

Attachment N
Detailed explanation of cognitive interviewing procedure
read by interviewer to respondent

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Reviewers: Note that the following is a prototype script that is generally followed by the interviewer. The interviewer departs from this as appropriate, given the mode of the study being conducted, i.e., face-to-face, telephone, self-administered, CAPI, CASI, ACASI, etc. The script is read after the respondent has read and signed the Informed Consent (Attachment E), filled in their demographic characteristics on the Respondent Data Collection Sheet (Attachment M), and confirmed that they understand that the interview will be audio/video recorded.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today. You have read the Informed Consent form and you have chosen to take part in this research study. Is that correct? [Interviewer waits for verbal acknowledgment]. You have given your permission for me to audio record/video record your interview today. Is that correct? [Interviewer waits for verbal acknowledgment].

Today we are testing questions on [fill topic/topics] that will eventually be added to national surveys. Before that happens, we like to test them out on a variety of different people. We are interested in your answers, but also how you go about making them. I may also ask you questions about the questions—whether they make sense, what you think about when you hear certain words, and so on.

I will read each question to you, and I'd like you to answer as best you can. Please try to tell me what you are thinking as you figure out how to answer. Also, please tell me if:

- there are words you don't understand,
- the question doesn't make sense to you,
- you could interpret it more than one way,
- it seems out of order,
- or if the answer you are looking for is not provided.

The more you can tell us, the more useful it will be to us as we try to develop better questions. Okay? Do you have any questions before we start? If yes, answer questions. If no, let's begin. We will do this for [time stated in newspaper advertisement/flyer], unless we get done with the questionnaire first.

The interviewer will follow the interview protocol, but will also ask emergent probes to better understand the question-response process. Examples of the sorts of probes that may be asked at the interviewer's discretion include:

- *Could you tell me what [term] means to you?*
- *Why did you answer that way?*
- *In your own words, could you tell me what you think this question is asking?*

- *Was this question easy or hard to answer? Why?*
- *How sure are you about your answer?*

Interviewers may use some or all of these probes, depending upon the content of the interview and how much information the respondents reveal without being prompted. In some interviews, probes will be administered throughout the interview, and for others they will be administered after completing the questionnaire.