

# HOOKAH FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE – ONLINE

*PATH ad hoc – E-cig and hookah formative research*

## I. OVERVIEW

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a discussion about hookah use. 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. Through a contract from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Westat is developing materials and questionnaire items for a study known as the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health or PATH Study. The PATH Study is a large national study to understand tobacco use and health among Americans.

Our interest is in being sure that people can understand and answer the questions we ask in the PATH Study. Because hookah use is fairly new, people may think about it or talk about hookah use in different ways. The questions and materials in the PATH Study need to reflect how people talk and think about hookah use. We hope to learn from you how we should ask about this product in the study questionnaires.

Today/tonight, we'll ask questions about your experiences using hookah, such as when you first started using hookah, what you like about using hookah, how often you use hookah, and why you use hookah.

Before we start, we'd like to make a few things clear. This is a research project, and your participation is voluntary. The focus group will last about an hour and a half. We will provide you \$40.00 after the focus group as a thank you for your participation. You may choose not to answer any question. You may leave at any time during the session.

Your participation is anonymous. Findings from the focus group will include the ideas that you all share with us today, but not your names. Sometimes we will quote what the group says, but we will not use anyone's names in the findings. This study is interested in *what* gets said, not who said what. On occasion, researchers from NIH and FDA may listen to this discussion today/tonight.

Do you have any questions so far? **[ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]**

Are you willing to participate in this focus group?

**[IF PERMISSION WAS GIVEN FOR INTERVIEW]** Super. In addition, we need to audio record this focus group session. This helps \_\_\_\_\_ and me; 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 audio recording and any identifying information when the project ends. Are you okay with us recording? I will call on you one by one for your answer. **[CALL ON GROUP MEMBERS]**

**[IF PERMISSION WAS GIVEN TO RECORD]** I'd like to start the audio recording now.

**[TURN ON RECORDER]**

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For the purposes of the recording I am going to repeat my requests to participate in the focus group and to allow us to record so I have your permission on tape. Are you willing to participate in this focus group? I will call on you one by one for your answer. **[CALL ON GROUP MEMBERS]**

Are you okay with us recording? I will call on you one by one for your answer. **[CALL ON GROUP MEMBERS]**

Just one last thing. I will call on you by your WebEx user name when appropriate. However, you don't have to wait for me to call on you. Feel free to speak naturally and interact with the other focus group participants. When studying the transcripts from today's session, it is helpful for me to know when we change speakers. So, please identify yourself by user name when you speak so that we have that on tape. Also, please try to speak one at a time and if you're talking to another person in the focus group, make sure to refer to them by their user name so that we know who you're talking to. If it looks like someone used their last name in their WebEx user name, please only refer to them by their first name. For example, if the user name is "John Smith," please just refer to him as "John S."

Does anyone have any other questions? **[ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]**

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Let's start off with introductions: state just your first name, approximately how long you've been using hookah, and then tell us something unique about yourself – an interesting hobby, famous relative or ancestor, something like that.

### **A. HOOKAH USE**

**[GENERAL DISCUSSION – NO NEED TO ASK EVERYONE INDIVIDUALLY]**

- a. When did you first use a hookah?
- b. Why did you start using a hookah?
- c. How often do you use hookah?
- d. When was the last time you used a hookah? Could you describe it to me?
  - i. PROBE AS NEEDED: Where were you? How many people were you with? How typical is this of your usual hookah use?

**[SHOW PICTURE OF HOOKAH]**

### **B. ANATOMY OF THE HOOKAH**

- a. Can anyone tell me about the different parts of the hookah and what they are for? You can use the letters in the picture to refer to specific parts if you would like.

### **CHARCOAL**

Many people use charcoal to heat the hookah.

**[REFER TO LETTER POINTING TO WHERE CHARCOAL GOES]**

- a. Do you use/Have you used natural charcoal? Is it quick light or non-quick light?

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- b. Have you heard of or used electric charcoal?
- c. What do you think about electric charcoal?

### **BOWL**

#### **[REFER TO LETTER POINTING TO BOWL]**

- d. What goes in that part?
- e. What do you typically put in there?
- f. Have you heard of or ever put anything else in there? (PROBE ONLY IF ABSOLUTELY NEEDED with “such as juice, Kool-Aid, or anything else?”)
- g. Does that change the experience?

