

# IN FOCUS: A SUMMARY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY GROUP REPORTS

## Focus Group Guide

### RESEARCH TEAM

Maryland Asian American Health Solutions (MAAHS)  
University of Maryland College Park School of Public Health

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to this meeting. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for taking the time to come here tonight. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be the moderator for tonight. Our co-moderator is \_\_\_\_\_. S/he will be taking notes and overseeing the discussion. This focus group is part of a research study being done at the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

The Research Team at the University of Maryland School of Public Health is assisting Montgomery County Health and Human Services to study health needs among Asian American communities in Montgomery County. The purpose of this focus group is to gather information on a broad range of priority health issues, barriers to health services, health and social service needs, and community assets among Asian populations in Montgomery County. Your participation is very important to the success of this project. Your feedback in the meeting will be combined with other information to help us identify key issues and concerns. The results of the focus group will inform County health officials of key issues related to health needs that will then be communicated to policy makers of the County. The results will also be used to compile a community health database for Asian Americans in the County. The database will be used to assess the health needs of this group and, based on the needs identified, may be used to allocate resources to this community.

Your name and any other identifying information will not be included in the report. All information will be kept confidential. Your participation is voluntary, and you may decide to stop at any time. If you decide to stop you will not be penalized in any way. If you have questions or don't understand what I am asking at any time, please let me know and I will explain further.

The most important thing is to be straightforward. We are interested in your opinions, and different opinions are welcomed. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to say whatever you are thinking.

I would like to ask that you speak one at a time and that everyone participate. I'd like everyone just to say his/her first name or a nickname s/he likes to use during this session.

Because what you share tonight is very valuable, I would like to audiotape our discussion with your permission. Your identity will be kept secret and all information obtained from the discussion will only be used for research purposes. Would it be all right with everyone to tape tonight's discussion? (After group consents)... Thank you.

### **[Introductory Questions]**

I would like to start talking about your concerns regarding health. It is such a broad topic that can have different concerns for different people. What do you consider being a serious illness or health problem in the (specify Asian subgroup) community?

### **[Transition Questions]**

What health needs concern you as a (specify Asian subgroup) living in the United States? Do you think there would be a difference in these needs if you were living in your home country?

### **[Key Questions]**

## 2 | RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY HEALTH ISSUES

- What are the most important health issues of the (specify Asian subgroup) community in Montgomery County? (Moderator may ask about the following at the end of the discussion if these are not mentioned)
  - High blood pressure
  - Diabetes
  - Stroke
  - Asthma
  - Hepatitis B virus infection
  - TB (Tuberculosis)
  - Arthritis
  - Cancer
  - Smoking / secondhand smoke
  - Substance use
  - Mental health
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Are these issues being addressed adequately? How can we make improvements?

## 3 | RESPONDING TO MENTAL HEALTH

- In terms of mental health, what are the most important health issues of the (specify Asian subgroup) community? (Moderator may ask about the following at the end of the discussion if these are not mentioned)
  - Depression
  - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (related to immigration)
  - Suicidal thoughts
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Are these issues being addressed adequately? How can we make improvements?

## 4 | RESPONDING TO ELDERLY CARE

- In terms of elderly care, what are the most important health issues of the (specify Asian subgroup) community? (Moderator may ask about the following at the end of the discussion if these are not mentioned)
  - Limited ADL (Activities of Daily Living) : ability to eat, bathe, dress, move around, etc. by themselves
  - Disability
  - Cognitive decline / stroke / dementia / Alzheimer's disease
  - Eyesight, hearing ability
  - Arthritis
  - Chronic disease related (hypertension, diabetes, etc.)
  - Depression
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Are these issues being addressed adequately? How can we make improvements?
- Are there places for elderly to gather and spend time together (e.g., playing games, sports, etc.)?

## 5 | RESPONDING TO CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT (YOUTH) HEALTH

- What are the most important health issues of the (specify Asian subgroup) community? (Moderator may ask about the following at the end of the discussion if these are not mentioned)
  - Substance use problems
  - Depression
  - School / gang violence
  - Video game problems
  - School problems related to school performance
  - Overweight / obesity
  - Anorexia Nervosa
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Are these issues being addressed adequately? How can we make improvements?
- Are there adequate vaccination programs at school for your children?
- Do schools offer a nutritious lunch?

- Are there adequate safe places (playgrounds, fields, etc.) where your children can have regular physical activity?

