INSTRUMENT 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PHA STAFF
Evaluation of the Community Choice Demonstration

CONSENT

Before we begin, I want to tell you a few things about this study and your participation in it. If you would like translated materials, or to complete the survey in language other than English, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate you. If you need information to be presented in an accessible format, for example, Braille, audio, large type, or sign language interpreters, or need a reasonable accommodation (a change or adjustment) so that you can participate, please let us know. Please feel free to ask me any questions you might have. We will also [email/give] you a copy of this information.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) hired a research team to conduct a study on HUD's Community Choice Demonstration (Demonstration) program. The research team is led by Abt Associates and includes the Urban Institute, MEF Associates, Sage Computing, Social Policy Research Associates, a team of consultants, and other researchers that may be added in the future. The research team and HUD want to determine whether and to what extent mobility-related services are effective in helping Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holders move to opportunity neighborhoods. During this interview, we will ask you questions about the Demonstration, including questions about your role and [PHA NAME's] involvement in the Demonstration, your perspective on the Demonstration, and how well the Demonstration meets the needs of participating families.

We are not evaluating your agency or its services. As part of this process, we are talking with representatives from PHAs participating in the Demonstration [IF PHA DOES NOT PROVIDE MOBILITY-RELATED SERVICES IN-HOUSE: along with mobility services providers if services are provided through external partners]. We will be conducting at least two rounds of interviews and we may reach out to you again in a couple of years for an additional interview.

I am required to tell you that the questions in this survey have been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to evaluate the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Choice Demonstration. The information requested under this collection is fully protected and kept private to the extent permitted by law, including 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974) and OMB Circular No. A-130.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: XXX-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any

other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to XX at XXXX@XXX., or by phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

During the interview, one of the researchers will be taking detailed notes, but we will not identify your name in our notes. With your permission, we will audio record the interview to have an accurate record of what is said as a back up to our notes. We may contact you after the interview to ask for clarification. No one outside the research team will see any information that identifies you personally, listen to the audio recordings, or review the notes we take. We will make every effort to protect your privacy to the extent permitted by law, but if we think you are at risk of physical or emotional harm, we may need to notify someone.

Themes across all the interviews we are conducting will be published in a report to HUD. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, the answers you provide during an interview will be combined with answers from many individuals. We never share any information that identifies you or any other respondents by name outside of our research team. However, we may identify the agency you work for, and unique roles could allow an individual to indirectly attribute a statement to you. We make every effort to avoid this, but you should be aware of the possibility.

Do you have any questions about the study or today's discussion? *[Pause for response and address any questions]*

Do you agree to participate? *[Pause for response]*

Are you comfortable with this interview being recorded? *[Pause for response]*

Thank you, we are going to turn on the audio recorder now.

The tape recorder is now on.

Do you have any questions before we continue?

OK, let's start.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today.

BACKGROUND [ALL RESPONDENTS]

First, we'd like to hear about your organization and your position here. Please tell us about how you ended up working here, and your role at [PHA].

1. Tell me about your current position.
    a. How long have you held this position?
    b. [*If new to the position*] What was your previous position?
2. What are your primary responsibilities at [PHA]?
    a. What are your responsibilities related to the mobility demonstration?

3. How much of your time do you spend on the mobility demonstration?

   Probes: Time with participating families assigned to the treatment group, time with contracted services staff or service provider, time with collaborating PHAs?

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT [ALL RESPONDENTS]

We would like to hear about [PHA]'s motivation for joining the mobility demonstration, and any previous experience [PHA] might have with providing mobility-related services before joining the demonstration.

4. Tell me about any role you played in helping the PHA to apply for the demonstration.
5. What motivated [PHA] to pursue the mobility demonstration opportunity? What was appealing about it?

   a. How does the demonstration opportunity align with [PHA]'s mission? And organizational priorities?

   Probes: Additional vouchers or service dollars, addressing challenges facing HCV participants, expanding housing choice and improving location outcomes?

   a. What are you hoping to achieve through the demonstration program?

