Focus Group Moderator Guide: Purchasers/Business Decision Makers

Focus Group Discussion: Purchasers/business decision makers: employers, corporations, business coalitions, and unions, vendors of health information technology focused on clinical decision support. *Note: depending on the organization, during the discussion we will reference employees or members as appropriate.*

Moderator's Topic Guide

ROAD MAP of Discussion

Introduction	5
Organizational Background	5
Awareness of the Research	10
Understanding of the Research	15
Behavior Change/Use	15
Research Benefits	5
Close	5
Total	60

I. Introduction (5 minutes)

(a) Introduction

> (i) Thanks for attending the teleconference/webinar.

> (ii) Your participation is important.

> (iii) Describe what a focus group is – like an opinion survey, but very general, broad questions.

(b) Purpose

> (i) We will be discussing you and your organization's awareness, understanding, use, and benefits of patient-center outcomes research (PCOR), how your organization and employees, members, or constituents receive and interpret materials, and how employees, members, or constituents decide to adopt new behaviors based on information they receive. We are also trying to understand how your organization learned about research that is designed to help your organization use PCOR, the best way to communicate information about PCOR within your organization, and how important you think it is for your organization to have information to make clinical comparisons.

(ii) Ground Rules (go over verbally)

1. I am interested in all your ideas, comments, and suggestions.

2. Please be in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted.

3. There is no right or wrong answers.

4. All comments, both positive and negative, are welcome.

5. Please feel free to disagree with one another. We would like to have many points of view.

6. Please turn off cell phones.

7. Please use your first name only.

(c) Procedure

(i) Explain the use of audiotape. All comments are confidential, to be used for research purposes only, as explained in the consent form you signed.

(ii) I want this to be a group discussion, so you need not wait for me to call on you. Please speak one at a time so that the recorder can pick up everything. Please state your name before you speak so I know who is talking.

(iii) We have a lot of ground to cover, so I may change the subject or move ahead. Please stop me if you want to add something.

(iv) When it comes to our health and our experiences surrounding our health, there is a lot we can discuss; however, in the interest of our discussion and so I get you out of here on time, please stay focused on the questions I will be asking.

Warm-up

Let's do introductions. Please introduce yourself, one at a time, first name only.

- Tell us your first name and
- Your favorite vacation spot

- Please describe your role/function in the organization.

Organizational Background (5 minutes)
1. Please describe the part of the organization that manages the PCOR information dissemination.
2. Is anyone in your organization on any government or private sector PCOR committee? If so, which ones?

Awareness of the Research   (10 minutes)

Individual Awareness
Let's talk about your awareness of PCOR.
3. Are you aware of PCOR?
4. If yes, how long have you been aware of PCOR? (Probe for a year, 6-9 months, longer than a year)
5. Did you become aware through your health care provider, family/friends, insurer, TV, radio, print, advertisement, social media, conference, membership organization, Web site or another source? (Probe for AHRQ and specific Publicity Center activities)

Patient-centered outcomes research or PCOR compares different health care interventions for common conditions by rigorously evaluating existing scientific literature and generating new findings through scientific studies of different treatment and diagnostic interventions. This information helps patients and their providers work together to make the best possible choice among treatment options.

6. Have you heard about the Effective Health Care Research Program (EHCP)?
   a. What do you know about the EHCP? Where did you learn about the program?
   b. Are you aware that there is a Web site to get information on this program? If so, have you visited it? If not, would you visit it?
   c. Are you aware that the EHCP, and PCOR, is a federally sponsored program? Does that make a difference to you in any way? (probe for use, non-use, trust, credibility)

Organizational Awareness

7. Does your organization receive information on PCOR? If so, from where and what is the frequency? (Probe for AHRQ sources)
8. Specifically, does the medical plan offered by your organization educate members on PCOR? Is it part of your open-enrollment educational process?
9. Is the awareness about PCOR on general information or a specific topic(s)? What is that topic(s)?
10. How are staff/members within your organization made aware of PCOR? Are they actively searching for materials? Do they receive routine updates from somewhere (Web sites, agency, provider organizations)? If so, which ones?
11. Does your organization provide PCOR training to staff/members? If so, who receives the training and who provides it?

Understanding of the Research   (15 minutes)
Individual Understanding
Let's talk about understanding PCOR, and the best way to convey what PCOR is.

12. If you learned about PCOR through TV, radio, print, advertisement, social media, conference, membership organizations, or Web sites, *(also reference another source if one was indicated in the awareness section)* was the concept of PCOR clear to you? What would make the message about PCOR clearer? (Probe for better visual, word choice, time of day, Web site)

13. After learning about PCOR for the first time, were you interested in learning more about PCOR?
    If yes, why?
    a. The information you received was insufficient.
    b. You were interested.
    c. Other.

14. Have you gone to Web sites or other sources to learn more about PCOR? What are they?

15. Do you participate in PCOR training in your organization, if training is conducted?

16. Do you feel comfortable explaining PCOR to staff within or members of your organization?

Behavior Change/Use (15 minutes)

17. Does your organization use PCOR?
    a. If yes, how long has your organization been using PCOR? (Probe for year, 6-9 months, longer than a year) For which topic(s)? Which divisions/groups use it?
    b. How is the information shared among staff/members?
    c. If not, why? (Probe for haven't heard of it, doesn't seem useful, and have not or do not know where to find resources)?

18. Does Federal policy or funding influence your organization's use of PCOR?

19. Why did your organization decide to use PCOR? Does it use PCOR for a specific topic or for general knowledge?

20. Are there any incentives for employees or members to use PCOR in their medical decision-making? If yes, what are those?

21. Do you feel your organization is likely to continue using PCOR in the future?
    a. Is there anything that would prohibit your organization from using PCOR?

22. What topics are you interested in learning more about? Would this encourage greater use of PCOR?

23. For Health IT vendors and Clinical Decision Support groups: Do you use PCOR information to guide your clinical decision support system development? If so, how? If not, why? What medical conditions does the decision support system support?

24. What would be the best way for you to receive PCOR information? (probe for: format, content, length, and media outlet)

Research Benefits (5 minutes)

Let's talk about some of the benefits of PCOR.

25. What benefits are associated with research that compares treatment options?
26. Do you feel there are any disadvantages to PCOR? What are they? What would you tell friends, if they expressed concern or /hesitation about PCOR?
27. How has the use of PCOR affected health outcomes (if your organization provides direct patient care)? Are they better or worse than if your organization did not use it?

Closing (5 minutes)

Is there anything else you'd like to say about the discussion we have had that has not yet been shared?

Thank you so much for your time and participation in the project. Your insights are very much appreciated and have been very helpful. Your participation incentive will be mailed to you within two weeks.