



Attachment K. Caregiver Focus Group Guide

Form Approve
OMB No: xxxx-xxxx
Exp. Date: xx-xx-xxxx

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Introduction

Hello, I'm (NAME) from Abt Global. I'll be the discussion leader for our group today. Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. (NAME) is also with Abt Global and will be taking notes during the discussion. The focus group will take about 60 minutes.

As a reminder, in 2022 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, known as the CDC, released the *Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain*. This guideline makes recommendations to improve pain management approaches and emphasizes the need for clinicians to listen and work with patients to provide effective and safe pain management.

General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT) and Abt Global are conducting a research study for CDC to better understand how this Guideline was implemented. We want to learn from your experience with providing care to someone with pain, and how the person's care and treatment may have changed because of this Guideline. This study is funded by the CDC.

Let's get started by going over some ground rules for our discussion today:

- We ask that, to the extent possible, individuals speak one at a time so that we do not miss any information. We will make sure everyone has a chance to talk.
- Please be respectful of the opinions of others.
- We are not seeking agreement on anything in today's group.
- Please respect one another's privacy and do not share anything you hear in today's focus group with anyone outside of the focus group.
- Please turn off your cell phone and other devices or put them in vibrate or silent mode, if possible.
- Be sure to ONLY USE FIRST NAMES or no names at all during the discussion. Please do not use your last name. Also, if you bring up another person you know as an example in our discussions, please do not use their name. So, whenever you mention a name, it should only be a first name and never a last name.
- Participation is voluntary and you are not required to answer every question. This will be a discussion, not an interview.
- There are no right or wrong answers.

- You may also choose not to participate or to leave the group, at any time or for any reason, without consequence.
- Feel free to ask me questions at any time.

The information you provide in the focus group will be kept private. Your name will not appear in any internal or published reports from the study. Information learned from these discussions may be presented in documents or materials like reports, conference presentations or posters, or publications. Please know that the information you share will not be linked to your name or any other identifying information. Although we will do our best, there is a small risk of loss of privacy.

You will receive a \$75 virtual gift card to compensate you for the time spent participating in the focus group.

To assist with our notes, we would like to record the focus group, so we do not miss anything. The recording will not be shared with anyone outside Abt Global, GDIT or CDC. We will use this recording to make de-identified transcripts of the recordings, which will be shared with GDIT and CDC. This recording will be deleted once our notes from the focus group have been completed.

Do any of you have any questions before we get started?

When I ask you, please provide a verbal “YES” to indicate that you have agreed to participate in the focus group and that we may record the discussion today.

WARM UP/UNDERSTANDING EXPERIENCE AS CAREGIVERS OF PATIENTS WITH PAIN

1. Let's start out by introducing yourselves with your first names and talking a bit about your experiences caring for someone with pain.
2. **PROBES:** When did you start providing care? What is your role in supporting someone with pain? What treatments and medications for pain has the person or persons you have provided care for tried? Tell me about your experience with caring for someone who takes/has taken opioids, to treat pain. Do you think opioids effectively manage pain? Were there negative side effects?

PROBES: Opioids, such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin) or morphine, for pain. What about compared to other treatments and the risks/harms and benefits

3. There are a lot of strategies to help with pain – counseling or behavioral therapy, and other non-medication treatments (e.g., acupuncture). Can you tell us about the person you care for and your experience with these for their pain?
4. Can you tell us your and the person you care for experience with non-opioid medications to manage their pain.

CHANGE IN CARE SINCE GUIDELINE IMPLEMENTATION

5. Have you noticed any changes to how clinicians manage the pain of the person(s) in your care since November 2022? If so, what have you noticed?

PROBES: As a reminder, in 2022, CDC released the Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain. This guideline makes recommendations to improve pain management approaches and emphasizes the need for clinicians to listen and work with patients to provide effective and safe pain management. Changes in tone or focus of conversations, changes in ability to access other medications or therapies like acupuncture or PT, changes in tapering conversations, changes in other recommendations

6. Give me an example of how the person's pain management has improved since November 2022?
7. How has the person's pain management remained the same since November 2022?
8. How has the person's pain management gotten worse since November 2022?
9. Since November 2022, what other factors may have affected the management of pain for the person you care for, such as a change in primary care clinician or changes in their insurance coverage or changing from primary care clinician to pain management specialist?
10. What, if anything, have you as a caregiver had to do differently as a result of the changes?
11. Thank you very much for sharing your experiences with me. Thinking about these experiences, is there anything else you think we should know about the management of the person's pain in the last few years?