

**State Comprehensive Aging Planning**  
**Conference Call Summary**  
April 13, 2004

Note: This call was recorded. The recording will be available until 3:38 pm (CDT) May 13, 2006. The recording can be accessed by calling 719 457-0820; passcode 61292925.

Participants

AZ

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Focus Groups – Lee Zacharias

A focus group:

- Is not representative of the total population.
- Is a guided group discussion.

Why use a focus group?

- Provides an opportunity to probe and explore why people answer the way they do.
- It's possible to get good, in-depth information on a few core issues.

Role of the focus group moderator:

- The role of the moderator is “careful listener.”
- Embodies the traits of a good listener:
  - Objective
  - Focuses on the present - what is being said now
  - Remembers what was said ten minutes ago
  - Has a sense of where the discussion is going
  - Conscious of quiet people – knows who hasn't said anything – and knows how to draw out all participants

- Withholds own opinions

#### Characteristics of focus groups:

- Groups should be homogeneous.
- Individuals selected must be able to articulate their thoughts.
- The ideal group is no larger than 10-12 persons.
- Facilitator must develop trust with the participants and establish the legitimacy of the focus group:
  - Assure their names will not be used for other purposes, such as given to other organizations for marketing.
  - Assure what is said in the room stays in the room (especially important when participants know each other).
  - Confidentiality: Assure their names will never be used.
  - Assure that what you say will not affect your services.

#### Ground rules for focus groups:

- Respect the views of others.
- What happens in the group stays in the group (especially important when participants know each other).
- There are no right or wrong answers

#### Environment

- Quiet, private room.
- Seat participants around a conference table.
- Can hold focus groups by teleconference as a way of reaching more people with limited resources.

#### Methods

- Flip charts to note salient points
- Note pads to give participants a chance to jot down their thoughts
- Reserve the last 10-15 minutes to give participants an opportunity to bring up anything not already discussed that might be on their minds or to say something they didn't have a chance to say earlier about a particular issue
- My favorite/least favorite exercise to put participants at ease and talking.

#### Discussion/Issue Guide

- What information do we want to get?
- Use open-ended questions.
- Ask probing questions to gain more in-depth understanding on opinions or perspectives expressed, to find out why people answered the way they did: "help me understand, tell me more, what else..."
- Avoid asking the question "WHY?"

#### Length:

- 90-120 minutes
- Smaller groups: 60 minutes

#### Ways to increase recruitment

- Provide transportation
- Provide food
- Use an established group

## TASC Report

The web site with interactive features is now online. [www.nasua.org/tasc/](http://www.nasua.org/tasc/)

The first time you visit the web site, please register for the interactive bulletin board.

## State Planning Activities

### Florida

The workgroups (housing, transportation, etc.) continue to have regular meetings. The master plan is being written.

### Indiana

The steering committee is meeting monthly. The AAAs are selecting people to participate in "Summer Institutes." Piloting web-based survey of desired project outcomes for AAA directors to help assure buy-in to project goals, associated evaluation and clarify summer training agenda.

### Kentucky

An area plan template has been developed. A crosswalk between the template and regulations and priorities has been completed. The next step is to have the AAAs review and comment on the template, refinement and then move on to the monitoring process.

### Minnesota

Meetings with state level agencies, health plans are being conducted to identify common interests. Determined that AAAs were supporting more evidence based health promotion activities than thought. Now have an inventory of these activities. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, will meet with AAAs to review health promotion models, costs, etc. and build consensus on which ones to promote statewide.

### North Carolina

A Summit/Visioning Conference was held April 4-6<sup>th</sup>. The planning process is to be consumer focused, simple to do, and outcome oriented. The project has been asked to provide information to county commissioners and to draft newspaper articles for local publication. Each AAA is moving forward with the planning process. A work group with four AAAs is being formed: one POMP AAA; one with lots of planning experience; one with little planning experience and a rural AAA.

### New Jersey

The work groups are meeting monthly. One group is defining “legitimate” costs and purchasing options. Another is analyzing the “MI Choice” assessment tool used by the ADRC and the nutrition assessment tool. Protocols between the ADRC and the nutrition program are being developed.

#### Pennsylvania

More specific activities to do with local planners are being developed. The pilot AAA is demonstrating the value of outcome based plans through the development of goals and outcome measures utilizing results-oriented input by the agency’s upper level executives. Six goals have been developed including reducing the in-home services waiting list through creative means.

#### Arizona

The project held its second meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss strategic and operational planning structures, methods to implement and monitor the plan, and format of the area plan. The following state agencies have been invited to present at the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss their planning processes with the planning committee: Department of Housing, Department of Transportation, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (Arizona’s Medicaid), Department of Health, and Department of Commerce.