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Generic Clearance
Formative Research and Tool Development

ATTACHMENT 7:

EXAMPLE GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING GROUP INTERVIEWS

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Guide for Conducting Group Interviews

AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN

Phase 1. Exploratory Formative Research

Focus Group/In-Depth Interview Guide

Campaign Objective: To increase the number of African American men who get an HIV test and to increase the number of African American men who are aware of their HIV serostatus.

Task Purpose: To gather information from the target audience, looking for patterns and ideas, to inform the development of campaign messages promoting HIV testing for young African American men at risk for HIV infection.

Data Collection

Setting: In-depth interviews (IDIs) will take up to 1 hour. The focus groups (FGs) will take up to 2 hours. A trained interviewer/moderator will meet with the participant(s).

Transcription: We will audiotape the discussions. A note taker will take notes from behind a one way mirror. Standard measures for transcribing the discussions will be arranged.

I. Welcome

Thank you for coming today. Your participation is very important. I'm _____ and I'm from RTI, a non-profit research organization. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is sponsoring this research. The purpose of this interview is to hear your views and opinions on important health topics concerning HIV/AIDS. Your insights are very important to us and your time today is appreciated. We will have about [1hour /2 hours] for our discussion.

Before we begin, I want to review a few ground rules for our discussion.

- Most importantly, there are no right or wrong answers. We want to know your opinions and what you think about the issues we will be discussing. I do not work for the people who are sponsoring this research, so don't hold back from giving me your honest opinions.
- You have probably noticed the microphones in the room. They are here because we are audio taping. I want to give you my full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. At the end of our discussion, I have to write a report and will refer to the tape when writing the report.
- Behind me is a one-way mirror. Some of the people working on this project are observing this discussion so that they can hear your opinions directly from you and take notes so that your opinions are accurately captured. However, your identity and anything you personally say here will remain secure. Your name, address, and phone number, which only the facility knows, will not be given to anyone and no one will contact you after this interview/group is over.

- There may be some sensitive questions asked during this discussion. If at any time you are uncomfortable with my questions, you can choose not to answer. Simply let me know that you prefer not to answer.
- Be sure to only use first names during the group. Please do not use your last name. Also, if you bring up a friend or other person you know as an example in our discussions, please do not use their last name either. So, whenever you mention a name, it should only be a first name and never a last name.
- FOCUS GROUP: We ask that each participant respect each other's privacy as well. Please do not share with others what was said in today's group after the group is over. Please be respectful of others' opinions. Any participant who is disrespectful to others or disruptive to the group will be asked to leave the group.
- Please turn your cell phone or beeper to vibrate or silent mode. The interview/group will last no more than [1 or 2] hour(s).
- If you need to go to the restroom during the discussion, please feel free to leave, but please return as soon as possible.
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

I. Warm-up

Before we begin our discussion, let's spend a little time getting to know one another.

1. Please tell [ME/THE GROUP] your first name and an interesting fact about yourself.
2. What are your top 5 health concerns?

[INTERVIEW: IF PARTICIPANT MENTIONS HIV AS A TOP 5 HEALTH CONCERN, ASK HIM TO RANK EACH BY LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE]

[GROUP: RANK FIVE HEALTH CONCERNS BY LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE]

II. Health and Health Care

Let's start out today by talking about our health. We all do some things that are good for our health and some things that aren't as good.

3. What are some things you are most proud of regarding your health (e.g., appearance, fitness level, good eating habits, etc.)? [MODERATOR MAKES A LIST ON FLIP CHART]
4. Staying healthy can be challenging. When you think about your health, what are some health concerns that come to mind? [MODERATOR MAKES A LIST ON FLIP CHART]
5. What are some of the reasons why you go to visit a doctor or clinic?
 - **Probe:** What types of health screening tests or exams do you get on a yearly basis?
6. How often do you go to the doctor for health screening tests or exams?

7. Where do you go to get your health care?

- **Probe:** Clinic, private practice?

