

## **Supplement B: Moderator Guide**

### **GSU Health Message Testing E-Cigarette Risk Focus Groups Moderator Guide Session Information**

Location:

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Recorder:

# of Participants present for entire session:

# of Participants excused/reasons:

#### **Focus Group Kickoff: Key Points to Cover** (Room set up prior to participant arrival)

#### **Welcome/Introduction (3 minutes)**

##### **Moderator:**

Welcome and thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this group discussion. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and my role is to guide the discussion today. I work for a company called John Snow, Inc., a public health research and consulting firm. We are conducting research on behalf of Georgia State University's School of Public Health's Tobacco Center of Regulatory Science (TCORS), a project funded by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We are conducting a series of discussions to find out what people think about messages about electronic cigarettes. We have developed some messages and want to get your opinions about these messages to find out which messages are most effective in communicating important information to the general public. Your feedback today is essential and will help us improve these messages.

Before we start, I want to make sure that everyone has signed the informed consent form.

##### **Moderator:**

- 1) Ensure that all participants have submitted a signed consent form prior to beginning the group. If any participants have not signed the consent form, have them sign it prior to beginning the group and give it to the moderator.**
- 2) Ensure that each participant has their own copy of the informed consent statement**

I just want to go over some things mentioned in the consent form:

- Participation in this focus group is completely voluntary.

- That means you can leave at any time.
- You can choose not to answer a question if you want.
- You will not be asked questions about your personal health.
- Your name and answers to these questions will be kept confidential.
  - We will not link your name to anything you say in reports.
- The session is being audio taped, so please speak at the same volume that I speak at—If you are talking softly, I may ask you to speak up to ensure your comments are captured.
- People from Georgia State University will be observing today via this camera to hear what you have to share firsthand, but they are observing only. Each person observing our discussion today has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- A note taker from GSU will also observe the group to take notes.
- You will receive \$50 in appreciation for your participation in the group.
- The group will last approximately 2 hours.
- We ask that you do not share with others what anyone says in this room today.

Does anyone have any questions about the informed consent or the group itself? Please keep your copy of the informed consent statement so that, if you have any questions after the focus group, you can contact the JSI project direct, who is Dr. Chris La Rose. You can also contact the GSU lead, Dr. Lucy Popova

### **Ground Rules (5 minutes)**

#### **Moderator:**

To make our discussion more comfortable and run smoothly for everyone, we will need to follow a number of ground rules. **[Note to moderator: Read the ground rules; ask if any other ground rules are needed for everyone to feel comfortable; seek consensus.]**

- There are no right or wrong answers – we are just interested in hearing what you think about the messages.
- I didn't create the messages so you can say what you really think about them without hurting my feelings.
- Everyone's input is important and I encourage everyone to be engaged in the discussion. Because of time and the amount of information we need to move through, however, everyone may not have an opportunity to respond to each question or I may need to cut you off in order to allow someone else to participate in the discussion.
- Please speak one at a time.
- Stay focused on the question. *[Moderator to focus group: I may need to cut a discussion short because of the limited time we have, so brevity will be important.]*
- Share the floor space. *[Note to Moderator: Invite quiet persons to share their opinions.]*
- It is okay to disagree with another's opinion or perspective. *[Moderator to focus group: If you dislike something or disagree with something that is said, I want to hear about it. However, please avoid debating or trying to sway the opinion of others.]*
- Please show respect for one another.

### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

#### **Moderator:**

So we can get to know each other let's begin by finding out a little bit about each other. Please tell us your first name only and your favorite thing to do to relax and why. [*Icebreaker: Moderator will start by restating name and one of their hobbies*].

### **General Tobacco Knowledge and Attitudes (15 minutes)**

#### **Moderator:**

1. Let's talk about electronic cigarettes now – these are also called electronic cigarettes, e-hookah, vapes, and vapor pens.
  - a. What are some of the words you use to refer to these products?
  - b. Have you ever used these products?
    - If YES
      - i. At what age did you start using these products?
      - ii. Why do you use these products?
      - iii. Do you use both regular and electronic cigarettes?
        - If YES
          1. Why do you choose to use both regular and electronic cigarettes?
          2. What do you think are the potential harms to your health from using both regular and electronic cigarettes?
          3. What do you think are the benefits to your health of using both regular and electronic cigarettes?
          4. To what extent would you want to use only electronic cigarettes?
        - If NO
          - i. Why do you choose NOT to use these products?
      - c. To what extent do you think that these products are addictive?
        - i. What makes them addictive?
        - ii. How can you tell if you or someone else is addicted to these products?
2. Let's talk now about the differences between regular and electronic cigarettes
  - a. What do you think are the differences between smoking regular cigarettes and using electronic cigarettes?
    - i. To what extent is the way that nicotine is delivered in regular cigarettes different from the way that it is delivered in electronic cigarettes?
    - ii. Which do you prefer and why?
  - b. To what extent do you think that these products are beneficial to your health?
    - i. What are the benefits?
    - ii. What about in comparison to regular cigarettes?
  - c. To what extent do you think that these products are harmful to your health?
    - i. How can they harm your health?
    - ii. What about in comparison to regular cigarettes?
3. Have you ever tried to stop or 'quit' using these products, i.e., have you ever tried to stop smoking?
  - a. If YES,
    - i. Why did you try to quit?

