

A.5 Group Residential Facilities

Interview Guide

PURPOSE: Assess group home administrators' experiences with the cash and non-cash portion of their residents' Family Card¹ benefit, and explore potential impacts of eliminating the cash portion of the benefit.

As you reviewed in the consent form, we are conducting a research study to better understand how Family Card holders spend their NAP benefits. For this study, we will be talking with NAP beneficiaries, retailers, community organizations and group residential facilities like yours all across Puerto Rico.

Since we are talking to many organizations across Puerto Rico, audio recordings help us remember who said what so I don't need to worry about taking notes. Only people working on this study will have access to the recordings.

Would it be ok if I record our discussion?

I. Background on group residential facility

1. Please tell me about your role at [FACILITY NAME] and how long you've been here.
2. Can you tell me about the history and mission of your facility?
 - a. When was it founded?
 - b. How is the facility funded? **PROBE:** Government? Private? Resident contributions?
 - c. Who operates the facility? **PROBE:** Government? Private?
 - d. Are there multiple sites/ locations?
 - e. Can you describe the services that you offer?
3. Can you tell me about the population(s) you serve?
 - a. How many residents live here?
 - b. Are they all from a similar demographic? **PROBE:** age, gender, health condition, other commonalities?
 - c. What amount of your residents receives NAP benefits? **PROBE:** all, some none?

II. Background on redemption of NAP benefits

¹ Note, for OMB review, the Family Card is the EBT card referred to in Puerto Rico as the Tarjeta de la Familia.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 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.

4. Can you walk me through how your residents' NAP benefits are redeemed?
5. Which of the following approaches describes how your residents' NAP benefits are redeemed:
 - a. Do you/your facility redeem 100% of the individual residents' benefits (that is, both the 75% non-cash and 25% cash portion) to buy food?
 - b. Do you/your facility redeem only the 75% (non-cash) portion of the individual residents' benefits to buy food? And the remaining 25% portion is used directly by the residents to make cash purchases as they like?
 - c. Do you/your facility not redeem any of your residents' benefits? So all residents are responsible for redeeming all 100% of their card? **[IF YES, PROCEED TO SECTION IV]**
 - d. Or is there a mix of options based on the resident? Probe: How is the mix defined?

III. Facility's NAP Purchasing Practices [only for facilities who redeem some or all of residents' NAP benefits]

6. Thinking of all of the food purchases you make for your facility, what proportion is made using NAP benefits? **PROBE:** All, some, none?
7. Let's focus on the purchases you make using your residents' NAP benefits, where do you make those purchases? **PROBE:** Do you usually go to superstores (e.g., Sams, Costco, Walmart), supermarket (e.g., Amigo, Pueblo, Econo, Plaza Loiza,), small grocery or convenience stores (e.g., gas station food stores, Mom and Pop shops), specialty stores (e.g., baker, butcher) or farmers markets?
 - a. How far do you travel to make these purchases?
 - b. How frequently do you shop for food/have it delivered?
8. Logistically, how do the purchases work? **PROBE:** Do you have one Family Card for each resident that you bring to the store?
9. What are the things you typically purchase with the non-cash NAP benefits? How often do you purchase each of the following items using the non-cash NAP benefits:
 - a. Perishable food (e.g., fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products, bread, meat, poultry)?
 - b. Prepared food (e.g., sandwiches, salad bar)
 - c. Non-perishable food (e.g., canned foods, tomato sauce, dried beans)
10. **[IF FACILITY ALSO REDEEMS RESIDENTS' CASH PORTION]** What about the cash portion of the benefit?

- a. Where do you usually spend that? **PROBE:** stores that accept the Family Card? Other stores?
- b. How do you usually access the cash portion of the benefit?? ATM? Cash-back? Bank? Using entire benefit (100%, cash and non-cash) on food purchases at stores that accept the Family Card? Other?
- c. What are the things you typically purchase with the cash benefit? How often do you purchase each of the following items
 - i. Perishable food (e.g., fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products, bread, meat, poultry)?
 - ii. Prepared food (e.g., sandwiches, salad bar)
 - iii. Non-perishable food (e.g., canned foods, tomato sauce, dried beans)
 - i. Items other than food? **PROBE:** for items other than food, what are some non-food items you use the cash benefit to pay for? (e.g., detergent, medicine, diapers, supplies for the facility)?

