

Focus Group Interview Guide (February 2011)

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I. Introduction

First, we want to thank all of you for taking the time to participate in this focus group discussion. The purpose of this project is to learn about what kinds of things are important for partnerships like this one to be able to work together. We are not here to “evaluate” this partnership but rather to learn from your experience. By talking about these issues with successful partnerships like yours, we hope to better understand how universities and communities work together in order to help other groups address important problems in their communities. For this discussion, we’d like you to think back to your experiences working in this partnership. We’re interested in hearing from all of you in your own words about the challenges and successes in this process. You’ve all been asked to participate in this group based on your involvement in the partnership and we expect that this discussion will last about 90 minutes.

II. Current Activities

We’d like to start off by asking you to share with us where your partnership is at now in terms of the work you’re doing. What kinds of things are you involved in now?

1. Have the goals of the partnership changed over time? If so, how?
2. Partnerships can have a lot of different people and agencies/groups involved. Thinking about your partnership, what kinds of resources do you have available to accomplish your goals?

We would also like to hear your views about some of the cultural issues that may come up in this kind of partnership. The research team from the University may not share a similar cultural background as the community or speak the same language. Do these differences impact the partnership? If so, how?

3. Different ways of knowing—Thinking over all the work you’ve done, can you give me a sense of how the experience and knowledge from the community has influenced this process?

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□ III. CBPR

Researchers use the term CBPR to describe this kind of University-Community partnership where ideally everyone has an equal level of involvement in the work. Can anyone share some thoughts about how this kind of approach is working in your project?

4. What kinds of things are working well? What are some of the challenges you've faced?
5. Did it make a difference in your efforts?
 - a. How about in terms of community views about research and/or trusting the University?

□ IV. Partnership/Group Dynamics (Power, Trust)

We're interested in understanding a little more about how your partnership works together. While one goal in a CBPR or this kind of research partnership is to make sure everyone can contribute equally, the reality is that this is difficult or sometimes impossible. Can anyone share their thoughts about how this is working out here?

6. Can you share with us some thoughts about how the issue of power affects this partnership?
7. For example, there may be times when not everybody agrees about something. Has that happened in this partnership? How do you address that?

We've also been trying to understand how trust works in this kind of partnership where there are people from the community working together with the University.

8. Would anyone like to talk about issues of trust in this partnership?
 - a. Trust in beginning of the partnership
 - b. Trust as it stands now in the partnership

□ V. Summary

As we come to the end of our discussion, we have just a few questions to wrap up.

If another group were going to start this kind of partnership, what kinds of things would you tell them in order to help them be successful? What's important for them to know?

9. Lastly, where do you see the partnership going from here? Is there anything else you'd like to add about the issues we've been discussing?

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for sharing your thoughts and experiences with us here today. Your time and devotion is truly appreciated. Many Thanks!!

For more information on Qualitative Case Study Design, contact: Julie Lucero, jelucero@salud.unm.edu; or Nina Wallerstein, PI, nwallerstein@salud.unm.edu, University of New Mexico

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