III. HIV Knowledge

8. We are going to shift topics a bit and talk about HIV. First, please tell me what you know about HIV. [PROBE AS NEEDED]

- How does a person get HIV? What puts someone at risk for it?
- What questions do you have about HIV? What would you like to know more about? [ideas for questions below if not offered by group]
 - How to prevent transmission
 - How it is transmitted
 - How it affects your body
 - How it can be treated
 - Difference between HIV and AIDS
 - Difference between treatment vs. cure

9. How much do you worry about HIV?
[PROBE AS NEEDED]

- Do you feel like you are at risk for HIV? Have you ever been at risk?
- Have you ever made any changes in your life because you were worried about getting HIV (e.g., started using condoms, got tested or got tested more frequently)?
- Why do you worry about HIV?

10. Have your views of HIV changed over time?

- Do you know anyone who is living with HIV? Does knowing someone who is living with HIV change the way you think about HIV? How so?
- Do you feel like HIV is less serious today than it used to be? If so, why?

11. Do you and your friends talk about HIV? If so, what do you talk about?

IV. HIV Testing

12. Now, let's talk for a moment about HIV testing.

13. When you think about getting an HIV test, what comes to mind (e.g., needles, cost of test, stereotypes)?

14. Why might someone want to get tested for HIV?

15. What are some reasons why a person may not want to get tested?

16. In general, who do you think is more likely to get an HIV test? Men or Women? Why?
17. Can you think of some reasons why someone may not want know their HIV status?
[Examples for discussion if not brought up by group]
- Fear of being positive/stigma/treatment availability
 - Fear of needles, doctors, etc.
 - Cost of test
- [If necessary] Some people think that they might have HIV, but never get tested. Why do you think this is so?
18. Where are some places that you could get an HIV test (e.g. doctor's office, health fair, free clinic)?
- **Probe:** Have you ever had a health screening at a mobile unit/van? If so, what was the screening for? Where was the mobile unit?
19. What types of HIV tests are available?
- **Probe:** Have you heard of an oral fluid test?
- “An oral fluid HIV test is done by taking a swab of your gums. On the other hand, blood tests either prick your finger for a sample of blood or a vial of blood is withdrawn from your arm for testing.”
- **Probe:** If the doctor's office or clinic gave you the choice between an oral fluid test or a test that required blood (finger stick or complete blood test), which would you prefer? What about this method do you prefer?
20. Has a health care provider ever talked to you about HIV? What did your health care provider say? What do you think about what your health care provider said?
21. Have you ever been tested for HIV [MODERATOR: For group, ask for a show of hands]
If no, skip to Question 27
22. When were you last tested? OR How long has it been since you were last tested? How often do you get tested?
- **Probe:** If they mention at a physical exam or doctor's appointment, probe for whether the doctor offered the test or if they asked for it.
 - **Probe:** How do you know if you were tested for HIV (check to see if he assumed testing was part of a group of tests)
 - **Probe:** How often do you get tested?

23. Why did you decide to get tested?
- **Probe:** Doctor asked, family/friend encouraged me to get tested, partner encouraged me to get tested, made a “mistake”/multiple partners, heard/saw an ad
24. Where were you tested? (clinic, private doctor’s office, etc) Have you ever been tested anywhere else? Where?
25. What type of test did you have? (oral, finger prick, blood draw)
26. Is there something about your testing experience that could change that would motivate you to get tested again?

Probe Categories:

- Location (More convenient location, mobile units?)
- Facilities (improve waiting area, provide reading materials/magazines/music, improve appearance of facility)
- Service (professional/courteous staff, privacy/security, lower cost or free, shorter waiting time)

27. Did you get the results of your test?

- If yes, how long did you have to wait for your results?

Probe: How would you feel if you could get your results more quickly?

- If no, why not?
 - **Probe:** What, if anything, could have encouraged you to get your results?

28. Did anyone go with you when you got tested?

- **Probe:** partner, friend, relative?

29. [IF TESTED, SKIP TO NEXT QUESTION] What keeps you from being tested?

- **Probe:** Do not believe you are at risk? Afraid to find out results? Worried what others might think? Afraid of being rejected by family or friends? Other reasons?

