

**Attachment G.**  
**State Public Health Autism Resource Center (SPHARC)**  
**Interview Guide**

## SPHARC Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. My name is [NAME], and I'm a researcher at 2M Research. [INTRODUCE ALL ON THE CALL, IF THIS HAS NOT ALREADY OCCURRED] The purpose of this interview is to obtain some descriptive information about your activities and outcomes for the evaluation of the HRSA Autism CARES Initiative. We will be asking you questions about your activities and accomplishments related to the goals and objectives of Autism CARES. We'll focus on a few key topic areas: providing technical assistance to Autism CARES grantees, fostering collaboration, collecting data, disseminating resources, sustainability, and impact of funding.

[IF RELEVANT] For this interview, I'd like you to reflect on the activities your program has completed for your current grant period. This evaluation builds on the previous evaluation, which covered Autism CARES activities and accomplishments through summer 2017. For each set of questions, I'd like you to report on activities or outcomes that have occurred during your current grant period. We understand that you received your most recent grant in [INSERT YEAR HERE]. Is that correct? We'd like you to think about the time since then during our conversation today.

### [TOUCH ON BULLETED TOPICS AS NEEDED]

- **Review of additional data sources.** We have already reviewed some quantitative and qualitative data on your program from other sources, including [NAME RELEVANT DOCUMENTS]. The information you share today will supplement the other sources we have reviewed. You may be able to provide additional context or share new information.

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, TRY TO DIRECT THE CONVERSATION TOWARD NEW INFORMATION OR SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS THAT ARE NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED IN THE PROGRESS REPORTS, ETC.]

- **Evaluation results.** The results from this evaluation will be presented in a report that will focus on all grant programs that received funding under the Autism CARES Act.
- **ASD/DD focus.** I know your program works in areas outside of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities (DD). Since this evaluation focuses on Autism CARES funding, please focus on activities pertaining to ASD/DD unless otherwise indicated.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Do I have your permission to record our conversation? The purpose of the recording is to be certain we accurately capture the information you share today. The recording will not be shared with HRSA.

### [CONFIRM PERMISSION ONCE RECORDING STARTS.]

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0915-0335. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 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.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For the first set of questions, I'd like to talk about some of the ways you provide technical assistance to Autism CARES grantees.

1. Please describe the kinds of technical assistance you provide to the state grantees in support of their activities under Autism CARES. What are some examples of technical assistance offered?

**[PROBE]** What methods or formats did you use for providing technical assistance?

- a. How was that assistance provided? How often?
- b. Was it broadly available to all grantees or targeted to single grantees?

2. How did you learn what types of technical assistance the grantees would like or need?

3. How has the technical assistance you provided helped grantees meet their program goals—specifically, their Autism CARES objectives?

- a. Can you give an example of where the technical assistance provided by SPHARC enabled a grantee to effectively manage a specific challenge or accomplish an ambitious goal?

**[PROBE IF NEEDED]** The goals are training, awareness building, research, and improving systems of care. How has your technical assistance addressed those goals?

4. What are some specific challenges grantees have been able to address with SPHARC's support?

**[PLACEHOLDER FOR QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FROM PROGRESS REPORTS/OTHER DATA SOURCES FOR WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE MORE DETAIL] FOR EXAMPLE, "I NOTICED IN [SOURCE] THAT YOU MENTION HAVING DONE X FOR Y. COULD YOU PROVIDE A LITTLE MORE INFORMATION ON X?"**

5. What challenges do you face in meeting the Autism CARES grantees' technical assistance needs?

- a. What challenges have you faced in making states aware of available resources?
- b. Did you see any changes over time with respect to use of the resources you've made available to grantees?

## COLLABORATION

Next, I'd like to ask you some questions about the ways SPHARC facilitates collaboration, both among state systems grantees and with other organizations and entities focused on children and youth with ASD/DD and their families. I would also like to know about any work you've done with the other MCHB-funded resource center, the Interdisciplinary Technical Assistance Center (ITAC).

First, let's talk about collaboration among Autism CARES grantees. I'd like to start with a big-picture overview of your activities in this realm, then I will ask for details about your work with specific grantees.

6. How would you describe your overall role in facilitating coordination among Autism CARES grantees?
  - a. What about other stakeholders and state systems outside of the Autism CARES grantees?

