

## Reaching Multicultural Communities: Advocates Mentoring Advocates

### Focus Group Moderator's Guide

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#### Introduction

*[When participants are about to be seated moderator will hand each a folded tent card on which they will write their first name using a marker]*

Hello. Thank you for coming. My name is Andrea and I will lead the focus group discussion tonight. Has anyone been in a focus group before?

*[Raise hands. If so, just thank - do not explore experience]*

For the next hour and 15 minutes you will be part of this focus group.

A focus group is when a group of people come together to talk about a specific topic or to look at something and give their opinions and ideas. In a focus group people are brought together to think out loud about a topic they have in common, and share their honest opinions. For this group, what you all have in common is your interest in and experience teaching others about Breast Cancer. In this group, we will focus primarily on the issue of Breast Cancer and the Environment.

As the moderator, I get to ask the questions and your role is to answer them based on what you know, think, feel and believe. Everyone has something valuable to contribute so we can develop our educational program in a way that will best serve the communities in which you live.

Usually when we begin to talk, lots of ideas get brought up, and people can get quite involved in the discussion. So the only rule is to give everyone a chance to speak. If there are questions you do not want to answer, that is okay. Also, you do not have to discuss your personal experiences.

I won't be taking very many notes. I want to listen and talk with you and keep the discussion moving forward. Clarissa is here to take notes.

This session will be confidential. Everything we will be discussing here is confidential. This means that your names will not be collected, stored and/or appear in any report or document that is created as a result of what is said tonight.

At the end of the interview/session, you will be compensated for the time you spent at tonight's focus group. You will receive a \$40 gift card.

Just a bit of housekeeping. The restrooms are located \_\_\_\_\_. If you need to leave the room, please do. Please turn off (or put on vibrate) your phones. There are some refreshments on the table. Feel free to reach out and take some during the time we're together.

This meeting is going to last approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. So we'll be finished at 5:30 PM.

May I begin?

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## **INTRODUCTION**

(Header questions in bold are not to be read. They signal the theme for the **cluster of questions to follow**)

Although many of you know each other, can we quickly go around the room and introduce yourself. Tell us your first name and briefly why you wanted to participate in this group. (What interests you most about breast cancer and the environment?)

## **General Information on Risk Factors for Breast Cancer**

What is your understanding of what contributes to a woman's risk of developing breast cancer?

(Probe)

## **Breast Cancer and the Environment**

Many of you mentioned environmental factors. Can you tell me more about specific risks in the environment that are related to breast cancer?

**What in the Environment We KNOW Contributes to Breast Cancer.**  
(Direct cause/effect)

**What we THINK might be contributing factors....**

**MYTHS that people believe, but there is no supporting evidence/research**

## **Windows of Susceptibility/ Modifiable Risk Factors/Precautionary Principle**

Can you tell me what you understand about “Windows of Susceptibility?” What times during the course of a woman’s life may she be more/less susceptible to environmental exposures?

We often hear the term “modifiable risk factors.” What does this mean and in what ways can women modify their risks for developing breast cancer?

What do we mean by the “Precautionary Principle?” (As Karen said - better safe than sorry) .... What precautions do you believe are important to take in your daily lives.

## **Your Community**

In your opinion, what is the level of concern of women in your community about developing breast cancer?

What is their understanding of some of the risk factors?

In particular, how knowledgeable do you believe they are about potential environmental risks related to breast cancer?

## **Messages and How to Present Them**

From your experiences, what do you think are the most important messages you want women in your community to know about breast cancer and the environment?

What are some of the best ways to get the messages to them?  
(Group presentations, written materials, videos, powerpoints, newsletters, etc.

What group of women do you believe are in need of this information the most?  
(age, etc)

What messages? What format, forum, by whom? To whom?

## **Advocacy**

Those of you who heard Karen and Laura talk know that they believe that getting the word out to women in the community is more difficult than to advocate with policy makers, government officials, and companies that make products.

If we have the opportunity to advocate for a change in something that might lower the risk of breast cancer in the community, what would you want to advocate for?

## **Workshops**

As you know, we will be planning a training program that will probably consist of 6 sessions. What topics do you feel are most important for us to discuss at these trainings? Elicit Responses, and include the following, if they have not been brought up by group:

What We Know About Breast Cancer and The Environment  
 What We Know About Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals  
 Reducing Your Exposure to Potentially Toxic Chemicals  
 Getting the Message Out: Effective Strategies for Communicating  
 Information to People in Your Community  
 The Precautionary Principle: Better Safe Than Sorry  
 OTHERS \_\_\_\_\_

## **Conclusion**

Thank you all for your participation in this Focus Group. We have gathered a great deal of valuable information from all of you. We will go through it and use it to guide us in the development of our Training Program. We appreciate your time and expertise.

Make sure that you see Clarissa before the end to receive your gift card and sign a receipt.