

# APPENDIX 2

## FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

### RYAN WHITE PLANNING COUNCIL OF THE DALLAS AREA RYAN WHITE CONSORTIUM OF NORTH TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

I would like to welcome each of you to the focus group discussion today, and I want to thank you all for coming. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am consultant conducting the 2004 comprehensive needs assessment for the Ryan White Planning Council of the Dallas Area and the Ryan White Consortium of North Texas.

This is one of seven focus groups we will be conducting with people who have HIV disease. Other things we are doing to get information for the comprehensive needs assessment include a large scale consumer survey, a provider survey and also gathering statistics on the epidemic in the region. Your suggestions today, and other information from the surveys and statistics will help the Planning Council and Consortium decide how to distribute the federal grant money the Dallas area receives for HIV services.

A focus group is really just a discussion group. We want to include everyone's ideas and suggestions, so please do not hesitate to voice your opinions. You might feel uncomfortable disagreeing with others in the group, but different opinions are important to this process and to the discussion.

I want everyone here to understand that this is a confidential discussion. We must all agree not to discuss what is said outside this room. The results of this discussion will be included with the results of other focus group discussions in the final report. We will not identify any person individually. Does everyone agree to maintain confidentiality of this discussion?

Okay, then we will begin.

#### Introductions

- a. Let's begin with introductions. Please introduce yourself and tell us where you are originally from, how long you have been in the US, when you were diagnosed with HIV disease, where you were diagnosed (in Dallas area or another place).

- b. For those of you with children under the age of 18, please tell me their ages and whether they are living with you. Are any of the children HIV positive?
- c. (For those appropriate) Have (any of) you been pregnant while you were HIV positive and living in Dallas? How easy was it to get the treatment to prevent transmission of HIV to your baby? How smoothly did you transition from OB care to HIV medical care?

**Not Accessing Care**

- a. Is anyone in this group not receiving HIV medical care?
- b. (If anyone is not accessing medical care) What has kept you from getting HIV medical care?
- c. What needs to be done to get you to use HIV medical care? What will make you get HIV medical care?

**Accessing Care After Diagnosis**

- a. (Targeting those diagnosed in the last five years) How soon after you were diagnosed did you start getting HIV medical care?
- b. (For those who waited more than six months) What kept you from getting HIV medical care? What could have been done to help you get HIV medical care sooner?
- c. Once you decided to get HIV medical care, what, if anything, made it hard to get HIV medical care? What could have been done to make it easier for you to get HIV medical care?
- d. If you have a friend that is like you that is diagnosed with HIV, what would you tell him (her) about getting HIV medical care? What advice would you give?

**Dropping Out of Care**

- a. Have you ever dropped out of HIV medical care?
- b. (For those that have ask for most recent time) Thinking about the most recent time dropped out of care, what caused it?
- c. What could have kept you in care?
- d. What made you go back?
- e. (If multiple times) Did your reasons for dropping out and for going back change?

**Top of Mind Services**

- a. What services do you need that you can't get? If so, what are they and why can't you get them?
- b. What services do you need that are hard to get? (Probe—reasons these services are hard to get—child care, location/transportation, hours of operation, waiting time, etc.)

**Improving Access to Care Now**

- a. As \_\_\_\_\_ (population), do you face special difficulties getting HIV medical care that others don't have to deal with? What are these?
- b. What would make it easier to access HIV medical care?
- c. When you miss medical appointments, what are the reasons?

- d. Service Issues:
- Transportation—How is this working? What can be done to make it better?
  - Case Management—Do you have more than one case manager? (If so) Why do you have more than one—do they do different things for you? What can be done to make case management services better?
  - Food Pantry—how is this working? What can be done to make it better?
  - Housing is a problem for many people. Do you need help with housing? (If yes) What help do you need?
  - Support Groups—do you use them? Do you need them? What can be done to make them more useful?
  - Mental Health Therapy and Counseling—do you use it? Do you need it? What can be done to make it easier to get or more useful?
- e. Do any of the following keep you from getting HIV medical care?
- a. Child care?
  - b. Other family responsibilities?
  - c. Telling your partner you are positive?
  - d. Telling your children you are positive?
  - e. Worried about other people knowing your status?
- f. What other services that could help you get care, stay in care?
- g. If you had a friend who was just learning that he/she was HIV positive, what would you tell him/her?

**Stigma**

- a. What is the attitude toward HIV among the \_\_\_\_\_ (population) community in Dallas?
  
- b. (If not addressed earlier) Do you worry that people will see you getting HIV services? Does this keep you from getting care?

Thank you for participating in today's group. Your comments will help form recommendations for the Ryan White Planning Council and Consortium's comprehensive needs assessment. We have a \$25 gift card to Wal-Mart as a thank you gift.