11. Have you experienced any challenges or difficulties redeeming NAP benefits on behalf of your residents? **PROBE:** difficulty accessing certified retailers? Difficulty accessing cash? Logistical challenges associated with redeeming benefits for multiple people? Other? **[GO TO PART V]**

IV. Resident's NAP Purchasing Practices [ONLY for facilities whose residents redeem 100% of their own NAP benefits]

- 12. Are your clients generally able to do their own food shopping?
 - a. **IF NO:** What are some of the things that make it hard for them to shop for themselves?
- 13. How easy or difficult is it for your clients do redeem their NAP benefits?
 - a. What barriers do they face?
- 14. Do you know where your residents typically redeem their NAP benefits?
 - a. **IF YES:** what types of stores do they usually go to? **PROBE:** superstores (e.g., Sams, Costco, Walmart), supermarket (e.g., Amigo, Pueblo, Econo, Plaza Loiza,), small grocery or convenience stores (e.g., gas station food stores, Mom and Pop shops), specialty stores (e.g., baker, butcher) or farmers markets?
 - b. **IF YES:** how frequently do they shop to redeem their NAP benefits?
 - c. **IF YES:** How far do clients typically have to travel to redeem their NAP benefits?
- 15. Have you ever heard about clients delaying getting food because of difficulty accessing a store where they can redeem their benefits?

16. Does your facility provide assistance to help your clients do their food shopping?
 - a. **IF YES:** Please describe
 - b. Are you aware of any such services available in your area to help people do their food shopping?

17. How familiar are you with your clients' food purchasing practices?

NAP beneficiaries receive a benefit every month, as you know. Seventy-five percent of the benefit is to be spent at certified retailers by using their Family Card and twenty-five percent can be spent on food or redeemed for cash. Given what you know/understand about your client's food shopping:

18. What types of things do you think your clients use the non-cash Family Card portion of their benefit to buy?
 - a. Food? **PROBE:** any specific types of food? Where/how do they store the food?
19. What types of things do you think your clients use the cash portion of their benefit to buy?
 - a. Food? **PROBE:** any specific types of food?
 - b. Non-food items? **PROBE:** what types of non-food items?
20. Do you think your clients are aware of the regulations regarding what can and can not be purchased with their Family Card?

V. **Impact of removal of cash benefit**

Now I want to give you a scenario to think about. Imagine that next month, your residents' benefit was the same amount it normally is, but that there was no longer a portion that could be used as cash. In other words, it would all have to be used to purchase food from NAP certified retailers, and none could be redeemed in cash.

21. What are some of the ways that would impact your residents?
 - a. Would it change where they shop?
 - b. Would it be harder for them to get food?
 - c. Could they continue to buy items they are currently using the cash benefit for? **IF YES:** what specific items?
 - d. Any other impacts?
22. What are some ways that would impact your facility? **PROBE:** No impact? Would impact facility?
 - a. Would it change where you shop?
 - b. Would it be harder for you to get food?
 - c. Could you continue to buy items you are currently using the cash benefits for?

d. Any other impacts?

VI. Other sources of assistance/ income

23. What are some of the other places your residents get cash (such as a retirement pension, child support, or assistance programs)?

a. Do they participate in any other Federal or local assistance programs? (**PROBE IF YES:** which ones?)

VII. Conclusion

24. To wrap up, what are some reasons you think the cash portion of the NAP benefit should or should not be eliminated?

Thank you for your time today. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

[DISTRIBUTE INCENTIVE, COLLECT SIGNED INCENTIVE RECEIPT FROM EACH PARTICIPANT]