

**Project Engage 2.0: Engaging Gay “Community” Activism for Syphilis
Prevention**

Generic Information Collection Request under OMB #0920-0840

**Attachment #5b
Focus Group Guide**

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 90 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 CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer; 1600 Clifton Road NE, MS D-74, Atlanta, Georgia 30333; Attn: OMB-PRA (0920-New)

PROJECT ENGAGE 2.0 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome

Thank you for coming today. Your participation is very important. My name is _____ and I am a Senior Research and Evaluation Analyst at the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is sponsoring this research. The purpose of this focus group is to learn about how you think about community and about sexual health. Your insights are very important to us and your time today is appreciated. We will have about 60-90 mins for our discussion.

I had the opportunity to speak with each of you individually about this study including any potential risks and your right to discontinue participation at any time. You also have that information in front of you. Does anyone have any questions?

Before we begin, I want to review a few ground rules for our discussion.

- Most importantly, there are no right or wrong answers. We want to know your honest opinions and what you think about the issues we will be discussing.
- [IF PERMISSION TO RECORD HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS] We will be digitally recording these discussions. I want to give you my full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. At the end of our discussion, I have to write a report and will refer to the recordings when writing the report.
- [IF PERMISSION TO RECORD HAS NOT BEEN RECEIVED FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS] My colleague (insert name) and I will be taking notes during the focus group to ensure we capture your feedback accurately.
- My colleague [NAME] is working on this project with me and will be observing this discussion so that they can hear your opinions directly from you and take notes so that your opinions are accurately captured. However, your identity and anything you personally say here will remain secure. Even though we collected your name, zip code and phone number during the screening process we have no way of tying that information to you individually. Additionally, that information will not be given to anyone and no one will contact you after this focus group is over.
- There may be some sensitive questions asked during this discussion. If at any time you are uncomfortable with my questions, you can choose not to answer. Simply let me know that you prefer not to answer.
- Be sure to only use first names during the group. Please do not use your last name. Also, if you bring up a friend or other person you know as an example in our discussions, please do not use their last name either. So, whenever you mention a name, it should only be a first name and never a last name.
- FOCUS GROUP: We ask that each participant respect each other's privacy as well. Please do not share with others what was said in today's group after the group is over. Please be respectful of others' opinions. Any participant who is disrespectful to others or disruptive to the group will be asked to leave the group.

- Please turn your cell phone or beeper to vibrate or silent mode. The interview/group will last no more than 90 minutes.
- If you need to go to the restroom during the discussion, please feel free to leave, but please return as soon as possible.
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

Opening

1. Please provide a name on your name tag – it does **not** have to be your real name, it can be a nickname or a pseudonym- and three communities you identify with. [for example, “My name is [Insert Name] and I identify as a member of the black, LGBT, and academic community”]]

Introduction	2. Do you feel like you belong to the gay community and why?
Transition	3. How important is to you to belong to the gay community (or any community)?
	<i>We have heard from some that the black gay community has less representation and accesses to resources than the larger gay community. When talking about access to resources, we have heard that some of these disparities “show up” in sexual health. For example, higher rates of HIV or STD infection, not having culturally relevant sexual health education, or access to information about things like testing or new medications.</i>
Key	4. Tell me about your experiences with having access to the resources you need to be healthy sexually, or make the best (sexual health) decisions for yourself?
	<i>Talking about sexual health in the black gay community, we have heard there are topics people talk about a lot, and some that are rarely discussed; One topic talked about a lot is Pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, for people who do not have HIV but who are at substantial risk of getting it to prevent HIV infection by taking a pill every day.</i>
	5. What kinds of things do you hear people saying about PrEP?
	<i>We learned that syphilis is something that not a lot of people are talking about.</i>
	6. What keeps people from talking about syphilis?
	<i>Let’s talk some about sexual health advocacy; meaning organizing or participating as a group to improve the sexual health of a community. We have heard that advocacy or activism for the community is more impactful when lead/ organized by members of that community.</i>
	7. What are your feelings about this, and why?
	8. What are the incentives that get people to become involved in advocating for their own or community’s health?
Ending	9. What would it take for you to get involved (or more involved) with advocating for your own or community’s health?
	10. Is there anything we should have talked about but didn’t?

Thank participants for their time and sharing their experiences.

Close focus group discussion.