7. How does SPHARC facilitate collaborations among state systems grantees?
  - a. What was the format of these collaborations (e.g., in-person meetings, electronic forums such as webinars, teleconferences, other ways)?
  - b. How often did these collaborations take place?
  - c. How well-attended were these activities?
  - d. How, if at all, did these activities facilitate collaboration among grantees? Was collaboration a primary goal of these events?

8. To what extent have you collaborated with ITAC? Please describe these collaborations

**[PROBE]** What can you tell me about the format of these collaborations? What about the frequency? What was the goal of these activities?

9. Does SPHARC ever facilitate collaboration between state grantees and other Autism CARES grantees?
  - a. With LEND programs? DBP programs? Research programs? ITAC or other coordinating centers?

10. Can you share any examples of two or more grantees leveraging their resources to meet a common goal?

**[PLACEHOLDER FOR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FROM PROGRESS REPORTS/OTHER DATA SOURCES FOR WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION. FOR EXAMPLE, "(SOURCE) MENTIONED THAT AUCD (HOSTED AN EVENT/HELD SOME ACTIVITY). HOW MANY PEOPLE ATTENDED THIS EVENT? WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THIS EVENT? HAD THIS BEEN HELD BEFORE?"]**

Now let's talk about collaboration with organizations beyond Autism CARES grantees. These could be State Title V agencies, advocacy groups, governmental commissions on autism, professional associations, etc.

11. Please describe how SPHARC facilitates collaborations that involve these types of entities.
  - a. What was the format of these collaborations (e.g., in-person meetings, electronic forums such as webinars, teleconferences, other ways)?
12. How often did these collaborations take place?
13. How many grantees or other stakeholders participated in these activities?
14. To what extent were these efforts successful in promoting collaboration?
15. Overall, to what extent did SPHARC's collaborative efforts influence grantees' success in meeting their goals and the broader goals of Autism CARES?

**[PLACEHOLDER FOR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FROM PROGRESS REPORTS/OTHER DATA SOURCES FOR WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION. FOR EXAMPLE, "WE'VE HEARD X MENTIONED A FEW TIMES. WHAT DOES IT REFER TO?"]**

16. Overall, what challenges have you faced in working to facilitate collaboration among Autism CARES grantees?

### **DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The next questions pertain to SPHARC's data collection and management activities.

17. What types of data have SPHARC collected and managed for Autism CARES grantees?

**[PROBE]** Customer satisfaction surveys, knowledge transfer?

18. What challenges have you faced in collecting these data?

**[PLACEHOLDER FOR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FROM PROGRESS REPORTS/OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION. FOR EXAMPLE, "SOME GRANTEES MENTIONED HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH (X ASPECT OF DATA COLLECTION). HAS THIS BEEN A WIDESPREAD ISSUE? IF SO, HOW ARE YOU ADDRESSING IT?"]**

### **RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION**

The final questions relate to the production and dissemination of resources, including research findings and other information about ASD/DD.

19. What types of materials and resources has SPHARC developed as part of its Autism CARES activities?

**[IF NEEDED]** These resources can range from pamphlets, to online resources, to strategies, systems, best practices.

20. How were these materials and resources developed? Who developed them?

21. How were these materials and resources disseminated?

22. Who were the audiences for these materials?

23. Does SPHARC disseminate information and resources developed by other entities, such as grantees, families, and other stakeholders?

- a. How were these materials and resources disseminated?

**[PROBE, IF ONLINE]** Is there a way to track how many people have viewed or downloaded these resources?

- b. Who were the authors/informants for these materials and resources?

- c. Who were the intended audiences of these materials and resources?

24. What type of feedback have you received from Autism CARES grantees about the information you disseminated?

25. What challenges have you faced in producing and disseminating information?

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT OF FUNDING**

26. To what extent do you feel the changes set in motion through your grant will be sustained following the end of the grant? *[PROBE FOR COLLABORATIONS AND/OR PARTNERSHIPS]*

- a. **[IF RELEVANT]** Which activities will continue? Which will end?

## **FINAL QUESTIONS**

**[PLACEHOLDER FOR QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FROM PROGRESS REPORTS/OTHER DATA SOURCES FOR WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE MORE DETAIL]**

27. What would you consider your greatest successes?

*[PROBE]* Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources?

28. What would you consider your greatest challenges?

*[PROBE]* Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources?

29. What effect, if any, has SPHARC had on the level of communication across states and other grantees?

30. Is there anything else you would like to share about your program at this time?

31. Is there anything else you would like to add that I did not ask about?

That concludes my questions for you. Thank you very much for speaking with me.