

## Att 4: Focus Group Guide and Consent Form

### Welcome

*My name is [name of facilitator]. I work at Banyan Communications. I am here with a couple of colleagues who will be listening in. Today, our discussion will focus on gathering your opinions and feedback on messages and images that aim to help people better protect themselves from tick and mosquito borne diseases. For today's discussion vector-borne disease will refer to the diseases that result from infection with viruses or bacteria that are spread by ticks and mosquitoes. VBD will also refer to alpha-gal syndrome (red meat allergy) which may be triggered by the bite of certain ticks. The information that you share with us today will be used to improve those messages and images. We ask that you provide your honest opinions and feedback.*

*Before we begin, I'd like to remind you that your involvement is voluntary, and you may end your participation at any time. I am going to review the document "Participant Informed Consent," which I have just provided to you all. [Go through informed consent document]. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions we ask today. You are the expert on your own experiences and interpretations, and your thoughts and opinions are greatly valued and appreciated.*

*To make sure we don't miss anything, this session will be audio and screen recorded. We will only use these recordings to help write a report. The recordings will be stored in a secure computer folder protected by a firewall and will be permanently erased after 3 years. The results and report will not identify you or other participants. Are there any questions? [Pause to address any questions or issues participants may have] If you are still willing to participate in this session, please say, "Yes." [If someone no longer wants to participate, Banyan will thank the person and dismiss them.]*

*Ok, great let's get started!*

### Introductions

1. Let's start with introductions. Please tell us a nickname you would like to be addressed by and what part of the country you live in.
2. Are you aware of any diseases that are spread by ticks or mosquitoes? If so, what are they?
3. Are you worried about diseases that are spread by ticks and mosquitoes? Why or why not?
4. What types of things do you do to protect yourself from ticks?
  1. How often do you do these things?
5. What types of things do you do to protect yourself from mosquitoes?
  1. How often do you do these things?

### VBD PPBs

6. Here is a list of all the things a person can do to protect themselves from a tick bite that were discussed in the messages. *(Show a list of all tick PPBs on the slide)*
  - a. Which of these options would be the easiest to incorporate into your life?
    - i. What makes that option the easiest?
  - b. What actions seem hardest for you to do?
    - i. What makes it hard to do this?

- c. (Go through each item on the list) Would you do this action? Why or why not?
  - d. Do you think you are going to need to do any of these actions? Why or why not?
7. Here is a list of all the things a person can do to protect themselves from a mosquito bite that were discussed in the messages. (*Show a list of all mosquito PPBs on the slide*)
- a. Which of these options would be the easiest to incorporate into your life?
    - i. What makes that option the easiest?
  - b. What actions seem hardest for you to do?
    - i. What makes it hard to do this?
  - c. (Go through each item on the list) Would you do this action? Why or why not?
  - d. Do you think you are going to need to do any of these actions? Why or why not?

### VBD Messages and Materials

8. Here are potential options for the VBD prevention messages. (*Show the messages on the slide and read them aloud.*)
- a. How would you sum up in just a few words your first impression of these messages?
    - i. Probe: What makes each message appealing or unappealing?
    - ii. Probe: What are you drawn to the most as you look at the image?
    - iii. Probe: What feelings come up as you read each message?
  - b. What is the main idea that these slogans are trying to get across, in your own words?
    - i. Was this a new idea or something that you've heard before?
      - 1. Probe: What did you learn?
  - c. Which slogan do you believe is the most memorable? Why?
  - d. Is there anything confusing, unclear, or hard to understand? If so, what?

### Existing VBD Materials

9. Here are examples of materials that provide information on VBDs. (*Show the materials on the slide and read the message aloud.*)
- a. How would you sum up in just a few words your first impression of these materials?
    - i. Probe: Were the materials appealing? Why or why not?
    - ii. Probe: Was your initial reaction positive or negative?
  - b. If you saw this message, would it get your attention? Why or why not?
    - i. Probe: How likely would you be to read this type of information if it was given to you?
  - c. How helpful do you think it is to have this type of information?
  - d. How could these materials be improved?
  - e. Is there anything confusing, unclear, or hard to understand? If so, what?

## Overall

Now that you have seen all of the materials and messages we are going to discuss them overall.

10. What do you think the materials are encouraging people to do?
  - a. Did you find the information you learned to be helpful?
  - b. How important do you think it is for individuals to have this information?
11. After reading these messages, are you more worried about getting a tick- or mosquito-borne disease?
  - a. If so, which message made you feel this way?
  - b. What about the message made you feel this way?
12. Who would you say they are trying to reach?
  - a. Does it seem like these messages are talking to you, and people like you?
13. What are some places where you might notice messages like these?
  - a. Probe: If the materials were in a [insert options below] how likely would you be to read or listen to them?
    - i. Doctor's office
    - ii. Web site
    - iii. Door hanger
    - iv. Outdoor spaces such as trail signs, or park bench
    - v. Audio version such as podcast, radio, or YouTube ad
    - vi. Printed media magazine, or newspaper
    - vii. Activity book
14. What type of social media do you use?
15. How likely would you be to read these messages if you saw them on social media?
  - a. On what social media sites would you expect to see these messages?