6. Has [PHA] focused on facilitating neighborhood choice in the past, before applying for the mobility demonstration?

   a. Which, if any, services or administrative policy options did you provide to standard voucher holders to support moves to opportunity areas before the demonstration?

      Probes: Provided information (about neighborhoods or schools), housing/apartment lists, search assistance, provided mobility-related services, referrals to mobility-related services, alternative payment standards (neighborhood rents or SAFMRs), security deposit assistance or other financial support, financial incentives for owners, regional portability (defined as {PHA-SPECIFIC DETAIL})?

   a. When did the agency offer these services or policy options?

7. How about now? Does [PHA] currently provide any mobility-related services or administrative policy options to standard voucher recipients—separate from the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] efforts?

   a. [*If yes*] Which services? Tell me about them.
   b. [*If yes*] Are those services still available to [PHA name] voucher holders?
   c. [*If yes*] What proportion of PHA voucher participants would you say receive these services?

Probes: Specific mobility-related services, information about neighborhoods or schools, housing/apartment lists, search assistance, provided mobility-related services, referrals to mobility-related services, alternative payment standards (neighborhood rents or SAFMRs), regional portability?

8. Have standard HCV program operations changed in any way because of mobility demonstration participation?

    a. [*If yes*] What has changed? Can you give examples? What prompted these changes?

        Probes: Staffing or staff roles, HCV admission processes, administrative policies (search times, portability, payment standards, occupancy standards, HQS inspections, lease-up processes), availability of mobility-related services, alignment with partner PHA procedures, definitions of opportunity areas, tracking of voucher holders' residential locations?

MOBILITY PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS [ALL RESPONDENTS]

We'd like to hear more about the partnerships that are part of [MOBILITY PROGRAM], including what has worked well so far and any challenges that you've faced implementing these partnerships and the program.

9. [*From site information*] We understand that your main partners in the demonstration program are [PHA(S) AND [MOBILITY SERVICES PROVIDER NAME(S)] (if relevant)]. Is this correct? Are there other partnerships or agencies involved in the mobility program that you consider key contributors to the program's success?

    Probes: Other local service providers, local landlord association, funders, local evaluators, other partners aside from HUD technical assistance and implementation teams?

    a. [*If yes*] What are their roles in [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

        Probes: Specific CMRS components, outcomes tracking/evaluation, staff capacity building/TA, overall administrative design, championing/supporting the effort, landlord outreach?

10. How did [PHA] determine whether to provide mobility-related services directly versus through a contracted service provider?

    Probes: PHA staff capacity, cost considerations, local provider capacity, PHA and partner preferences and reputation?

11. [*If services provided in-house by [PHA]*] Did [PHA] already have the capacity to fully implement the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] CMRS model?

    a. How did you establish staff capacity to provide [MOBILITY PROGRAM] services in-house?

        Probes: Redirecting existing program staff, hiring new staff?

PARTNER PHAS (ONLY SITES WITH MULTIPLE PHAS) [ALL RESPONDENTS]

Let's start with your work with your PHA partners.

12. Tell me about [PHA]'s role in the demonstration, in relation to [PARTNER PHA].

    Probes: Primary leadership/lead PHA, collaborator, supporting other lead PHAs/organizations?

    a. What about for the application process? Did one PHA initiate the application process?
    b. What about for designing and implementing the mobility program?

13. Has [PHA] worked with [PARTNER PHA] or other PHAs before the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] partnership?

    a. [*If yes*] Please describe past collaborations.

14. Thinking about your current collaboration on [MOBILITY PROGRAM], what would you say has worked well so far in the collaboration? What has been challenging?

    Probes: Building staff capacity, coordination of HCV services, communication, fidelity to the model, service provider coordination, enrollment issues, working with the evaluation/TA/implementation teams, portability across PHAs?

15. How do you stay in communication with [PARTNER PHA]?

    a. How often do you communicate with them? Who is your main collaborator there?

    Probes: informal/as needed, standing meetings, trainings?

PARTNERSHIP WITH EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDER (ONLY SITES W/CONTRACT SERVICE PROVIDER) [ALL RESPONDENTS]

Now we'd like to hear more about [PHA]'s work with [MOBILITY PROGRAM]'s mobility services provider.

