

Conducting Interviews During the Site Visit: Tip Sheet for Site Visitors (DRAFT)

March 2013

What to Do:

- Do remain flexible in the Site Visit Agenda. Domain interviews may have to be rearranged based on last-minute changes at the health department.
- Do come to the Site Visit well prepared with a list of topics to discuss during the interviews.
- Do develop a specific list of your questions ahead of time and take good notes. In the event of illness or an emergency, another team member may need to conduct an interview in a Domain for which they were not the primary reviewer.
- Do use open-ended questions instead of "yes" or "no" questions.
- Do keep the tone conversational and collegial.
- Do use open body language with a friendly demeanor. Smile and remain pleasant. Keep eye contact.
- Do practice active listening.

What Not to Do:

- Do not use leading questions.
- Do not share your personal views about how "you would do something at your health department".
- Do not offer suggestions on how a document could be better.
- Do not offer judgments on the health department, its work, or any staff member.
- Do not make statements related to how well or poorly the health department was assessed on any standard, measure, or Domain.
- Do not make any statement about the accreditation decision.



Purpose of Site Visit Interviews

1. Interviews are opportunities for the Site Visitor to have personal interaction with health department employees, partners, and the governing entity.
2. Interviews are a time to verify the documentation that was reviewed and clarify documentation that was confusing or ambiguous or to answer questions raised by the Site Visitor.
3. Interviews are an opportunity to learn how documentation is implemented or operationalized in order to gain insight into the work of the health department.
4. The interviews' value is reflected in the final assessment contained in the Site Visit Report submitted to PHAB.

Conducting the Interview

The interview is a key part of the Site Visit. It is as important as the documentation. The quality of information gained from the interview is determined by your questions and actions. Introduce yourself to every person in the room whom you have not previously met and briefly explain your professional experience, as it relates to your role as a peer reviewer. Provide a very brief overview of the Domain covered in the interview to provide context for the discussion. A successful interview begins with a Site Visitor's assessment of the documentation and thoughtful questions concerning the requirements for specific measures. If time allows, solicit input from everyone in the room to determine how their work relates to the Domain.

Interview Guidance

Questions

- Questions should relate directly to the Domain and the measures within; be guided by what is necessary to assess the documentation submitted; and clarify or verify assessment of specific measures during Pre-Site Visit Review.
- Open-ended questions provide more useful information than a question that can be answered "yes" or "no". If you do use a "yes" or "no" question, be prepared to ask a follow-up question, whenever appropriate.
- Avoid the use of leading questions or questions that would direct the person being interviewed toward a particular response.
- Use language in your questions that is as neutral as possible so that the interviewee does not give answers he or she thinks you want to hear.
- It is not necessary to discuss every measure in a Domain. Focus your attention first on questions about specific measures.
- Do not ask questions that go beyond what is required to demonstrate a measure, as contained in the **PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0**.

Additional Documentation

- You may request additional documentation during the course of the interview. In your assessment, consider only documentation that was developed and in use at the time of the original documentation submission date in e-PHAB.
- Be specific about the documentation you are requesting; note which part of the measure's required documentation it refers.
- All documentation requested during the Site Visit must be uploaded to e-PHAB by the Accreditation Coordinator before the start of the Team's last Executive Session.
- When documentation is not related to a specific measure or from programs that are not accepted by PHAB, steer the conversation back to a covered program.
- Hard copies of documents offered during an interview may not be reviewed and considered.