- ii. How did you try to quit?
  1. Have you ever tried to use electronic cigarettes to stop or 'quit' smoking regular cigarettes?
  2. If YES, what was that experience like?
  3. Was it successful?
    - a. If YES,
      - i. Why was it successful?
      - ii. How many times did you try to quit?
    - b. If NO,
      - i. Why was it not successful?
      - ii. How many times have you tried to quit?
      - iii. Are you going to try to quit again?
4. To what extent do you talk to others about using regular cigarettes?
  - a. If so, whom do you talk to about using regular cigarettes?
    - i. Your friends and family members?
    - ii. Your doctor?
  - b. What sorts of things do you say about using regular cigarettes to
    - i. Your friends and family members?
    - ii. Your doctor?
5. To what extent do you talk to others about using electronic cigarettes?
  - a. If so, whom do you talk to about using electronic cigarettes?
    - i. Your friends and family members?
    - ii. Your doctor?
  - b. What sorts of things do you say about using electronic cigarettes to
    - i. Your friends and family members?
    - ii. Your doctor?
  - c. To what extent do you discuss
    - i. Switching to electronic cigarettes?
    - ii. Using both regular and electronic cigarettes?
    - iii. Quitting?
    - iv. Warnings?
    - v. Potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes?
    - vi. Uncertainties about the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes?
    - vii. Potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes?
    - viii. Uncertainties about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes?

### **Transition to Discussion (2 minutes)**

#### **Moderator:**

Now I want to switch gears. We are going to talk about some messages about electronic cigarettes specifically. We're going to be looking at 8 messages in total and I'm going to ask you a series of questions about each.

Please remember that I want to hear your honest opinions on all the different things that I am going show you today. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions I'm going to ask; please just relax and participate in the discussion.

Are there any questions before we begin?

### **Discussion Questions: (10 minutes per Message)**

#### **Moderator: Display Message 1:**

OK, let's start with Message 1. Let's read it out loud

1. What are your first impressions of this message?
2. What do you think this message is trying to tell you?
3. How do you feel about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes after seeing this message?
  - a. How does this compare to what you feel about the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes?
4. What do you understand about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes after seeing this message?
  - a. After seeing this message, what do you understand about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes compared to those associated with regular cigarettes?
5. What do you know now that you didn't before about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes?
  - a. What do you know now that you didn't before about the potential harms to your health associated with electronic cigarettes compared to those associated with regular cigarettes?
6. What parts of the message best communicated the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes compared to those associated with electronic cigarettes?
  - a. What could be improved about this message to better communicate the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes compared to those associated with electronic cigarettes?
7. What would this message lead you to think about?
  - a. (If you use only regular cigarettes), to what extent would this message make you consider switching from regular cigarettes to electronic cigarettes?
    - i. What parts of the message or what words make you consider switching from regular to electronic cigarettes?
    - ii. What could be improved about this message to encourage switching?

- b. (If you use both cigarettes and electronic cigarettes) to what extent would this message make you consider only using electronic cigarettes?
  - i. What parts of the message or what words make you consider using only electronic cigarettes?
  - ii. What could be improved about this message to encourage you to consider using only electronic cigarettes?
- c. To what extent would this message make you want to talk to friends and family members about the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes compared to electronic cigarettes?
  - i. What would you say to them?

### Repeat for Messages 2-8

### Concluding Discussion Questions (10 minutes)

**Moderator: handout final rating scale and say:**

We are almost done, but I have some final questions for you.

1. Firstly, I want you to answer some questions on this survey, but I also want to hear from you about your answers to those questions
2. While you're filling out the survey, I want to ask you to tell me To what extent do you think that using electronic vapor products less harmful, about the same, or more harmful than smoking regular cigarettes?
  - a. Why?
  - b. Has your opinion changed since seeing the messages today?
  - c. If so, which message changed your opinion the most?
  - d. Why?
3. Looking back on the 8 messages we've reviewed today I would like to rate each of them in terms of how effective at communicating the potential harms of regular cigarettes when compared to electronic cigarettes. On this form you'll see all 8 messages and three columns with a scale of 1 to 8. One is very good and eight is not good at all. Please use each number only once per column
  - a. Please rank each message in terms of how good that message is at communicating the potential harms to your health associated with regular cigarettes compared to those associated with electronic cigarettes.
  - b. Please rank each message in terms of how good that message is in communicating how much more harmful regular cigarettes can be to your health compared to electronic cigarettes.
4. While you're filling out the survey, I also want to ask you to tell me which message did you like the best? Why?
5. Which medium would be best to communicate these messages?
  - a. Print, like a magazine or a brochure

- b. Direct mail
  - c. A warning on a packet
  - d. Digital media, for instance on a website
  - e. Social Media, such as FaceBook, Twitter or Instagram
  - f. Radio
  - g. Television
6. If you saw these messages out in public, would they draw your attention?
- a. Why/why not?

*This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions about these concepts with us. Your thoughts are invaluable to our efforts to create messages about electronic cigarettes. Once again, thank you very much.*