16. How did you identify [SERVICE PROVIDER] as your service provider for [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

    Probes: Issued an RFP, approached the provider based on reputation/experience, approached by provider?

    a. Has [PHA] worked with [SERVICE PROVIDER] in the past, before the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] collaboration?
    b. [*If yes*] Please describe a past program/collaboration.

    Probe: If RFP not already available, request copy of RFP.

17. Tell me about the performance of [SERVICE PROVIDER] so far.

    a. What is going smoothly?

b. What challenges that have bubbled up with their work, if any?

HOUSING SEARCH CONTEXT [ALL RESPONDENTS]

We'd like to hear a bit more about your local housing market and the challenges facing voucher families searching for housing.

18. From your perspective, what are some common barriers families face while searching for housing with a voucher?
    a. What additional barriers, if any, do families face when searching for housing in an opportunity area?

19. Do these barriers differ for new admission families coming off the waitlist versus families who already have vouchers and are trying to move?
    a. [*If so*] in what ways?

20. To what extent do you think [MOBILITY PROGRAM] addresses these barriers?
    a. Tell me more about this. Which barriers are more challenging to address through mobility-related services? Which are easier?

DEMONSTRATION RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT PROCESS [HCV STAFF]

Now we'd like to hear about your experience so far with enrolling families in the demonstration and mobility program. Walk me through how families are identified for the program, and how they are enrolled and connected to the mobility program.

21. How do existing HCV families learn about the opportunity? Describe how the PHA recruits existing voucher families into the demonstration.

22. How do new admission families learn about the opportunity? Describe how the PHA recruits new admission families from the waitlist.
    a. How is the recruitment process going?
    b. How has the process differed for new versus existing households?
    c. Have you experienced any challenges recruiting either existing or new admission voucher families?
    d. Are there any particular strategies that have been more or less effective in identifying interested families? Please describe.

23. Once eligible families interested in [MOBILITY PROGRAM] are identified, what happens next? Please walk us through:
    a. The enrollment process
    b. The randomization process

c. The collection of information through the baseline information form and the self-administered survey

d. Do these processes differ for new admission families compared to existing voucher families? In what ways?

24. How would you say enrollment and randomization have gone to date?

    a. What has worked well?

    b. Has enrollment of new admission families met expectations? How has it/has it not?

    c. Has enrollment of existing voucher families met expectations? How has it/has it not?

    d. What challenges have emerged for enrolling or randomizing eligible families?

    e. What would help improve/address these challenges?

    Probes: Differences for new admissions or for existing families, voucher eligibility, interest in [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

25. What, if any, differences do you see between families that choose to enroll and those that do not?

    Probes: Children's ages (older/younger), smaller/larger families, by race/ethnicity or primary language, by current neighborhood; any challenges with take-up by new admission versus existing voucher families?

26. Do voucher families generally already have a housing unit or neighborhood in mind for their move when they enter [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

    a. [*If so*] About how common is it to have already selected a unit or neighborhood for their move?

    b. Does this differ between new admissions families and existing voucher families?

    c. Are some existing voucher families still deciding between moving and staying in their current unit when they enter the [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

27. Do any families that are eligible for the mobility program express concerns about data, privacy, or the consent process for the evaluation? How widespread are any such concerns?

28. How are the families assigned to the treatment group connected to the staff who will provide mobility-related services?

    a. Is this matching process working well?

    b. What, if any, challenges have there been?

MOBILTY-RELATED SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION [HCV STAFF]

Now we'd like to hear more about the mobility program model and services, and implementation to date.

29. To what extent are all the planned comprehensive mobility-related services fully implemented and available to participating households? Tell me more about that.

30. Which services have not been fully implemented yet?

    a. Why have they not been fully implemented?

    b. Do you expect they will be provided going forward?

    Probes: Ask about any site-specific CMRS not mentioned in response to Q1 or Q2 [prepare a list of a sites CMRS before the interview].

31. What would you say has gone well to date with the mobility-program launch and [PHA's] [SERVICE PROVIDER's] provision of mobility-related services?

    a. Are there aspects that were easier to launch?

