

TAB D
Facilitator's Guide

OPIOID PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION TO GROUP PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES (10 MIN)

Hello, my name is _____ and I will be moderating today's discussion. I work for Lake Research, a research and consulting firm in (CITY, STATE). I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group – I really appreciate your time and look forward to our discussion. First, I want to take a few minutes to tell you what to expect from our conversation. After that, I'm going to give each of you a chance to introduce yourself and then we'll begin our discussion.

As you may recall from when you were recruited, we are conducting this study on behalf of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to learn more about individuals' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors surrounding opioid misuse. The information gathered today will inform the initial development of messaging and materials for a SAMHSA public education program aimed at preventing prescription opioid misuse.

My role is to simply facilitate the discussion, make sure we stay on topic, and keep us on track so that we finish in a timely manner. I am not here to push any particular agenda or point of view, so please do not worry about offending me.

The focus group should take about two hours. And before we get started, I would like to lay down some ground rules:

- There are no right or wrong answers and absolutely no thoughts or opinions that should make you feel ashamed – we are just looking for your honest opinions and perceptions.
- With that being said, please remember that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, so please treat each other with respect. It is perfectly acceptable to respond to another participant's comment(s) or openly disagree with someone, just please do so in a respectful manner,
- Also, please try not to interrupt one another or talk over each other to ensure that everyone's opinions can be heard.
- Lastly, confidentiality. Our discussion here is private. We will not report your comments by name, and we ask that you respect one another's privacy in the same way. We don't expect you to tell us anything that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the group. But like I said, I hope you will feel comfortable in sharing your honest opinions and perceptions today.

I need to remind you that we are not medical professionals. If your questions are specific to your personal health and/or any prescription medications, we urge you to contact your health provider. If you have questions specific to your participation in this project, you can contact our Principal Investigator, _____.

This focus group will be recorded and my colleague [first name] will be taking notes. This is to ensure that we are able to capture your thoughts and opinions as accurately as possible. The information you provide today will not be tied specifically to you. We will be conducting a number of focus groups over the coming weeks and the results from this study will only be presented in aggregate form. Your name will not be used in any reports that are written on the basis of this project. The audio recording and transcript of the focus group will be stored on a password-protected computer. Only members of the project team will have access to this information, and they will not share it with anyone else.

As a reminder, your participation in this discussion is completely voluntary. You do not have to answer any question. You may choose not to participate or to leave the discussion at any time. At the end of the focus group, you will receive a \$50 cash as a token of appreciation for your time.

That was a lot of information. Does anyone have any questions before we get started?

Do you all agree to participate? Okay, I will start the recording now. [Press record]

Just a couple of friendly reminders before we get started (and that you may hear me repeat throughout the discussion) – please speak loud and clear and please silence your phones so that they do not interrupt the conversation.

All right, let's get started.

PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKER (5 MIN)

So we can get to know each other a little, let's go around the room and introduce ourselves. Please tell me your first name and what you like to do in your free time. Thank you. Now, let's get started with our discussion.

DISCUSSION

Section 1. General Attitudes (5 min)

1. First, I would like to talk in general about prescription opioids, such as when they should be used and for what illnesses.
2. Fill in the blank in this sentence: I feel ____ about people's health in America today. Discuss.

Section 2. Dealing with Pain (15 minutes)

3. Stepping back for a moment, if you are in physical pain, take me through the steps you take to deal with that pain.
4. How often do you treat pain with over the counter drugs like Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil)?
 - What about alternatives to medication? Do you ever consider that as a way to deal with or treat pain?
5. Have you ever talked to a doctor or other health care provider about pain? What was that discussion like?
 - What did you ask? What did the health care provider say?
 - Do you talk to your pharmacist?
 - Has a doctor ever prescribed pain medication for you?
 - Have you ever been prescribed an opioid for your pain? Do you know what an opioid is? What do you think it is?
 - Have you heard of the following: oxycodone, hydrocodone, tramadol, and codeine – list of others if needed). Do you think of those as opioids?
 - What did your doctor tell you about the pain medication?
 - a. Is it your assumption that the medicine is safe since the doctor is prescribing it? What makes you think this?
 - b. What do you think is the biggest issue with pain medication?
 - c. Did he/she say that it could be addictive? Would that have an impact on whether you decided to take the medication or not really?
6. Where else have you learned about prescription pain medication?
 - Have you searched for information from anyone else or any organization or website? If so, who or what?

Section 3. Doctor's Orders (10 minutes)

7. Did your doctor or health care provider give you any special instructions about taking the prescribed medication? What did he or she say?
 - Did your doctor or health care provider give you instructions on how much to take and how often?
 - What are you supposed to do when you finish the medication?

- Did you take every pill you were prescribed or did you have any left over?
 - What did you do with the leftovers?
 - What are some reasons you would keep the leftover medication?

Section 4. Storing Medication (10 minutes)

8. Where do you typically keep your prescription medication?
 - How do you typically store medication?
 - How much thought have you put into how you store medication?
 - What are some of the factors you have considered?
 - Do you have any concerns about where you store your medication?
 - Have you ever stored your prescription in a locked location?
9. Did your doctor or health care provider talk to you about how to store your prescription in your home?
 - What did he/she say?
 - Did what the doctor or health care provider tell you change how you store your medication?
 - What did they tell you that made you change how you store medication?

