

OPIC GUIDE

Patient/carer focus group meeting

10.30-10.40 Welcome from facilitators (10 minutes)

- Debi, Sathon, Clare and Trish
- Core team members working on a study to test the effect of medication organisers
- Thank you coming along today
- Appreciate taking the time to share your thoughts and opinions

There are 3 main aims of this group meeting:

1. Find out about your experiences either as a patient or carer of trying to take or give medicines regularly as prescribed
2. Find out what you think about medication organisers
What is good and bad

Thirdly, we plan to use the information that you give us to design a study to test the effect of medication organisers. We already have some thoughts about the study design so we would like your opinions on these.

- There are no right or wrong answers – we are interested your thoughts and experiences
- It is important that everyone has a chance to speak and be heard.
- There are just a two ground rules for the focus group
 - Firstly, the discussion will be recorded, so please allow each person to speak without interruption just so that when we come to write this up we can actually tell who is talking.
 - The information that we write up will be completely anonymous so it will say group member 1, 2 or 3 for example – there will be no names.
 - The second rule is that anything you learn about someone else in this discussion must be kept completely confidential so you cannot repeat anything that you hear during this discussion outside of this room.
- Is that OK?
- Ok to start?

10.40-10.50 Introductions (10 minutes)

- For the purposes of the recording, please introduce yourself:
 - What you would like to be called
 - whether you have been invited to this group meeting as a carer involved with helping medication taking or someone who is prescribed medication
 - roughly how many different medicines you take or if a carer, give per day

10.50-11.10 Experiences of organising and taking or giving medicines (20 minutes)

- Briefly describe how you currently manage or organise your tablets. Or how you help someone else to manage their tablets?

Prompt if required:

- Tell us about your typical routine
- Any things that you do to help with remembering to take / give them, opening the packaging?
- Any difficulties?

11.10-11.30 Medication organisers (20 minutes)

- Tell us your thoughts about medication organisers. **(Show samples of med organisers)**

If necessary prompt with the following:

- What you think is good, not so good?
- If you were given one, what aspects would be important to you: size, what it looks like, how easy it is to use?
 - Would you be happy to carry the larger packs with you on days out? If not, what is your strategy for dealing with 'away-days'?

11.30-11.50 Proposed study (20 minutes)

- Mentioned at the beginning that we are trying to design a study to test the effect of medication organisers.
- On a piece of paper that you have in front of you, is the current plan for what may happen to participants of that study.
- Useful if you could tell us what you think about these plans
 - Prompt: – is there anything there that might people off participating?
 - Anything that might change the normal way of taking medicines?

11.50-11.55 Summary and closes (5 minutes)

- Is there anything else that you would like to add?
- Thank you for your participation, we will keep all of this information confidential and now get designing the study.
- If you would like a copy of the report, let Sathon know and we will send you a summary.

TOPIC GUIDE
Healthcare professional focus group meeting

15.15-15.20 Welcome from facilitators (5 minutes)

- Debi, Sathon, Clare and Trish
- Core team members working on a study to test the effect of medication organisers
- Thank you for coming along today
- Appreciate taking the time to share your thoughts and opinions

We are designing a study to test the effect of medication organisers compared with usual medication packaging. The main aim of this group meeting is to gain expert opinion on the effects of medication organisers and our plans for the study design.

- There are no right or wrong answers – we are interested in a range of opinions and experiences
- Everyone will have a chance to speak and be heard

- There are just a two ground rules for the focus group
 - Firstly, the discussion will be recorded, so please allow each person to speak without interruption just so that when we come to write this up we can actually tell who is talking.
 - The information that we write up will be completely anonymous so it will say group member 1, 2 or 3 for example – there will be no names.
 - The second rule is that anything you learn about someone else in this discussion must be kept completely confidential so you cannot repeat anything that you hear during this discussion outside of this room.

- Is that OK?, OK to start?

15.20-15.30 Introductions (10 minutes)

- For the purposes of the recording, please introduce yourself:
 - What you would like to be called
 - Your current professional role
 - Your experiences of medication organisers

15.30-15.50 Experience of medication management/medication organisers (20 minutes)

- From your experiences, what types of patients experience problems with adhering to their medication regimens and why?
- What sorts of strategies have you used or recommended to address non-adherence?
- There is a wide variety of MOs available and we have a few different types here. What are your thoughts about these and any others of which you have experience?
- What types of patients may benefit (or not) from receiving MO?
 - Any criteria for recommending a MO?
- Any groups of patients which should be excluded from a trial?

Prompt: Any particular preferences or concerns

15.50-16.00 Wider effects of MOs (10 minutes)

- Thinking about the effects of MOs, how may they affect a patient, their carer, family or friends?
- What about the wider effects?

Prompt: Time associated with writing Rx, filling box, carer, anxiety

16.00-16.40 Study design (40 minutes)

We are designing a study to test the effect of medication organisers. The aim of the study is to determine the effect of these on adherences in older people.

- First question is – who are older people?
 - Any challenges to recruiting this population to this study?
- If I talk you through the plans, it would be good if you would let me know what you think may not work or could be further improved in terms of practicalities and acceptability.

Recruitment method (10 mins)

Plan to try 2 approaches to see which is best for recruiting 120 patients per practice:

1. For half of the surgeries involved we'd like them to screen their records for eligible patients and send them letters with a follow up letter after two weeks.
2. For the other half of the recruited surgeries we'd like them to invite eligible patients who attend surgery for a routine appointment to see a researcher who will be located in the waiting area of the practice.

Any thoughts? Problems with this plan? Are we likely to get the numbers that we need? (120 per practice)

Proposed trial design (15 mins)

Thinking more about what will happen to participants, the handout provides an outline.

- It would be useful if you could tell us your thoughts regarding these steps
 - What types of patients suitable/ unsuitable?
 - Can you foresee any potential problems that might occur at this stage?
- Are there other measurements which would help to fully capture the benefits and potential problems of MOs? (Wider factors influence by MOs)

Outcome Measures, Costs and Benefits (15 mins)

- In order to decide whether the MOs are better or worse than usual packaging we need to decide on what the minimum acceptable level of adherence is. Thinking about the range of medicines that you prescribe, supply or encounter, what do you think is the minimum acceptable level?

Prompt: 80% is often quoted as being acceptable but there is no clinical evidence to support this number.

- Having thought about the minimum acceptable adherence level, when we compare these MOs with usual packaging, what size of difference in adherence might be clinically important.

16.40-16.45 Summary and close (5 minutes)

- Is there anything else that you to add?
- Thank you for your participation, we will keep all of this information confidential and now get designing the study.
- If you would like a copy of the report, let Sathon know and we will send you a summary.