

# PATH Focus Group Moderator Guide

## Electronic Nicotine Product - Polyuse and Dual Use

### Overview

Thank you for agreeing to participate this evening in a discussion about the use of electronic nicotine products. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be leading the session tonight. With me is \_\_\_\_\_, who will be taking notes and helping me with the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_ and I both work for Westat, a company based in Rockville, MD that conducts research on many different topics for a variety of government agencies. Westat has been contracted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop materials and survey questions for a study known as the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health, or “PATH”. PATH is a national study that will look at how people use tobacco (or don’t) over a period of many years. Data collected during the study will help provide the scientific background for the development of product regulations to reduce tobacco-related illnesses and deaths in the United States.

Today, we’ll be asking you questions about your experiences with products such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, hookah pens, personal vaporizers, and e-cigars. Our discussions today will help us develop questions to include in the PATH survey.

Before we get started there are a few things I should mention. This is a research project, and your participation is voluntary. You may leave at any time during the session. You will receive \$50 as a thank you for participating in tonight’s discussion.

Your participation is also anonymous. Our report to NIH and the FDA will include the ideas that you all share with me today, but not your names. They are interested in *what* gets said, not *who* said what. Sometimes we do include quotes from groups like this, but we never use participants’ names in any reports. We also won’t share your names with NIH or the FDA, except as required by law.

Behind me is an observation room. Sitting in there tonight are [Westat staff and NIH or FDA staff]. They are also here to learn from you. Towards the end of the group, I’ll go back and see if our discussion raised any questions that they would like me to ask you. Because they are part of the research team, they also cannot attribute what they hear tonight to any one of you in particular. In fact, they only know your first name as it’s written on your name card.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 86 minutes per response, 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, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: NIH, Project Clearance Branch, 6705 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7974, Bethesda, MD 20892-7974, ATTN: PRA (0925-0675). Do not return the completed form to this address.

In addition, we need to audio record this focus group session. This helps \_\_\_\_\_ and I. I can listen better to what you are saying, and the recording will help \_\_\_\_\_ be sure that her notes are complete. We will destroy the file and any identifying information when the project ends.

I will look at your name tags and call on you by your first name. However, when studying the transcripts from today's session, it is helpful for me to know when we change speakers. So, please identify yourself when you speak so that we have that on tape. Also, please try to speak one at a time.

If you need a restroom, they are located \_\_\_\_\_. Please feel free to step out if you need to, but don't all leave at once!

Does anyone have any questions? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

In front of you is a form that says I've fully explained what we're doing today, and what your rights are as participants in this discussion. Please take a moment to read it and let me know if there is anything on the form that you do not understand. If you understand and are ok with what we're doing this evening, please sign and date one copy of the form and give that to \_\_\_\_\_. The other copy is for you to keep. It has contact information for the study director at Westat, in case you should have any questions later on. [COLLECT ALL FORMS]

If everyone's ready, we're going to start recording the session now.

## Introductions

Let's start off by going around the room: state just your first name and tell us something interesting about who you are - a hobby you may have, a unique experience, something like that.

## Devices

Now that we've done our introductions, I'd like to move on to discussing the products you use. One at a time, tell me what you use and either show me the products you brought or pick out the ones on the table that are closest to what you use.

[DURING THIS TIME, THE NOTE TAKER SHOULD BE WRITING A LIST OF THE MENTIONED PRODUCTS ON THE WHITE BOARD OR PAD.]

## Terminology

Taking a look at these products and the ones you all have brought in, what do you call this entire group of products?

PROBE TO FIND NATIVE TERMINOLOGY FOR UMBRELLA TERM

What do you call users of these products? IF NEEDED, Would you call them smokers, vapers, something else?



I have here a description of these types of products. DISPLAY LARGE-SIZED POSTER OF FOLLOWING:

\_\_\_\_\_ are products such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, personal vaporizers and mods, e-cigars, e-pipes, e-hookahs, and hookah pens. These products are battery-powered and produce vapor instead of smoke. They typically use a nicotine liquid, although the amount of nicotine can vary and some may not contain any nicotine at all. Some common brands include Vuse, Blu, Logic, MarkTen, NJOY, and e-Go.

INCLUDES IMAGES

Does {NATIVE UMBRELLA TERM} fit in this blank? Why or why not?  
Does this description cover all of these products—the ones you brought in, the ones you use?  
IF NOT, Which products aren't covered? Why?

REPEAT FOR EVERY NATIVE UMBRELLA TERM.