## 6 | RESPONDING TO WOMEN'S HEALTH

- What are the most important health issues of the (specify Asian subgroup) community? (Moderator may ask about the following at the end of the discussion if these are not mentioned)
  - Breast cancer
  - Cervical cancer
  - Heart disease
  - Depression
  - Domestic violence
  - Osteoporosis
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Are these issues being addressed adequately? How can we make improvements?
- Do you participate in regular cancer screenings (e.g., mammogram, Pap test) for early detection of cancer? If not, why not?

## 7 | HEALTH CARE ACCESS

- What is the level and type of access the (specify Asian subgroup) community has to health care services? How does this access compare to the access of other communities?
- What do you think are the most important or significant barriers (social, economic, cultural, etc.) that prevent Asians, such as (specify Asian subgroup) from using health care services / meeting their health needs with the health care services? If not mentioned, moderators may ask about barriers related to:
  - No health insurance
  - Cannot afford co-payment or deductible
  - Language
  - Concerns about immigration status
  - Do not have transportation
  - Do not have time
  - Do not understand the American medical system
  - Lack of resources for referrals

- Long wait for services
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Knowing about health care services available to them?
- What kind of preventive / screening services do your community members receive annually/ regularly? If not mentioned, moderators may ask about:
    - Blood pressure check
    - Cholesterol check
    - Blood sugar check
    - Blood stool / urine test
    - Infectious disease (e.g., Hepatitis B)
    - Cancer screening (e.g., breast / cervical cancer for women)
    - Seeing dentist for regular check-up
    - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Would your community members prefer physicians of the same ethnic origin (i.e., a doctor who speaks your native language)?
- What happens when using health services provided by English speakers, and you or your community members do not understand what to do? Moderator can raise these possibilities if not mentioned:
    - Use by yourself without help (don't have a problem communicating in English)
    - Bring a friend or relative to translate
    - Bring a social worker to translate
    - Use an interpreter
    - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Do members of your community regularly go outside Montgomery County for health services?
- How do you or most of your community members pay for their health insurance? Moderator may ask about the following if not mentioned:
    - An employer or spouse's employer pays
    - One pays for all costs
    - One does not have health insurance
    - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- If your community members do not have insurance, where do they seek health care? Moderator may ask about the following if not mentioned:

- Hospital /emergency room
- Community health clinic (e.g., Pan Asian Clinic)
- Government-provided health care
- Faith-based clinics, e.g., Holy Cross Hospital
- Pay cash for care at the doctor's office
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 8 | RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY HEALTH RESOURCE

- What roles do Asian Americans such as yourself (specify Asian subgroup) play in dealing with health issues? What role do you think that the Asian community (specify Asian subgroup) should play?
- What are your community's strengths? What strengths do you have in terms of health and health care?
- If members of your community (specify Asian subgroup) had health issues to deal with, where would they go to seek help? With whom would they wish to speak? And why?
- Which groups need to have input into a study of health issues facing Asian Americans (specify Asian subgroup) in Montgomery County?
- Are there any specific individuals you know of that we need to contact as part of this process? Or do you know specific contacts at organizations or within the Asian community (specify Asian subgroup) who can help us identify health needs and solutions?
- Are there any other assets that could be leveraged or applied to address your community's health concerns?

## 9 | MONTGOMERY COUNTY HEALTH PROGRAMS

- How much do you know about Montgomery County health services / programs? Are you aware of the AAHI website?
- How much do you know about the Pan Asian Clinic or other Community Clinics?
- How much do you know about the Asian American Cancer Program or Hepatitis B program?
- How much do you know about Health Fairs / Seminars happening in your faith-based and community-based organizations from time to time?
- Have you used any of the above services/programs?
- What are the main challenges/ barriers to using the above services/programs?
- What are the best ways to conduct outreach to Asian Americans?

## 10 | GENERAL QUESTIONS

- What advice would you give to the Asian American Health Initiative about how to identify the health needs of Asian Americans (specify Asian subgroup) in Montgomery County?
- What areas may the existing programs/partnerships of Montgomery County Health and Human Services be improved to better serve the Asian Community such as yours (specify Asian subgroup)? How might the health department help your community address its priority health issues (specify from question 2)?

## 11 | THANK YOU AND CLOSE

Thank you very much for helping us today. We are going to analyze the information we get from the focus group. With your permission, we would like to contact you in the future to consult with you on the direction of the needs assessment (Yes/No). Thank you again for your assistance.