

**Attachment A**  
**Wellness Focus Group Protocol**

**Wellness Materials Concept Testing**

**The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the Center for Mental Health Services**

**Wellness Initiative: People in Recovery and General Population Focus Group Protocol**

**Description**

Representatives of the target populations for the Wellness Initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), including people living with mental and/or substance use disorders and the general population (including family members, loved ones, and service providers of people living with mental and/or substance use disorders) will participate in four focus groups to explore understanding and attitudes about wellness. They will assess cultural understanding and the meaning of graphic elements and icons related to the Eight Dimensions of Wellness as well as evaluate comprehension and readability of the data visualization, content, and knowledge of a new infographic.

Results of the testing process will help determine whether materials resonate with the target audiences. The results also will assess the extent to which they could inspire and appeal to individuals to improve their health behaviors and incorporate elements of wellness in everyday habits to better manage their conditions and experience recovery. Their feedback will be used to identify the need for new materials, if any.

**Target Populations**

- People living with mental and/or substance use disorders
- General population, including family members of people living with mental and/or substance use disorders and community health providers servicing people in recovery

**I. GOAL**

Determine the appropriateness of the current branding, and identify new, useful materials to meet the needs of the target audiences.

## II. OBJECTIVES

The focus groups are intended to explore and assess the following:

- Understanding and attitudes about “wellness” in general;
- Understanding of cultural nuances and the meaning of the eight icons that correspond to the Eight Dimensions of Wellness;
- Appeal, understanding, attention-getting aspects, and memorability of the Wellness banner that includes a tagline, as well as a potential future logo for the Wellness Initiative; and
- Comprehension and readability of the data visualization and content of an in-development infographic, as well as its appeal, relevance, and identification.

The information obtained from the focus groups will guide materials developers to improve the concepts and refine the messaging and products to make them more relevant for the target audiences.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### Focus Group Discussion Procedure

The focus group procedures will encompass the activities shown in the table below.

Step	Activity	Purpose and Description
1	Screening and recruitment of participants	<p>Ensure that the right target audiences participate in the discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A screening and recruitment questionnaire (see Attachment B) will be provided to the market research vendor to guarantee the desired composition of each group.</li><li>• Forty screened and recruited diverse individuals will be divided into four groups of 10 participants each; they will participate in 90-minute focus group sessions.</li></ul>

Step	Activity	Purpose and Description
		Conduct all sessions in Rockville, Maryland. Three groups will be conducted in English, and one in Spanish.
2	Selection of participants	<p>Confirm that participants meet the selection criteria.</p> <p>Select a mix of 40 participants with the following profiles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals in recovery (substance use);</li> <li>• Individuals in recovery (mental health);</li> <li>• Individuals from the general population (including family members/loved ones of people in recovery); and</li> <li>• Community health providers servicing people in recovery.</li> </ul> <p>Participants must be between 18 and 65 years old, with an equal mix of males and females, living in the Washington, DC (WDC), metropolitan area (WDC, Maryland, and Virginia). Respondents will represent the four major racial/ethnic groups in the United States (White, African-American [Black], Hispanic/Latino [from diverse countries of origin], and Asian). They must exhibit a mix of educational and income levels.</p>
3	Focus group planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct focus groups between Dec 2016 and Jan 2017, preferably after working hours, based on potential participants' availability.</li> <li>• Facilitate focus group sessions with racially/ethnically and linguistically concordant skilled moderators.</li> <li>• Use an approved focus group facilitator guide (see Attachment D) to facilitate all groups.</li> </ul>
4	Focus group implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digitally record sessions to capture all ideas; each group will last 90 minutes.</li> <li>• Use a trained note-taker to record salient points throughout the session and to observe and record multiple elements of meaningful nonverbal communication.</li> <li>• Have participants complete the authorization and release form for use of the information (see Attachment C) before starting the focus group session. The facilitator will address any concerns or questions that participants may have.</li> </ul>
5	Introduction, disclosures,	Explain the activity to the respondents.

Step	Activity	Purpose and Description
	guidelines, and self-introductions (icebreaking exercise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that participants understand their roles and the purpose of the focus group discussion.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarify the structure of the session.</li> <li>○ Provide guidelines.</li> <li>○ Answer questions.</li> <li>○ Perform self-introductions and the icebreaking exercise.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6	The concept of wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore understanding and attitudes about “wellness” in general.</li> <li>• Guide the group discussion—the facilitator will use the facilitator guide (see Attachment D).</li> </ul>
7	Test Wellness logos	<p>Obtain participants’ reactions to three creative executions. Guide the discussion—refer to the facilitator guide.</p> <p>Distribute Worksheet 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the three logos one by one, to identify the one with the most potential for reaching the target audiences of the SAMHSA Wellness Initiative.</li> <li>• Explore which of the concepts is the most convincing, well understood, attractive, and relevant to the audiences.</li> <li>• Explore cultural nuances.</li> <li>• Explore aesthetics (text, visuals, objects, colors).</li> </ul>
5	Logos’ comparative analysis	<p>Distribute Worksheet 2. Guide the discussion—refer to the facilitator guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify participants’ preferred choice, who provided reasons for their choices (rating exercise).</li> </ul>
6	Infographic evaluation	<p>Guide the discussion—refer to the facilitator guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore content comprehension and the purpose of the infographic.</li> <li>• Explore the story, i.e., the important/surprising points in the data and the meaning of the data.</li> <li>• Explore aesthetics (text, photos, objects, colors).</li> <li>• Explore clarity and meaningfulness of titles, headlines, and copy.</li> </ul>
10	Closing and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank participants.</li> </ul>

Step	Activity	Purpose and Description
	adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute a 1-pager with information about the Wellness Initiative.</li> </ul>
11	Participants' incentive distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After concluding the focus group session, give participants a gift card with a value of \$50.</li> </ul>
12	Analysis and reporting of focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review digital recordings and notes after each session, present a debriefing, and create "extended notes."</li> <li>Draft a top-line report of findings, and send it to SAMHSA for review.</li> <li>Produce documents with extended notes to facilitate the coding process.</li> <li>Code and analyze information obtained during the focus group discussions.</li> <li>Develop and submit a focus group findings report.</li> </ul>

#### IV. TIMETABLE

Task	Activity	Date
Design Office of Management and Budget (OMB) package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Synergy Enterprises, Inc. (Synergy) develops the first draft of the focus group plan, including protocol and data collection instruments.</li> <li>Draft is circulated for internal feedback and comments.</li> </ul>	Sept. 2016
Submit OMB package for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final OMB package is submitted to SAMHSA.</li> <li>SAMHSA submits the OMB package to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.</li> <li>OMB approves the OMB package.</li> </ul>	Nov. 2016 Nov. 2016 Dec. 2016
Conduct focus group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Synergy will identify and hire a research market vendor in the WDC metropolitan area.</li> <li>Vendors will conduct the <u>screening</u> of</li> </ul>	Nov. 2016

Task	Activity	Date
discussions	potential participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will conduct a focus group dry run at SAMHSA (via phone or in person).</li> <li>• Synergy will <u>conduct</u> focus groups.</li> <li>• Synergy will present debriefings after the focus groups.</li> <li>• Synergy will produce top-line reports.</li> </ul>	Dec. 2016  Dec 2016  Jan 2017
Present top-line report/highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will present top-line highlights to SAMHSA.</li> </ul>	Feb 2017
Analyze focus group discussion results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will create extended notes.</li> <li>• Synergy will code the information.</li> <li>• Synergy will analyze the focus group results.</li> <li>• Synergy will deliver the final report.</li> </ul>	Feb 2017