opinion on the document ATSDR produced for [INSERT SITE NAME].

[The goal here is to set subjects at ease, establish a positive group dynamic, and get subjects engaged and talking]

[Have subjects introduce themselves]

1. First let's go around the room and have everyone tell us your first name, occupation, and your involvement with the site.
2. How did you obtain the document about [insert site name]?
[Probe]
 - a. What would be the most effective way or format to receive the document?
 - b. Video? Educational pamphlets? Community/public meetings? Internet? Social Media?

Part 2. Treatment



[Aim to finish Part 2 by xx:xx] [30 minutes]

Alright, thank you. Now let's talk about what the [Public Health Assessment (PHA)/Health Consultation (HC)] document for [insert site name].

Now, I'm going to pass out a couple copies of the [PHA/HC]. That should be familiar to you. [Pass out the 2-3 examples and let everyone skim through them.]

3. How would you sum up in just a few words your first impression of the document? Do you like it? Not like it? Why?
[Probe]
 - a. What about the tone of the document?
 - b. [If not mentioned] What about the language used in the document?

- c. *[If not mentioned]* How about the format of the information in the document?
4. How beneficial do you believe this document is for people like you? *[Probe]* How do you see our documents?
 5. How did you use the information from this document?
 6. In your own words, what is the message this [PHA/HC] is trying to get across?

By a show of hands please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about the message this document relays.

- I learned something new after reading it _____ [insert number]
 - After reading document, I implemented a recommendation _____ [insert number]
 - I shared information from the document with other people _____ [insert number]
7. Is there anything you want to know that this document does not tell you? *[Probe]* What are some things that you need to know that was not in the document?
 8. Did you understand the conclusion and recommendations in the document? *[Probe]*
 - a. How easy were the recommendations for you to follow/implement?
 - b. *[If not mentioned]* How realistic were the recommendations in the document?
 - c. *[If not mentioned]* What makes it difficult to carry out the recommendations outlined in the document?
 - d. *[If not mentioned]* Which action/recommendation, if any, are you likely to implement? Why? Why not?
 9. What could be changed to make the conclusion and recommendations more effective?
 10. Is there anything in the document that is confusing, unclear or hard to understand?
 11. What changes would most improve the document? *[Probe]* What information could be added or taken out?
 12. By a show of hands, do you agree or disagree with this statement: The document accurately describes the community's health concerns?
 - Agree
 - Disagree

13. Do you think the document was written for the community members, public health practitioners, or someone else? *[Probe]* Does it seem like the document is talking to you and people like you, or someone else?

Part 3. Content



[Aim to finish Part 3 by **xx:xx**] [45 minutes]

[Begin to pass out the [PHA/HC] section outline to each participant. With each section/title have participants indicate which section should be kept with no changes, changed, or should be removed.]

The paper in front of you is an outline structure of the [PHA/HC]. In just a minute, I would like for you to indicate which sections provide you with the most important information. Please write a “K” for sections that should be kept with no changes, a “C” for sections that should be changed and an “R” for sections that should be removed. Ready? Go!

[Once everyone is finished ask for a show of hands, how many people have a “K”]

14. [Ask “K’s”] What did you like about this section?

[How many people have a “C”]

15. [Ask “C’s”] What could be changed to make it more effective?

[Probe]

- a. *[If not mentioned]* What type of information would you add to the section?
- b. *[If not mentioned]* What information would you remove?

[How many people have an “R”]

16. [Ask “R’s”] What did you dislike about this section? *[Probe]* How could this section be more useful to you?

[Repeat for each section.]

Part 4. New Products



[Aim to finish Part 4 by **xx:xx**] [30 minutes]

In front of you, there are a few alternative redesigns of the PHA/HC format. Take a look at these and decide if the redesigns work for you. [*Give participants a few minutes to review documents*]

Let's take a look at the Brochure.

17. How would you sum up in just a few words your first impression of this document? Do you like it? Not like it? What makes you say that?
18. How beneficial do you believe this document would be for people like you?
19. Do you feel like any information is missing from this document?
20. What additional sections would you want covered in the document?
21. How do you feel about the format in which the information was presented?

[Repeat for the alternative documents]

22. Please rank these three redesigns, by placing 1 by the document you feel you are more likely to use, a 2 by the second-mostly likely to use, and a 3 by the one you would use least:
 - Brochure - A
 - Community Report - B
 - Narrative HC - C

Part 5. Wrap-Up



[Aim to finish Part 4 by **xx:xx] [5 minutes]**

Okay, we're ready to wrap up now. Now that we've looked at a bunch of documents, I have a one more question to ask.

23. Is there anything else you would add that you think could enhance the redesign of ATSDR documents?

Now I will check with my co-workers in the back to see if they have any additional questions.

Thank you all very much for your participation. Your feedback will help us make these documents as effective as they can be.

[Thank subjects again, say good-bye and show them out.]