## Wrap-up

16. Does anyone have any ideas they would like to share?
17. Does anyone have any questions?
18. Does anyone have any final thoughts/comments?

*If there are no additional items to add or questions I would like to thank you for your time and for sharing your experiences with me today.*

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## CONSENT FORM

**STUDY TITLE:** Tick- and Mosquito-borne Disease Prevention Message Evaluation

**STUDY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Mariah Laird

**STUDY SITE:** Banyan Communications  
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**TELEPHONE:**(404) 682-3008

**SPONSOR:** Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, Division of Vector-borne Diseases

**WHAT AM I BEING ASKED TO DO?**

We are asking you to be part of a focus group. This is part of an evaluation of communications messages and materials put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The purpose of this group is to get your thoughts and reactions to materials and messages about vector-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and West Nile virus disease.

At most, 60 people (men and women) who are age 19 and older will participate in the focus groups.

**WHAT WILL I BE DOING?**

A focus group is a special group discussion. We will meet with a small group (about 7 to 9 individuals) with people like you in a private Zoom meeting to talk about this topic. We will ask you what you think about some messages and materials that aim to teach people about how to prevent vector-borne diseases. We will use this information to improve the materials and messages.

We will record what people say so that we do not miss what is being said. We will also take notes. We will destroy the recordings and notes as soon as we finish working on our materials and messages. Our job is to:

- Ask you questions,
- Keep the group focused on the topic we want to discuss, and
- Make sure we don't run out of time.

We really want you to feel free to talk together as a group. If everyone is talking about the questions we asked, we will just listen to your ideas and take notes. This discussion will take about one and a half hours to complete.

**DO I HAVE TO DO THIS?**

You do not have to be part of this group. It is your choice. Your being in this focus group is voluntary. You can say that you don't want to be in the focus group and that is fine. You are also free to stop participating at any time. It is important that you feel okay answering the questions honestly. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

**HOW WILL MY PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?**

To protect your privacy, we will not ask you to share your name and we will not write down your name on any of the notes we take.

We value your being in this focus group. We also understand that you may not be okay telling the entire group what you think out loud. In these cases, if you prefer, you can write down your ideas or thoughts and share them in the Zoom chat box with (name of facilitator or note-taker/observer). Feel free to write down and send all of the ideas that you do not want to share with the entire group. No one else will see your ideas except the study team. We will review all private messages sent to us via private Zoom chats after the focus group and record them in a password protected drive with other study materials. We will destroy our notes and recording when we finish working on our messages.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

Because you will be speaking with us in a group, there is the possibility that other participants in the group will tell other people you were here. They may repeat what you said during the focus group to other people. However, we will ask everyone in the group to not share anything said in the discussion with anyone after the discussion ends. We hope you will feel okay being open and honest in your responses to our questions.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO BEING IN THIS GROUP?**

There are no direct benefits to being in this study. However, you may benefit from knowing your contributions in this discussion could help future individuals to avoid getting a vector-borne disease.

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?**

We will give you a \$50.00 gift card after we finish the discussion to thank you for your time, effort and contributions.

**WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH THE RESULTS OF THIS FOCUS GROUP?**

We will review information from the focus group to identify common opinions and reactions to the messages and materials. We will use this information to update and improve these messages and materials.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

Please keep a copy of this information sheet for your records. If you have any questions about this study or believe you have been harmed by participation, you may contact Mariah Laird at 404-682-3008 ext. 328 or via email at [mlaird@banyancom.com](mailto:mlaird@banyancom.com). The study team is also willing to answer any questions or concerns you might have right now or after the discussion. We are also willing to give you information about how to prevent tick- and mosquito-borne diseases.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if you have questions, concerns, complaints about the research, would like more information, or would like to offer input, you may contact Banyan Communications' Senior Research and Evaluation Strategist Robyn Singleton at [rsingleton@banyancom.com](mailto:rsingleton@banyancom.com) or 404.682.3008 ext. 308. Leave your name, number, and state the name of the project (Tick- and Mosquito-borne Disease Prevention Message Evaluation). She will get back to you as soon as possible.

We look forward to working with you. We do not anticipate any risks to you and we think that our message testing will be helpful in designing better messages and materials to support individuals in preventing vector-borne diseases.

Please answer yes or no to the following statements:

\_\_\_ I understand the information that has been provided to me and voluntarily agree to take part in this focus group.

\_\_\_ I know that I have a choice to be this focus group or not and can stop taking part at any time during the group.