



# Focus Groups

---

Ron D. Hays, Ph.D.  
and Leo Morales, M.D., Ph.D.

# Focus Groups

---

Discuss feelings, attitudes, perceptions

Learn

- Vocabulary and thinking patterns

Conversational meeting

- Moderator and 6-10 people
- Questions posed
- Group synergy
- Economical

# Focus Group Logistics

---

HSPC/IRB

Recruitment and payment

Moderator and note-taker

Visitors

Audio-record (backup)

Background questionnaire

Focus group excerpts follow

# Conservation of Energy

---

Because of Hepatitis C, Jenny has had to set “boundaries” with people. For example, she has had to close her office door and say “no” at times.

She has had to figure out how much energy she has to get to the finishing line. “If I don’t have enough energy to get to the finishing line, it means I won’t be available for everyone else.”

## ■rhays:

■Example of unique issue that would be missed if survey only asked whether Jenny cut down on work instead of asking whether she adjusts her work behavior to ensure she doesn't deplete her energy reserve.

■Question 14a

# Longer Recovery Period

---

Candy has a full-time job (fixing earthquake damage) and “needs the rest of the day to be able to do that.”

She engages in heavy work, but it takes her several hours to recover from it.

■rhays:

■Question 15d,  
16e, 25g

# Worklife accommodation and physical limitations

---

Manny is a self-employed builder who has owned his business for 25 years. He goes to bed at about 9:00 and gets up about 5:30 am. He wakes up several times during the night.

Manny has changed from participating actively on the job site with his employees to only setting up the job and supervision.

■rhays:

■Quest. 4a-d  
may not capture  
this very well.



# Symptoms of disease

---

Since he went off interferon, Manny has had a lot of muscle fatigue. His legs cramp when he surfs. He can't arm wrestle his 12-year old son, etc. Forcing himself to do even 10 pushups now is difficult. Manny has also been getting little pimples on his legs ("cryoglobulins") due to inadequate blood circulation.

■rhays:

■Questions 12a,  
b, n

# Side effect of medicines

---

When taking interferon Manny said that he tended to get angry and yell and scream at his wife.

Manny also indicated that he gets a stomach ache daily somewhere between noon and 2 pm whether or not he has eaten. “All of the sudden I feel nauseous.”

■rhays:

■Questions 14c,  
14f, 27a



# Daily unpredictability; change in relationships

---

Tammy lost her best friend as a result of hepatitis C, because the friend didn't like her last minute cancellations caused by the disease.

However, it has brought her very close to her spouse—he is very supportive and even “babies” her now.

■rhays:

■Question 14e,  
16d, 26e

# Keeping disease secret from others

---

Fred only recently told other people that he had hepatitis C (other than his wife). He told a few people and recommended that they get checked for it themselves.

He is more comfortable telling people now because he has more information about the disease and can explain what it is.

- rhays:
- Questions 26e, i, m