

Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Sample Questions

Before conducting any focus groups or key informant interviews, it is important to decide what information you would like to obtain from your qualitative methods. The objective of collecting these qualitative data is to identify the most relevant contributing factors in your community. Based on the information you'd like to obtain, you can create questions. Here are some sample questions you may use. Remember that these are only suggestions – feel free to adjust, discard or add any questions to adapt your qualitative methods to your specific community.

Tips:

- ✓ Always provide definitions for terms like prescription opioids and opioid misuse so that you and your participants are on the same page.
- ✓ Start with 1 – 2 warm-up questions to build rapport. These are easy, fact-seeking questions.
- ✓ Use 5 – 7 core questions to obtain in-depth information and 1 – 2 wrap-up questions to allow respondents to share final thoughts.
- ✓ Either use a recorder or have a second person taking notes and debrief immediately.

Key Informant Interviews

Providers (medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists):

1. When people misuse prescription opioids, how do you think they obtain them?
2. What are some factors that contribute to prescription drug abuse in this community? Heroin?
3. Who are the people most affected by opioid misuse?
4. What can be done to prevent abuse by those who have been prescribed opioids?
5. Do you use PDMP?
 - a. *If provider uses PDMP:* How often do you utilize it before writing prescriptions for opioids? What has your experience with PDMP been like?
 - b. *If provider doesn't use PDMP:* What are the barriers to using PDMP?
6. When was your most recent prescription opioid misuse training, if any? Who provided the training?
 - a. *If several years:* Would you (and/or other providers in your field) find it useful to have further training?
 - b. *If recent:* Did you find it useful? Would you recommend expansion?
7. How often do you encounter patients who are doctor (or pharmacy) shopping? Can you tell me something about who these patients are in terms of age, gender, etc?
8. What actions have you taken when you suspect someone is...
 - a. *For doctors/dentists:* doctor shopping?
 - b. *For pharmacists:* pharmacy shopping or attempting to fill fraudulent prescriptions?
... What do you believe is/are appropriate action(s) to take? What barriers, if any, exist to taking said action?
9. When writing/dispensing prescription opioids, what counseling points do physicians (or pharmacists) discuss with your patient? If not, what are the barriers to doing so?
10. What can you recommend to address the opioid misuse problem in [community]?

Pharmacist specific questions

1. What problem prescribing practices do you witness commonly?
2. Which drugs are most commonly overprescribed and possibly misused?

Focus Groups

	Current/past users	Substance Abuse Treatment providers	Other community members
General Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What, in your opinion, constitutes inappropriate use of prescription opioids? - What are some factors specific to this community that lead people to misuse prescription opioids? Heroin? - Why or under what circumstances do people start misusing prescription opioids or heroin? 		
Community Norms	- How do most people in [community] view using prescription opioids to get high? What about heroin?	- How do most people in [community] view using prescription opioids to get high? What about heroin?	- How do most people in [community] view using prescription opioids to get high? What about heroin?
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What role does law enforcement play in terms of opioid misuse (both heroin and prescription opioids)? What about in overdose situations? What roles would you like law enforcement to play? - What are someone's chances of getting caught while using prescription opioids? Heroin? - What do you know about the Good Samaritan law? How do you feel about it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What role does law enforcement play in terms of opioid misuse (both heroin and prescription opioids)? What about in overdose situations? What roles would you like law enforcement to play? - How do you feel about the Good Samaritan Law? In your experience, what has been the awareness and uptake level among users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What role does law enforcement play in terms of opioid misuse (both heroin and prescription opioids)? What about in overdose situations? What roles would you like law enforcement to play? - What are someone's chances of getting caught while using prescription opioids? Heroin? - What do you know about the Good Samaritan law? How do you feel about it?
Perceived Risk of Harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the dangers associated with heroin use? What about prescription opioids? - If applicable, what has your doctor and pharmacist discussed with you about prescription opioids? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What risks do your clients perceive with misusing heroin? What about prescription opioids? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the dangers associated with heroin use? What about prescription opioids? - If applicable, what has your doctor and pharmacist discussed with you about prescription opioids?
Retail/Social Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do people obtain prescription opioids? (for both retail and social access) - What do you think about people sharing prescription opioids? - What are appropriate methods of storing prescription opioids? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do people obtain prescription opioids? (for both retail and social access) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do people obtain prescription opioids? (for both retail and social access) - What do you think about people sharing prescription opioids? - What are appropriate methods of storing prescription opioids? - What do you know about prescription opioid drop off sites in [community]?
General questions	How or under what circumstances did you begin using	What trends are you seeing with prescription opioid and heroin use in this community?	