

## Supplemental Digital Appendix 2

### Patient Focus Group Discussion Guide, From a Study Validating and Identifying Domains of Patient Context, Chicago Area Veterans Health Administration Sites, 2014

Location of Focus Group: \_\_\_\_\_

# patients participating \_\_\_\_\_

# males \_\_\_\_\_ # females \_\_\_\_\_ SM users \_\_\_\_\_ Not SM users \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

#### I. Welcome and Introductions

Welcome to our focus group today and thank you all for your time. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be leading the discussion today. [Introduction of other moderator(s)]

Focus groups are informal group discussions, and they provide a way for us to learn how a group of people feel about a particular topic or issue. Our main purpose here today is to learn about factors that affect your ability to manage your health care, your preferences for health care, and your thoughts about using technology for health care delivery. We are going to use the information that you share with us today to create an inventory tool that can be used to improve your care by addressing what matters most to you.

Before we begin, I'd like to mention a few things. I am now turning on the recorder. By participating in this group discussion, you are agreeing to be recorded.

- We'll be audio-taping this discussion so that we can focus on what you are saying and not have to concentrate on taking detailed notes. The recording is for our use only and will not be shared with others. Could each one of you respond with a "yes" that you're okay with us recording our discussion today?
- Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's opinion is welcomed, appreciated, and important.

Please contribute as much as possible, as it is truly your thoughts and ideas that matter to us. Everything that you say will be kept confidential. If we use what you have shared with us today, we will not identify you as the speaker. This focus group will take about 60 minutes and your participation is voluntary. Also, please know that, if at any time, for any reason, you wish to stop your participation in this focus group discussion; you are free to do so.

Does anyone have any questions about today's discussion?

Since we will be spending the next hour together, I would like to go around the room and just ask everyone to introduce himself/herself and tell us a little bit about you. First names are fine; you can also give us some background including your age, whether you receive your health care from the VA-only or VA and non-VA, how long you have been receiving your care from the VA [MODERATOR: Provide/display list of items to participants (so they remember what background information to provide) ]

## **II. Focus Group Questions**

### **Individual**

1. Each patient is unique and has their own preferences for care. What are some things that you would like your doctor to consider when making recommendations and decisions about your health? (prompt: e.g., other things going on in your life, spiritual beliefs, feelings you have about your condition)?
2. Please describe any personal beliefs you have about your health that influences how you choose to care for yourself. (prompt: These can be related to past experiences, your culture, or other things important to you.)

### **Interpersonal/social support**

People we care about including spouses, children, family members, friends, co-workers and caregivers can influence our ability to manage our health.

3. What role have your personal relationships played in you managing your health (e.g., refilling your prescriptions, cooking)?
4. How can your support system be helpful in managing your health?
  - a. What are the disadvantages of having a support system involved with your health?
5. What is important to you about having others involved in your health outside of you and your doctor?
6. For those of you who have been accompanied by a family member/friend to a health care appointment, describe why you did and how the doctor interacted with this individual.

### **Organizational**

7. What does it mean to you to receive care centered around or focused on you - the patient?
8. What are things the VA does that provide you with the care you want and need?
9. What things could VA do to provide you with the care you want and need?

### **Broader Community**

10. What are some groups or activities you engage in within your community that may influence your health? (e.g. church, social clubs/activities)
  - a. How do these things influence your health decisions? (For example, church members sometimes desire to pray about health decisions, support groups provide meals, light chores, etc.)
11. How do issues related to the availability of transportation and safety of your neighborhood influence your health decisions?

### **Technology/Resources**

12. Tell me about your experience with technology (e.g., computers, cell phones).
  - a. What experience do you have using technology to manage your health care?
13. What technologies are you currently aware of that are used in the VA to help provide or manage your health care? (Note: don't want to include things like MRI, EKG)
14. What do you know about telehealth/clinical video telehealth/secure messaging/mobile applications/interactive voice response/social media? (ask about each separately if they exhibit some knowledge of these)
15. How do you feel about the use of technology to receive or manage health care?
  - a. How would respond if your doctor offered you the option of using technology as a part of your care? Explain. (or if you are already using – How do you feel about having technology be part of your health care delivery?)
  - b. Would you be willing to incorporate technology in your care? Which types? Why or why not?

### **Patient Inventory**

16. If you could add information to your medical record for your doctors and your health care team to see, what types of things would you include?
17. What would be the advantages of being more involved in creating your health plan? Any disadvantages?

### **III. Discussion Wrap-up**

Thank you very much for the time you spent with us today. Your ideas and responses will really help us as we continue to better understand patient preferences and develop strategies to improve the quality of care provided to meet your health care needs.

Do you have any questions? Or is there anything else that you would like to discuss that I did not mention?