### **VENT**

#### **[REFER TO LETTER POINTING TO VENT]**

- h. Does anyone know what this is?

#### **[IF NEEDED: Tell them that it is the vent for hookah]**

- i. Why do you think there is a vent there? What do you think it does?

[Many of you already know this, but] Typically people use something called shisha or mu’assel in a hookah.

#### **[SHOW PICTURE OF SHISHA]**

- j. Have you seen this before?
- k. What is shisha? (What is it made of?)
- l. What kind or flavors of shisha have you used?
  - a. Is it herbal? Fruit? Tobacco? Candy? Some combination of those?
- m. Does all shisha contain tobacco?
- n. Does shisha contain nicotine?

#### **[PROBE AS NEEDED]**

- i. How would you recommend we ask about other changes people might make to a hookah?
- ii. For example, how would you ask someone what they use in the bowl for the liquid in a hookah?
- iii. How would you ask them what they use in a hookah?

### **C. HOOKAH USING BEHAVIOR**

- a. When you use a hookah, how many puffs do you usually take?
- b. How long does it usually take you to use one hookah?
- c. How often do you use your hookah in a day?
- d. Is there a certain time of day that you usually use a hookah?
- e. Where do you usually use a hookah?
- f. Are you usually alone or do you usually use with friends?
- g. How many hoses do you usually have coming off the hookah?
- h. How many people do you usually share the hookah with?
- i. Do you own a hookah? Do you live with someone who owns a hookah?

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- j. For how long have you been using hookahs this way? Would you describe this as how you “typically” use a hookah?
- k. Do you consider hookah a “tobacco product”?
  - i. PROBE AS NEEDED: Tell me more about that. Is this what you usually do?

### D. USE BEHAVIORS

- a. What do YOU usually use in a hookah?
- b. Have you ever used anything else in a hookah? Do you know anyone who has used anything other than [responses provided] in a hookah?
- c. Do you prepare the hookah yourself or does someone else prepare it for you?
- d. Where do you buy the shisha?
- e. How do you decide which one to buy?
- f. How much do you usually pay for it? Is it expensive?
- g. If you purchase shisha yourself, how long does it usually last? How do you think the price of the shisha compare to other tobacco products?
  - i. PROBE AS NEEDED: How do you know that?/How can you tell? Do you have a typical brand that you like to use?

In our surveys, we often want to learn how many cigarettes smokers are using. We thus typically ask a question like the following [SHOW TO PARTICIPANTS]:

*On average, about how many cigarettes do you now smoke each day? A pack usually has 20 cigarettes in it.*

If we were to ask about using a hookah, does asking [SHOW] “On average, about how many *times* do you use a hookah in a day?” make sense to you? What time period makes sense—day, week, month, 3 months? Explain.

[IF THE ABOVE WORKS] How meaningful would it be for us to then ask [SHOW]:

*“Each time you use a hookah, how many puffs do you take?”*

Does this question make sense to you [SHOW]:

*“On average, how long [is/was] one hookah session for you [and the people you share/d it with]? A session is one sitting in which you use hookah, whether alone or with others.”*

[IF ABOVE QUESTIONS DO NOT WORK] What would be a better way to ask these types of questions? Would you say a hookah ‘session’ or a ‘time’ that you used a hookah or something else?

### E. DUAL USE

We’re also interested in how people use tobacco products in the same day.

- a. Other than hookah, can you tell me what tobacco products you usually smoke or use?
- b. Describe how you use hookah and \_\_\_\_\_ in a typical day.
- c. When do you use hookah and when do you use \_\_\_\_\_ in a typical day?

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- d. Which one do you use the most?
- e. Which one did you start using first?
- f. Why do you sometimes use hookah and sometimes use \_\_\_\_\_?
  - i. PROBE AS NEEDED about environment, social context, subjective experience from different products.
- g. Do these patterns stay the same month to month, or does how you use hookah and \_\_\_\_\_ vary a lot from month to month?
- h. Are you planning on cutting back on one of these products? Switching completely to one product?
- i. Do you think using a hookah is bad for you? How about compared to other tobacco products?

### **CLOSE**

Those are all the questions I have for you, but let me check with my colleagues 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. We will send you the \$40 as a thank you for your participation via FedEx. Do you have any other questions?