Moderator's Guide for Consumer/Patient Focus Group Sessions
Blue Button and Other Forms of Health IT

Need in the room: Pencils and highlighters for all participants; an easel for the moderator.

Introduction [10 minutes]

Welcome and thank you for joining us. My name is Christina Nicols and I will be your moderator for this focus group session, which is about health information technology and ways in which people and their doctors are using technology such as phone and computer apps and electronic health records. I'd like to hear how you feel about this topic, and I'm also interested in your perceptions about some visual materials and ad concepts, which I will show you a bit later. I want to let you know that I am not an expert in this topic; rather, I am an independent moderator trained to facilitate our discussion.

Our client for this research is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), located in Washington, D.C.   Our discussion should take about an hour and a half.

Disclosure

- Observation: There is a one-way mirror with observers in the next room who are interested in hearing your views, but don't want to interrupt the conversation.
- Audio taping and video recording: This session will be recorded by audio and video tape to enable us to capture everything that is being said today. We will use the tape to write our report to our client. The tapes will be destroyed after the report is completed.
- Confidentiality assured: All of your answers will be confidential, so feel free to say exactly what is on your mind. Nothing will be attributed to any particular person in our report.

Ground rules

- Need to hear from everyone, one at a time please
- No right or wrong answers, want personal opinions
- Moderator is impartial, please be candid
- It's okay to be critical. If you dislike something you hear, it's fine to disagree but please be willing to offer your own views and opinions.
- If anyone needs to use the rest room, they are located [specify]. There is no need to stop the discussion.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Participant introductions

- Brief introductions around the table

Familiarity with and Use of EHRs and Health IT [20 minutes]

As I mentioned in our introduction, this session is about ways in which people and their doctors are using technology such as phone and computer apps and electronic health records. Before we get into details about specific forms of health IT, I'd like to talk about how you currently manage the information associated with your health care. Let's see a show of hands for the following questions....

- Has anyone searched online for information about a disease, medical condition or health topic within the past year?
- Has anyone looked at any medical test results in paper format? How about online, in electronic format?

- Has anyone looked at your medical record [or the medical record of your child or someone in your care] in paper format? How about online, in electronic format?
- Has anyone received an email message from a health care provider? What about a text message?
- Has anyone renewed a prescription online?
- Does anyone keep a paper file of their own records or the records of some for whom they are providing care or assistance?

Some doctors and health care organizations use computers or mobile devices to record their patients' medical and health information. These electronic health records – sometimes called 'EHRs' or 'Electronic Medical Records - EMRs' – contain notes from your doctor or other medical personnel about your visits, diagnoses, test results, prescriptions, lifestyle and other elements of your medical history. As far as you know, do any of your health care providers maintain your medical record in an electronic system?

If yes, how do you know—did your provider discuss this with you, or is your impression based on observation of your provider, or on something else?

> [If yes] How would you characterize your experience with EHRs – Has this technology been helpful? Has it made managing your health care [or the health care of others] easier for you? In what ways?

> [If no] Have you ever wished you had your health record in electronic format so you could have all the information in one place? Do you think it would make it easier for you to share information among multiple health care providers?

How important do you think it is for health care providers to use EHRs instead of using paper-based records? What are the main benefits of EHRs? Are these benefits important to you personally?

Let's briefly talk about your experiences with other forms of health IT – specifically health-related apps. A "health app" is a program on a cell phone, mobile device or computer that can help you manage your health. Examples of health apps include calorie counters, sleep monitors, heart monitors, exercise trackers, and tools to help you manage your medications.

- Has anyone ever used a health app?
- How many health apps have you used or tried in the past year?
- Does anyone currently use a health app?
- Can you describe the health app you have used the most?
- How effective was this health app in helping you manage your health and/or health care [or the care of others?]?

Has anyone ever used a health app that helps you manage your health records [or the records of those in your care] so you can have all of the information in one place and share it with others you trust (e.g., doctors, other care providers or family), if they need it while providing care? (Some people might call this a PHR or personal health record – as opposed to an app…)

> [If yes] How was your experience with this app? Helpful?
> [If no] Does this sound like it could be useful? Why or why not?

Have any of you heard of Blue Button?

Blue Button is a way for patients to get easy online access to view their own personal health information, such as their insurance claims and medical records. Using Blue Button, patients can download their personal health information in a text file or PDF that can be read, printed or saved on any computer. [Share the visual symbol… so it's not just about recognition of the phrase but the logo also]

- Has anyone ever used Blue Button?
- Do you know of any friends or family members who have used Blue Button?

    [If yes to used]: How effective was Blue Button in helping you manage your health/healthcare [or the care of others]?
    [If no to used]: Based on the description of Blue Button, do you think you'd use it if it were available to you? Why or why not?

Blue Button Demonstration [5 minutes]
I'd like to show you a brief video that explains how Blue Button works….

[Show video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCt4jVR9AXU]

Attitudes about Blue Button [10 minutes]
Now that you've learned a bit more about Blue Button and you've seen how it works, do you think you'd use it if it were available to you? Why or why not?

Does anyone have concerns or questions about using Blue Button?

[Probe on specific factors as necessary]
- Access to a computer
- Time required to use it
- Understanding of medical terms
- Privacy or security concerns
- Comfort in using technology
- Cost
- Would rather have doctor keep track of health care
- Lack of interest / Lack of personal relevance
- Would rather not know what's in my record

What benefits do you think you would get from using Blue Button? Are these important to you, and if so can you tell us why?

I would also like to point out there will be a new web site soon that can tell you if you are eligible for Blue Button and where you can go to get your Blue Button….

[Demonstrate two screen shots showing the Blue Button Hub site and explaining its functions]

Does it seem like it the Blue Button Hub site could be useful to you? Do you think you will go online to use it when it becomes available?

