

Introduction

Good afternoon. My name is _____ and this is my colleague _____. We are here from the Delaware Public Health Institute. We are a private, non-profit public health institute that works to improve the health of Delawareans.

Purpose

Thank you for coming to this focus group. A focus group is a relaxed discussion... please feel free to ask questions or get up to stretch or use the bathroom.

We are here today to talk about the health care strengths and unmet needs of your community within your county. DPHI has partnered with the Delaware Division of Public Health to manage Delaware's comprehensive quality assessment and improvement activities, in support of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). An important element of that effort is your perceptions of the quality of life in your county including health status, what the strengths are of the health care system, and whether there are any unmet needs.

We are not here to share information, or to give you our opinions. Your perceptions are what matter. There are no right or wrong; desirable or undesirable answers. You can disagree with each other, and you can change your mind. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.

Procedure

_____ (colleague) will be taking notes and tape recording the discussion so that I do not miss anything you have to say. Individual responses are anonymous, and will not be shared with your organization, or the public. Aggregate (i.e. group) results will be included in the statewide needs assessment report, available in early 2017. I want this to be a group discussion, so feel free to respond to me and to other members in the group without waiting to be called on. However, I would appreciate it if only one person did talk at a time. The discussion will last approximately one hour. There is a lot we want to discuss, so at times I may move us along a bit.

Introductions

1. Now, let's start by everyone sharing their name, how long they've lived in _____ county, and the #1 health issue or health problem they feel is most important in their community (*i.e., problems related to aging such as arthritis or hearing/vision loss, child abuse/neglect, diabetes, high blood pressure, domestic violence, cancers, homicide, mental health problems, suicide, infant death, infectious disease, dental problems, teenage pregnancy, etc.*).

2) In the same fashion, I'd like each of you to name one "risk" behavior you feel is most or important or contributing the most to unfavorable health outcomes in your community (*i.e., alcohol abuse, poor eating habits, dropping out of school, racism, drug abuse, refusing immunizations, tobacco use, unsafe sex, not abiding by child safety laws, etc.*).

3) Lastly, I'd like each of you to name one factor you feel is most important for achieving/maintaining a healthy community (*i.e., low crime/safe neighborhoods, good schools, parks and recreation, clean environment, affordable housing, strong family life, healthy behaviors and lifestyles, excellent race relations, low death and disease rates, religious or spiritual values, access to health care, etc.*).

Next, I am going to ask you some questions about health and quality of life in this county. These questions will be open to the room to respond.

Quality of Life Questions

1. What is the quality of life in this county? What characteristics of the community make it so? (Consider your sense of safety, well-being, participation in community life and associations, etc.) [IOM, 1997]
2. How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the health care system in the community? Why? (Consider access, cost, availability, quality, options in health care, etc.) [IOM, 1997]
3. For those of you who have children, what are the pros and cons of raising children in this community? (Consider school quality, day care, after school programs, recreation, etc.)
4. What are the pros and cons of growing older in this community? (Consider older adult-friendly housing, transportation to medical services, churches, shopping; older adult day programs, social support for older adults living alone, meals on wheels, etc.)
5. How much economic opportunity is there in the community? What types of economic opportunity are there? What types are missing? (Consider locally owned and operated businesses, jobs with career growth, job training/higher education opportunities, affordable housing, reasonable commute, etc.)

6. What are your perceptions of the level of safety in the community? (Consider residents' perceptions of safety in the home, the workplace, schools, playgrounds, parks, the mall. Do neighbors know and trust one another? Do they look out for one another?)

7. How extensive are the networks of support for individuals and families during times of stress and need (neighbors, support groups, faith community outreach, agencies, and organizations)?

8. What level of opportunity do individuals and groups have to achieving health and a good quality of life? Would you say the level of opportunity differs or is the same across all individuals and communities? (if differ) In what ways?

9. What is the perceived importance of residents — individually and collectively — about making their community a better place to live?

10. What primary asset or resource does this county need but currently does not have (enough of) that could address an important unmet need/needs of its residents?