

NPRC Evaluation

NPRC Peer Discussion Guide

Consent language

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. My name is [name] and I am here with [name]. We are with RTI International. We are part of the research team seeking to understand how the National Paralysis Resource Center (NPRC), which is administered by the Reeve Foundation, operates and what features make it successful. This study is funded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

This evaluation is a 4-year effort that includes a mix of interviews, focus groups, surveys, and performance monitoring to assess how well the NPRC is meeting its goals. The purpose of our discussion today is to gather your perspectives and experiences with the Reeve Foundation's Peer and Family Mentoring Program. Specifically, we have some questions to ask you related to:

- How you found out about the Mentoring program
- Your relationship with your mentor
- What supports and assistance you receive from your mentor and the NPRC [Reeve Foundation]
- Impact of the mentoring program on your day-to-day life

We are expecting our discussion today to last approximately 90 minutes.

We want to inform you that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these questions. We are interested in your individual perspective. If there are any questions that you don't feel knowledgeable about or don't feel comfortable answering, please let us know and we will move to the next question. You are also welcome to end the discussion at any time.

The information gathered during our conversation today will be summarized for briefs that we submit to ACL. These briefs may eventually become public as a way to describe and highlight the NPRC's work. We may use quotes in our reports to highlight an important themes or findings. However, quotes will not be attributed by name and will be used sparingly. If there is anything you do not want to be quoted, just let us know, but we would appreciate your feedback, both positive and negative.

We'll be taking notes during our discussion, but if it's okay with you we would also like to record this discussion. Do we have your permission to record?

Do you have any questions for us before we get started?

Protocol Questions

Introductions

Before we get started we would like to first go around the room and introduce ourselves. Please tell us your first name and how long you have been participating in the peer mentoring program.

Learning about the Peer Mentoring Program

1. How did you hear about the Reeve Foundation Peer and Family mentoring program?
2. What (if anything) had you heard about the Reeve Foundation or the Peer Mentoring program before you signed up? What do you know about how the Reeve Foundation mentoring program compares to other similar mentoring programs you may have heard about?
3. Why did you decide to participate in the program? What were you hoping to get out of participating?

Requesting a Mentor

Now I'd like to switch to talk a little bit about the process you followed to request a peer mentor.

4. Can you talk a bit about how you requested a peer mentor from the Reeve Foundation?
 - a. Did you apply on the website?
 - b. Did a program coordinator call you?
 - c. If you are comfortable sharing, what did you discuss during that call?
 - d. Were you asked to provide information about yourself and your situation?
 - e. Did you understand what would happen after your call with the program coordinator? Were your questions answered? Did you understand how you would be matched to a peer?
 - f. Did you experience any barriers to requesting a mentor?

Matching of Mentors to Mentees

5. Please tell me about how you were matched to your mentor.
 - a. Did you understand the criteria for matching mentors to peers? If so, what were those criteria as they were communicated to you?
 - b. What were you told about your mentor prior to their initial outreach to you?
 - c. How long after you talked with a program coordinator did you first contact your mentor?
6. Did you experience any challenges with this initial matching process? If so what were they?

Communication with Mentor

7. Once matched with your mentor, how did they make initial contact with you? How did that initial connection with your mentor go?
8. How often do you connect with your mentor and how do you typically connect? (in-person, phone, email, etc.)
9. Do you feel like you can reach your mentor when you need to? Have you experienced challenges in contacting/reaching your mentor?

Benefits and Challenges of Participating in Mentorship

10. If you are comfortable sharing, can you talk about the topics/concerns you typically discuss with your mentor?
11. Does your mentor seem to know about resources that can help you in your situation?
12. What has been the most helpful assistance or support provided to you by your mentor?
Facilitator may probe on specific types of outcomes:
 - a. Help with issues related to improving physical or mental health
 - b. Help with issues related to improving quality of life
 - c. Improved understanding of paralysis
 - d. Increased awareness of relevant services
 - e. Increased feelings of empowerment, confidence, and independence
 - f. Strengthened support network
13. Have any of you experienced challenges building or sustaining a relationship with your mentor? Did you contact Reeve Foundation staff to get assistance with resolving any challenges and if so, what type of support did you receive from Reeve Foundation staff in addressing this challenge?

Concluding Thoughts

14. What has been the most rewarding or valuable part of your relationship with your mentor? What is the most challenging or frustrating part of your relationship with your mentor?
15. Have you considered becoming a mentor with the Reeve Foundation? Why or why not?
16. What's one thing you would change to improve or enhance the mentoring program moving forward?
17. Are there things that we haven't talked about today that you feel like we really should know about your experience with the Peer and Family Mentoring program?

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