Benefits of Health IT [10 minutes]
Let's go through a list of benefits provided by EHRs, Blue Button and other forms of health IT, and I'd like you

to tell me how important/appealing each of these is to you personally [go through list on flipchart]:

- Send and refill prescriptions electronically
- Receive electronic reminders to take medications
- Receive electronic reminders for appointments, preventive screenings and tests
- Communicate with health providers through secure email or secure text messaging
- View lab and test results online
- Have access to your health information during an emergency
- Have a summary of each visit with your health care provider
- Use programs that help you to set and reach your own personal health goals, such as losing weight or quitting smoking
- Send medical information from a device that helps you monitor indicators of your health (such as blood glucose, weight, heart rate or other indicators)
- Share your health information with other people—doctors or family caregivers-- you trust (especially when you change doctors, move, or make another significant transition)
- Withhold sensitive health information from selected health care providers (such as mental health information, HIV status, substance abuse or other sensitive health information)
- Correct inaccurate information in your medical record
- Add new information to your medical record (for example, information collected by your own medical device that your doctor may not have)
- Manage or keep track of your family's medical records
- Monitor and manage health-related expenses
- Keep track and manage medications in one list
- Keep track of immunizations

Out of all of these, what would you say is the most important benefit to you?

Testing Blue Button PSA Concepts (40 minutes)
HHS is in the process of developing 60-second television ads – called public service announcements (PSAs) – to inform Americans about Blue Button. These types of PSAs typically appear online (such as in YouTube), on television, or perhaps in the waiting room of your doctor's office. While HHS is producing these ads, their hope is that they will become an education tool for patients and other health organizations to use to help educate their members about how information technology can improve their lives and healthcare. We'd like you to tell us which PSA concept most effectively in catches your attention, both by providing useful information for you and motivating you to take action.

The PSA concepts are still just ideas – they haven't yet been made into videos, so we will be reviewing storyboards – we'll read a script and review illustrations that will show how the video will run. I'll show you three PSA concepts, and we'll discuss each one separately.   [Show one storyboard at a time]

PSA Concept #1: [See Attachment]

- How would you sum up your first impression of this PSA concept? [Probe:]
    - o   Do you like it?
        - ▪   Why or why not?
    - o   Would you pay attention to it if you saw it online, on television, or in your doctor's office?
        - ▪   Why or why not?
    - o   Is it interesting?

- ▪ Why or why not?
  - o What is the tone of this PSA concept (Probe: funny, serious, etc.)
    - ▪ Is the tone appropriate to the subject?
  - o Is it useful?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Would you forward it to a friend?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
- What does this PSA concept mean to you personally? [Probe:]
  - o Is it relevant to you?
  - o Can you see yourself in this concept?
- Is this PSA concept easy to understand?
  - o Why or why not?
- Is the information credible? [Probe:]
  - o Does the dialog/script seem realistic?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Is the person depicted here appropriate for the role?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
- What is the PSA asking you to do? What's the "call to action"?
  - o How easy or difficult do you think it would be to do what the PSA is asking you to do?
  - o How likely are you to take this action after seeing the PSA?
- Is there anything you would change about this PSA concept to make it more effective?
  - o What would you change?

PSA Concept #2: [See Attachment]

- How would you sum up your first impression of this PSA concept? [Probe:]
  - o Do you like it?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Would you pay attention to it if you saw it online, on television, or in your doctor's office?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Is it interesting?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o What is the tone of this PSA concept (Probe: funny, serious, etc.)
    - ▪ Is the tone appropriate to the subject?
  - o Is it useful?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Would you forward it to a friend?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
- What does this PSA concept mean to you personally? [Probe:]
  - o Is it relevant to you?
  - o Can you see yourself in this concept?
- Is this PSA concept easy to understand?
  - o Why or why not?
- Is the information credible? [Probe:]
  - o Does the dialog/script seem realistic?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Is the person depicted here appropriate for the role?

- - Why or why not?
- What is the PSA asking you to do? What's the "call to action"?
  - o How easy or difficult do you think it would be to do what the PSA is asking you to do?
  - o How likely are you to take this action after seeing the PSA?
- Is there anything you would change about this PSA concept to make it more effective?
  - o What would you change?

PSA Concept #3: [See Attachment]

- How would you sum up your first impression of this PSA concept? [Probe:]
  - o Do you like it?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Would you pay attention to it if you saw it online, on television, or in your doctor's office?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Is it interesting?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o What is the tone of this PSA concept (Probe: funny, serious, etc.)
    - ▪ Is the tone appropriate to the subject?
  - o Is it useful?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Would you forward it to a friend?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
- What does this PSA concept mean to you personally? [Probe:]
  - o Is it relevant to you?
  - o Can you see yourself in this concept?
- Is this PSA concept easy to understand?
  - o Why or why not?
- Is the information credible? [Probe:]
  - o Does the dialog/script seem realistic?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
  - o Is the person depicted here appropriate for the role?
    - ▪ Why or why not?
- What is the PSA asking you to do? What's the "call to action"?
  - o How easy or difficult do you think it would be to do what the PSA is asking you to do?
  - o How likely are you to take this action after seeing the PSA?
- Is there anything you would change about this PSA concept to make it more effective?
  - o What would you change?

Let's see a show of hands to determine which of these three you think is most effective [Show each in turn - #1, #2 or #3 – to have them vote].

Communication Preferences and Wrap Up (5 minutes)

As a result of our discussion tonight, are you interested in learning more about Blue Button? What would be the best way to provide additional information for you? Where would you be most likely to pay attention to it? [E.g., web site, television, magazines, newspapers, doctor's office, community organizations, etc.]

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, I want to thank all of you for your input today. Please stop by the reception desk to receive a token of our gratitude. [Collect all materials]