

**Background & Supporting Statements on Focus Groups for Testing Health Communication Messages to Promote Hepatitis C Testing among U.S. Adults**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this activity is to conduct an evaluation of hepatitis C communication materials among U.S. adults. Focus groups will be conducted to test materials that will be part of the updated Know More Hepatitis campaign that will announce the new CDC recommendation to test all adults for hepatitis C, not just baby boomers as recommended in 2012. Results of the message testing will be used to improve existing materials and ensure the materials are effectively promoting hepatitis C testing to a broader audience of U.S. adults. From this testing, we will identify strengths and weaknesses of existing materials and determine if these materials are appropriate and relevant to all adults, or if the materials will need to be adapted to improve effectiveness. Through the focus groups we also hope to gain understanding of knowledge and perceptions about hepatitis C, as well as to gauge opinions.

**Respondents**

U.S. adults 21 to 60 years of age. This population reflects CDC's expanded universal hepatitis C testing guidelines for all adults that are scheduled for release in 2020.

**Methods**

Our research method is qualitative focus groups with participants recruited by professional focus group facilities from databases of individuals who have previously volunteered and registered with the facilities and who have agreed to participate in focus groups.

Staff from the focus group facilities will initially select potential participants from the databases that match the criteria specified by CDC in the focus group screener. Once potential participants are identified, they are called and re-screened over the phone to ensure eligibility. If eligible and interested, they are then invited to participate. The entire screening process will be completed in less than 10 minutes.

A professional moderator will lead the focus group discussion and will ask participants a series of questions to get feedback to help CDC determine whether messages and materials are understandable, appropriate, and able to motivate participants to get tested for hepatitis C. Participants will also be asked to share their knowledge and perceptions about hepatitis C in order to put their responses into context. The discussion is expected to last up to 2 hours, and groups will be audio-recorded to ensure all feedback is captured.

**Information Usage**

The information gained from the focus groups will be qualitative in nature, and not used to generate statistical or generalizable information. The feedback obtained will be synthesized by the moderator and provided to CDC in the form of a report, and will not contain any names or other personally identifiable information. The report will contain feedback with recommendations about CDC's materials and messages. Information is internal and is not intended for release outside of the agency.