30. What kind of things would convince you to get [A / ANOTHER] test?

31. When do you think a person should get an HIV test?

32. How often do you think a person should get an HIV test?

V. Theoretical Concepts: Perceptions of Risk, Normative Beliefs, Behavioral Beliefs (re: HIV test and support/treatment)

33. Thinking about your best friends, would you describe them at high, medium or low risk of HIV? Why?
PROBE: How about you? How would you describe your risk for HIV?
PROBE: Give me an example/scenario of someone who is at high risk for HIV infection. Medium risk example/scenario. Low risk example/scenario.
34. Do you know if any of your close friends have been tested for HIV?
PROBE: Does knowing that they were tested change how you think about them? Why or why not?
PROBE: If not tested, what would you think if you found out that your friend was tested for HIV?
PROBE: Would you think differently about him or her? Why or why not?
35. Do you know if your partner has been tested for HIV?
PROBE: Does knowing that he was tested change how you think about her? Why or why not?
PROBE: If not tested, what would you think if you found out that your partner was tested for HIV?
PROBE: Would you think differently about her? Why or why not?
36. [INTERVIEW ONLY] Let's say you just went to get an HIV test, how would your partner react if she found out?
PROBE: How would your friends react?
PROBE: How would your family react?
PROBE: When you think about their possible reactions, does it make you more or less likely to get an HIV test in the future?
37. What type of support or treatment is available to people who test HIV positive?
PROBE: Are you aware of resources in your community?
PROBE: Do you think those resources would be available for you if you tested positive? Why or why not?
PROBE: Would you use those resources? Why/why not?
PROBE: Would you encourage friends and family to use those resources if they tested positive? Why/why not?
38. Do you know anyone in your community who is HIV positive?
PROBE: What do people think about them?

VI. HIV-Related Health Communications

39. Have you seen any advertisements about HIV/AIDS? If so, where and what did they say?
40. An advertising campaign may be created to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and encourage people to get tested, especially those who are at high risk for getting HIV. Let's talk about how you think the HIV ads should be created.
- What kinds of things should the ads say?
 - What would be important to tell people who read or hear the ads about HIV?
 - What would you want to hear/read in the ads?
 - What kinds of pictures would you like to see in the ads?
 - If pictures of people mentioned, ask, what ethnicity, age, and gender the person should be?
 - What should the person be doing?

VII. Sources of Information

41. When it comes to health information, who are the people or organizations you're most likely to respect and listen to? Why? (spouse, doctor, etc)?
42. Where do you go to get answers to your health questions? Any place else?
43. Who do you NOT trust to give you health information?
44. Have you ever received HIV/AIDS information at a health fair or other event? If so, what was the event? Where was it?
45. How would you feel about getting HIV testing information in the following places?
- Community health clinic
 - Doctor's office
 - Church
 - Health fair
 - Work
 - Sporting event
 - What other places can you think of that would be convenient places to get information about HIV testing?
46. Has your opinion changed about how much you are at risk of getting HIV?
47. Are you more or less likely now to get tested for HIV? Why/why not?
48. What would motivate you to want to get an HIV test?
49. Do you have any unanswered questions about HIV or HIV testing?

VIII. [Focus Group only] Group Exercise [If time]

I'm going to split the group into two sections. [Moderator splits group up evenly].

Group 1: Your task is to come up with ideas to convince a friend of yours who you think is at high risk for HIV that they should be tested for HIV. What would you tell them to convince them?

Group 2: Your task to come up with excuses that your friend might give to not get tested.

Moderator positions a flip chart for each group to use.

As your group comes up with ideas, have one member of your group write them up on the board. I will give you about 5 minutes and then we will discuss them as a group.

50. First group, what ideas did you come up with to convince your friend to get tested?

PROBE: Group two, what are your reactions to these reasons?

PROBE: Do you find the reasons believable?

51. Second group, what excuses did you come up with?

PROBE: Group one, what are your reactions to these reasons?

52. Okay, this question is for both groups. We heard excuses that a person may give to not get tested. What ideas do you have to counter these excuses?

VIII. Closing

Okay, we are pretty much out of time. Do you have any last thoughts?

Excuse me for one moment while I see if the people observing have any questions that I have not asked. I will be right back.

Interviewer/Moderator steps out to check to see if there are any additional questions.

Thank you for your participation. There is a brochure for you to take with you if you would like. It has information about HIV/AIDS and locations where you can get further information. Have a good day/evening.