

## Sample group interview – Victim/survivor

### **PURPOSE: When might you use this interview?**

- This interview might be used during the team’s Community Needs Assessment to determine a baseline about victim’s experiences with the system’s response.
- The interview could also be used when a team is considering making changes to its protocols.
- This is an interview that could be conducted on an annual or periodic basis to determine whether there are indications of beneficial improvements happening for victim/survivors over time.

### **GOALS: What do you want to learn from the survey?**

- What are victims’ experiences with the system’s response to a sexual assault?
- What could have been done differently that would have made the experience easier for them?
- What things helped them during the experience?
- What factors went into their decision to report the sexual assault?

### **PREPARATION STEPS**

- **Interview Set Up** – Identify a potential participant group for the interview, and engage key community or agency leadership in recruiting and encouraging participation.
- **Test Your Questions** – Run through questions a final time (with another person, if possible) to ensure they will elicit relevant responses, are in the proper order (general to specific), and make logical sense.
- **Send Reminders** – Send an email/phone call to remind participants about the day/time/location of interview.
- **Do You Have Everything?** – One quick check to make sure everything (name tags, poster paper, markers, recorder, etc.) is packed and ready to go.
- **Arrive Early** – Give yourself enough time to set up the room, food, or anything that needs to be taken care of before participants arrive.
- **Be Inviting** – Create a warm and friendly environment. You will not only make participants feel welcomed, but you will also put them at ease.

### **INTERVIEW SCRIPT OUTLINE**

- Welcome, make introductions, and thank participants
- Review the purpose of the focus group interview
- Review the ground rules
- Conversation
- Debrief

### **THE OPENING**

Welcome! I’m (Insert name here), and I’m going to be facilitating our conversation today. Our Assistant Facilitator (insert name here) will be documenting our conversation. I want to begin by thanking you all for taking the time to join us today. We want you to know how much we appreciate your participation and that the information you share will be put to good use.

As you know, we are here to learn more about your perceptions of sexual violence in the community and services available to address it. We are here representing the SART, which is made up of agencies involved in responding to sexual assault cases, including advocacy, prosecution, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and other community agencies.

Our hope is to deepen our understanding of how the community perceives sexual violence and the services available to address it. We’re interested in your perceptions about what is working well, and what kinds of support and assistance might foster beneficial changes to addressing sexual violence.

As I mentioned before, (Insert AF Name) will be documenting our conversation, and diligently capturing the thoughts and opinions expressed today. We do this to aid our memory as we later try to recall and organize what you’ve shared with us. We want to accurately capture what you’ve said.

We want you to know that the information collected here will remain anonymous, and you will not be associated with any individual answer or comment. The more honest and candid your responses, the more useful it will be towards informing our multi-disciplinary team’s process and outcomes. Responses will only be shared in summary form.

Does anyone have any questions before I go on?

Before we get started, let's talk about some guidelines for our time together. First of all, we will be asking about your opinions, ideas, and experiences, so there are no right or wrong answers. As I mentioned, (Insert AF Name) is going to be documenting the conversation, so it's important that only one person is speaking at a time, so that s/he can capture what's said. Your participation in this interview and the views you express will have no impact, positive or negative, on community services you are eligible for or with the agencies represented by the SART. Again, please share your views candidly.

We ask that everyone respect one another's privacy about what is said here by not sharing or discussing it outside of this conversation. There's no expectation that you'll agree with what others share, but it's important that everyone listen to all ideas shared, and that each person gets a chance to share their thoughts and ideas and be listened to. During the conversation, I'd ask that you direct your comments to one another, and not just to me. We'd like this to be a conversation with the full group.

At this time, I would ask that you each power off or silence your cell phones. If you must respond to a call, please separate from the group quietly and rejoin us as quickly as you're able.

Any final questions before we get started?

#### THE INTERVIEW / CONVERSATION

- If you wanted to encourage a friend to seek support in response to a sexual assault, what would you tell them?
- We'd like to ask you now about some of the different agencies within the system and your experiences with them. For those of you who have had an experience with law enforcement, how was that experience? What do you wish might have been different about it? What was helpful?
- For those of you who have had an experience with a sexual assault nurse examiner, what was that experience like? What do you wish might have been different about the experience? What was helpful?
- For those of you who have had an experience with advocacy services, how was that experience? What do you wish might have been different about the experience? What was helpful to you?
- Let's talk a bit now about reporting the sexual assault. There are many good reasons why someone wouldn't report a sexual assault to law enforcement. What are some of the reasons why you think victims do not report or that you did not report?
- For those of you who made the decision to report a sexual assault, what are some of the factors that went into that decision? What ultimately made you decide to report the assault?
- Suppose you were in charge and could a change in the way things currently operate, what would you change?
- Based on your experience, what do you wish the community understood about sexual assault?

#### INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Draw out all responses** – Allow ample time as well as silences, in order to hear all relevant thoughts and opinions. Don't rush through the questions, but be mindful of time.
- **Exercise flexibility** - Capitalize on unanticipated comments and useful directions the discussion may take. Explore and move flexibly into unplanned aspects of the topic, but be careful about unnecessary or irrelevant divergences.
- **Who isn't speaking** – After 1-3 questions, make note of quiet participants and ask if they have anything they'd like to share without putting them on the spot. This gives them an opening to join the conversation.
- **Summarize responses:** After the discussion from each question, summarize the response and check for validation of your summary. "So what I'm hearing is..." "Would it be safe to say..." "My understanding is..."

#### WRAP / DEBRIEF WITH CO-FACILITATORS

- See the "[How to Conduct a Systematic Analysis Process](#)" section of [Group Interview Guide](#).