What about “electronic nicotine products”? Does that fit in this blank? Why or why not?  
Which products aren't covered? Why?  
IF NEEDED (ONLY IF RESPONDENTS DO NOT BRING IT UP ON OWN), What about when someone uses a liquid that does *not* contain nicotine? Does “electronic nicotine products” fit? Why or why not?

What about “electronic vaping products”? Does that fit in this blank? Why or why not?  
Which products aren't covered? Why?

What about electronic products that use tobacco leaves, instead of nicotine liquid?  
Are you familiar with these types of products? What do you usually call them?  
Does this description cover those? Why or why not?  
ASK FOR EACH UMBRELLA TERM: What about this term?

## Device Use

Now let's go back to discussing the products that you use.

- How often do you use your product?
- How long have you been using it?

[FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO USE MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF ELECTRONIC NICOTINE PRODUCT (E.G., PRODUCTS WITH CARTRIDGES AND PRODUCTS WITH REFILLABLE TANKS), PROBE FOR EACH PRODUCT]

## Polyuse

*FOR POLYUSE GROUP ONLY*

All of you use more than one type of product. Let's talk about how you decide when to use different products. Are there certain times or places you use particular products?

How do you decide between e-cigarette, e-hookah, e-cigar, etc?

How do you decide between a disposable or reusable product?

PROBE TO TEASE OUT DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT PRODUCTS (SUCH AS E-CIGARETTE AND E-HOOKAH), AND DISPOSABLE VERSUS REFILLABLE.

IF NEEDED: Do you tend to use multiple products on the same day?

Do you consider any one product to be more important to you than the others?

IF YES, Which one? Why do you consider it most important? How often you use it or something else?

IF MOST OFTEN DIFFERENT FROM MOST IMPORTANT, PROBE TO FIND OUT WHY.

Do you tend to use disposable or reusable e-products more often?

## Dual Use

### *FOR DUAL USE GROUP ONLY*

All of you use another tobacco product along with an electronic nicotine product—whether cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, or something else. What do you use?

How do you decide which to use when? Are there certain times or places you use one or the other?

Do you tend to use both products on the same day?

On days when you use regular tobacco, do you use your e-product less often, more often, or about the same?

On days when you use your e-product, do you use your regular tobacco product less often, more often, or about the same?

Are you using your e-product to help you quit using your regular tobacco product? If yes, has using your e-product been effective in helping you quit?

Do you consider one product to be more important to you than the other[s]?

- IF YES, Which one? Why do you consider it most important?
- Is the product you consider most important also the product you use most often?  
IF MOST OFTEN DIFFERENT FROM MOST IMPORTANT, PROBE TO FIND OUT WHY.

## Dosage

Do you know how much e-liquid your tank can hold?

PROBE AS NEEDED

- How do you measure your e-liquid? (In milliliters, milligrams, visually...?)
- Do you know how many milliliters of e-liquid you typically use in a day? In a week? PROBE TO SEE IF THERE IS ANOTHER TIMEFRAME RESPONDENTS ARE USING TO MEASURE THEIR USAGE OF E-LIQUID.
- When you buy e-liquid, how do you know how much to buy?

How often do you refill your tank with e-liquid?

## Flavors

We're also interested in learning about flavors that people use. The last time you used your product, what flavor of e-liquid did you use?

IF NO FLAVOR, PROBE TO SEE IF E-LIQUID IS CIGARETTE, TOBACCO, OR NICOTINE FLAVORED.

PROBE TO SEE HOW THESE FLAVORS ARE DESCRIBED/ADVERTISED ON PRODUCT PACKAGING.

Do you usually use the same flavor? Do you usually use the same types of flavors (e.g., fruit, candy)? IF YES, What flavor do you usually use?

IF MULTIPLE FLAVORS: How do you decide what flavor to use?

- Do you use certain flavors at certain times?
- Do you use certain flavors in certain places?

## Disposal

When you are finished with a disposable e-product or an e-product cartridge, what do you do with it?

Are there parts you keep?

Are there parts you throw away? Where do you throw it away?  
Do you usually throw them away in the same place or does it vary?

[PROBE FOR MULTIPLE LOCATIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE FULL RANGE OF PLACES RESPONDENTS MAY DISPOSE OF E-PRODUCT PARTS]

## Close

Those are all the questions I have for you, but let me check with my colleagues behind the glass to see if there are issues you all raised about which they have additional questions. [CHECK WITH OBSERVERS, RETURN AND ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, AS APPROPRIATE]

Thank you for your thoughts and your time today.  
DISTRIBUTE INCENTIVE OR DIRECT RESPONDENTS TO FRONT DESK.