32. What has been challenging about the launch and provision of comprehensive mobility-related services?

    Probes: Staff capacity or expertise to provide comprehensive mobility-related services [at PHA or service provider], recruitment and enrollment, landlord engagement, fidelity to the model?

    a. Are there aspects of the comprehensive mobility-related services model that have been more difficult for the [PHA] [SERVICE PROVIDER] to launch or implement?

    b. What improvements, if any, are you hoping to see as implementation moves forward?

33. Which service or services provided through [MOBILITY PROGRAM] do you think are the most effective or important for helping families access opportunity areas?

    a. What led you to identify this service/these services as most effective?

    b. Are there any other services you think are particularly effective?

34. Have you or your team identified any gaps in the services needed to facilitate moves to opportunity areas? For families? For landlords?

    a. Do you have plans to fill the service gaps? If so, how?

EARLY OUTCOMES [ALL RESPONDENTS]

We would like to hear your perspective on how the mobility demonstration program is doing so far, and any observations about early outcomes for families.

35. What types of information does [PHA] track on family outcomes related to the demonstration?

    Probes: Enrollment, participation in various services, housing moves, outcomes related to services received?

a. How do you track outcomes?

b. [*If external service provider*] What types of information or reports does [PHA] receive from [SERVICE PROVIDER]? What does the PHA do with the information received?

36. What, if any, early trends have you observed in housing search outcomes for [MOBILITY PROGRAM] participants?

    a. What differences, if any, have you observed in housing search outcomes between new admission families and existing voucher families?

    Probes: Moves to opportunity areas, time spent searching, types or amount of assistance received?

    b. What do you think explains these differences?

37. What other trends in search outcomes have you observed for families receiving services through the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] compared with families in the standard HCV program?

    Probes: Longer or shorter search times; units of better, similar or worse quality; fewer or more HQS inspection failures; need for higher payment standards or HAP; more or less porting?

38. Has participation in the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] benefitted the participant families? In what ways?

    Probes: Feeling hopeful about opportunities for housing that better serves a family's needs, opportunity to live in a different area, sense of increased choice, support for landlord interactions, support for lease-up?

    a. Are there ways that participation has been challenging for families?

39. For families that want to remain in the opportunity areas, have you observed any challenges so far to [MOBILITY PROGRAM] participants' ability to remain in opportunity neighborhoods once they move there?

    a. [*If yes*] Can you describe the challenges?

    b. [*If yes*] Has [PHA] or your partners identified ways to try to address the challenges?

    c. What do you think might help families stay in opportunity areas?

    Probes: Post-move services, supports for children, economic supports, access to a reliable car or reliable public transportation?

40. Among families that have moved to an opportunity area, do you know of any participants who do not want to stay there?

    a. [*If yes*] What are reasons they do not want to stay in opportunity areas?

    b. What do you think might help encourage families to remain in opportunity areas?

REFLECTIONS [ALL RESPONDENTS]

41. To what extent has the [MOBILITY PROGRAM] implementation so far met expectations?

    a. How has it been different from expectations?

42. Are you satisfied with the final opportunity area maps and administrative policies? [*If not*] Why are you unsatisfied with them?

43. Should the scope of comprehensive mobility-related services be changed in any way? [*If yes*] How?

    a. What do you think are the most critical changes needed and why?

44. What might be useful to you and your team as you move forward with [MOBILITY PROGRAM] to improve family mobility outcomes?

    Probes: Staff resources, expertise with comprehensive mobility-related services, HUD guidance, other waivers or programmatic flexibilities, TA provider support, additional partnerships within the community (landlord association)?

CLOSING [ALL RESPONDENTS]

45. Is there anything that I did not ask about that you think I should know about your experience with the mobility demonstration?

46. Do you think your organization has had the support and resources necessary to implement the Demonstration? [*If no]* What support or resources would be useful to you?

47. Are there any other PHA or service provider staff that you think we should be sure to talk to about the [MOBILITY PROGRAM]?

48. Do you have any final questions for me about the study?

Thank you for your time. I will turn off the recorder now.