Section 5. Handling After Use (15 minutes)

10. Did your doctor and health care provider talk to you about what to do with your prescription when you were done with it?
 - What did they say?
 - What do you typically do when you are finished with a prescription?
11. Do you tend to hold onto the medicine or throw it away?
 - Why do you hold onto medicine? Or, what reasons do you think others hold onto medicine?
 - Have you ever saved it to use in the future?
 - Have you ever used leftover medicine from an old prescription you were prescribed for pain?
 - Do you have any concerns about using this prescription?
 - Do you have any concerns about someone else finding or using your leftover medication from an old prescription for pain?
 - Has that ever happened?
 - What are some of the risks of holding onto a leftover medication in your view?
 - Have you heard of any risks of holding onto leftover medication from an old prescription? What have you heard?
12. Have you heard of safe disposal programs or take-back programs? What have you heard?
 - Have you ever taken medications to these programs?
 - What medications have you taken?
 - Would you take your prescription opioids to these programs? Why or why not?

Section 6. Sharing Medication (10 minutes)

13. Did your doctor or health care provider talk to you about sharing your prescription with anyone?
 - What did they say?
 - What about sharing a prescription pain medication? What did they say?
 - Have you ever shared a prescription with someone else before?
 - Who did you share with?
 - What was the reason you shared your prescription?
 - Did someone ask you or did you offer?

- Have you ever told someone that they could not share medication with you? What did you tell them?
14. Have you ever asked someone else to share a prescription with you? For what reasons?
- For what reasons do you think others might ask to share a prescription? (Probe: help others; relieve their pain; help them financially; no health insurance?)
15. Do you think there are any risks of sharing medication with others? What are those risks?
- What about sharing pain medication? Are there any unique risks for sharing that type of medication?

Section 7. Sharing as a Broader Value (15 minutes)

16. Stepping back. How do you feel about sharing an over-the-counter pain medication with a friend who asked you for one? What are some reasons you would share this medication?
- Are there any reasons you would feel uncomfortable sharing?
17. How do you feel about sharing a prescription for a chronic illness like a heart condition? What are some reasons you would share this medication?
- For what reasons would you not share?
18. What about a sharing a prescription pain medication like what we were talking about earlier – how does this fit into what we are talking about? What are some reasons you would share this medication?
- Who would you share with? (Probe: relative, family friend, someone younger, someone older?)
 - Probe on difference between who they would share with and who they would not share with.
 - For what reasons would you not share?
 - How do you feel about telling someone no?
 - What would you say?
 - What concerns do you have about their reaction if any?
 - Do you think it is legal or illegal to share medication?
 - If I told you it is a felony, how does that make you feel?
 - Do you think the pain medication would cause harm to someone it was not prescribed to? Do you think it could be fatal?

Section 8. Concerns about Opioid Misuse (15 minutes)

19. Stepping back for a second, have you heard anything about opioids recently? What have you heard?
- What concerns do you have about opioids if any?
 - How concerned are you about opioid addiction? Do you think opioids are addictive?
 - How much of an issue do you believe opioid addiction is in this area?
 - What do you think are some of the reasons behind opioid addiction?
20. **Write.** In the space below please write your reaction to the following statistic: 54 percent of opioid misuse begins with the sharing of prescriptions among family and friends.
- **Discuss.** What do you think about this?
 - Does this change the way you think about sharing pain medication?
 - How does this change how you might store your medication?
 - How does this change what you would do with your leftover medication?
 - Would you still hold on to leftover medication or not?
 - What would you do with leftover medication?
 - How does this change how you feel about sharing a prescription with a friend or family member? How likely would you be to offer your prescription to someone?
 - Does it change how you feel about sharing a prescription with a friend or family member if they asked for it? (Probe: Do you worry that sharing a prescription will lead to addiction?)

Section 9. Strategies to Prevent Misuse (15 minutes)

21. We have talked about a couple of different areas of handling prescriptions – where and how you store them, what you do with any leftover medication, and if you share medication with a friend or family member.
- Which of these three – storage, leftovers, sharing – do you think is the most important behavior to change to reduce the risk of someone misusing a prescription?
 - For what reasons?
22. Let's take them one by one. You are now on the commission on preventing opioid addiction. Your first order of business is to help people store their prescriptions securely.
- **Easel.** What would your recommendations be? What would you tell the public?
 - What steps would you take?
 - What would motivate you to securely store your prescriptions?
 - Who do you think should deliver the message? Who do you trust and that you think others would? (Probe: Doctors? Police officers or first responders? Parents? Children?)
23. Let's do the same thing for what to do with medication when finished taking it and have leftover pills.
- **Easel.** What would your recommendations be? What would you tell the public?
 - What steps would you take?
 - What would motivate you to dispose of your leftover pills?
 - Who do you think should deliver the message? Who do you trust and that you think others would?
24. Let's do the same thing for sharing medications.
- **Easel.** What would your recommendations be? What would you tell the public?
 - What steps would you take?
 - What would motivate you to not share your pain medication?
 - Who do you think should deliver the message? Who do you trust and that you think others would?
25. **Write.** What change are you most likely to make in how you handle prescription pain medications in the future and what is the main reason you will make that change? Discuss.

CLOSING REMARKS (5 MINUTES)

26. [If time allows] What is one key thing you've taken away from participating in this group?
27. Is there anything else you can think of that is important for us to consider that we have not already discussed?

Well, if there are no more questions, then I will conclude the focus group. Thank you so much – you've given a lot of great input today. We greatly appreciate your participation. As a thank you, you will receive a \$50 cash as a token of appreciation for your time.