

Health Message Testing System Expedited Review Form

1. Title of Study: (Please append screener and questionnaire)

Tick- and Mosquito-borne Disease Prevention Message Evaluation

2. Study Population: (Discuss study population and explain how they will be selected/recruited.)

The Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD) will conduct message testing via 90-minute focus group discussions (FGDs) with males and females who are at higher risk of vector-borne diseases. Specifically, individuals who either:

- Engage in outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, visiting parks, gardening;
- Have at least one child in the home that is 12 years or younger that spends time outdoors;
- Have at least one dog as a pet;
- Have a job that requires work outdoors such as farmer, landscaper, forest manager, park employee, utility worker, etc.
- Identify as Latino, Latina, or Hispanic **and** can understand, read, and speak Spanish;
- Live in the Southeastern U.S.; or
- Are 65 years or older.

We will utilize social media platforms that have been identified as preferred channels for priority audience members. These channels were identified through formative research tasks (i.e., environmental scans). We will launch recruitment materials for FGDs (att. 1) via audiences' preferred communication channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

FGD recruitment materials will include information on the purpose of the data collection, eligibility requirements, contact information for additional questions, and a link to a screening form (att. 2) for individuals to express their interest in participating. This screening form will not ask for PII. The screening form will ask questions that assess interested individuals' potential VBD risk and mechanism of exposure, in addition to demographic variables necessary for FGD segmentation. Participants will be asked to provide a "nickname", rather than their full name, so as to avoid collecting PII. They will also be asked to only provide an email that Banyan study personnel may use to contact them with further information. We will send a follow-up email (att. 3) inviting individuals to participate until a diverse array of perspectives and experiences is reached. All collected email addresses will be stored on password protect devices and spreadsheets, and all emails will be deleted upon conclusion of the message testing project. FGD questions and informed consent can be found in attachment 4.

Respondent characteristics:

- Number of subjects:
- Age range:
- Number of males:
- Number of females:
- Racial/ethnic composition:

- Special group status: no special groups or vulnerable populations will be involved

Incentives: (State what incentive will be offered and justify proposed incentives to be used in study.)

Each focus group participant will receive \$50 in the form of a gift card as a token of appreciation and reimbursement for opportunity costs and expenses (i.e., babysitter) incurred due to participation. Providing incentives to respondents is necessary to successfully recruit individuals. Due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions and concern for the safety and welfare of respondents, it will be necessary for focus groups to be conducted virtually. The majority of respondents represent hard to reach populations (i.e., racial/ethnic minority individuals and Spanish-speakers). Research suggests that incentives have proven helpful in recruitment of hard-to-reach groups (Bonevski et al. 2014; George et al. 2014). Therefore, to increase the likelihood of obtaining a diverse sample of participants, which would include individuals in hard-to-reach and minority populations who encounter complex social problems that place limitations on their desire and time to volunteer for research studies (Ellard-Gray et al. 2015; Knoll et al. 2012),

4. Study method: (Please check **one** below)

- Central location intercept interview:
- **Focus group: X**
- Online Interview:
- Individual in-depth interview (cognitive interview):
- Telephone interview:
- (CATI used: yes or no):
- Other (describe):

5. Purpose of the overall communication effort into which this health message(s) will fit: (Please provide 2-3 sentences below.)

DVBD seeks to raise awareness of vector-borne diseases and understanding of and compliance with individual-level prevention behaviors. Studies have shown that awareness, perceived susceptibility and severity, and self-efficacy are significantly able to predict health behavior including adoption of vector-borne prevention behaviors (Mowbray et al., 2014, Omodior et al., 2018, Slunge & Boman, 2018). We will conduct message testing with target audience members—individuals at high risk of tick- and mosquito-borne diseases, in order to gauge material comprehension, resonance, gaps in information, and ongoing needs of newly developed messages.

6. Category of time sensitivity: (Please check **one** below)

- Health emergency:
- Time-limited audience access
- Press coverage correction
- Trend Tracking
- Time-limited congressional/administrative mandate:
- **Ineffective existing materials due to historical event/social trends: X**

7. Describe nature of time sensitivity: (Please provide 2-3 sentences below.)

Vector-borne diseases are an increasing threat in the United States as geographic expansion of vectors and rates of infection increase, and control efforts are not sufficient to reduce disease incidence (Dantas-Torres & Otranto, 2016; Rosenberg et al., 2018). Primary prevention through personal protective behaviors (PPBs) are essential to prevent VBDs (Eisen & Stafford, 2021). Testing messages that promote the use of PPBs and that resonate with high-risk groups is essential to reducing the incidence and impact of vector-borne disease.

8. Number of burden hours requested: 97

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondent	Form Name	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Focus group discussion participants	Screening survey Appendix 3	60	5/60	5
	Follow-up email Appendix 4	60	2/60	2
	Audience research FGD guide Appendix 5	60	90/60	90
Totals				97

9. Are you using questions from the approved question bank?

- Yes: 1d, 6d, 7d, 10d, 12d, 24d, 41d, 44d, 81d
- No:

*** Items below to be completed by Office of Associate Director for Communication (OADC)***

1. Number of burden hours remaining in current year's allocation: 7410
2. OADC confirmation of time-sensitivity:
 1. Yes: Yes
 2. No:

Project Officer: Dawn B. Griffin