

# Appendix: Focus Group Consent Form

Dear Prospective Participant:

You have been chosen to participate in a focus group backed by the Greater Brockton Community Health Network Area (CHNA 22), a coalition of public, private and nonprofit organizations located within Southeastern Massachusetts. The purpose of this focus group is to collect qualitative information surrounding the subjects of oral health, nutrition and fitness, asthma, and substance abuse among the ten CHNA communities.

The Mission of the Greater Brockton Community Health Network Area and its Health Assessment Subcommittee are to gather information about the health and well-being of residents of the communities within the Greater Brockton CHNA and determine the areas of greatest need. This information will be used to assist the CHNA in directing resources toward primary areas that address the four focus areas.

**Your Information:** This research project employs focus groups as a form of data collection. Consequently, your identity will not be anonymous, but it will be confidential. All information regarding subjects and their subsequent responses will be kept in a safe location and only shared among the facilitators and researchers. Please note that the audio content of this session will be recorded, but the audio and subsequent transcripts will not be shared. The information will be compiled with that from other focus groups and shared only in a way that individual participants cannot be identified.

***Your Participation is Voluntary:*** Upon agreeing to participate in this focus group, please understand that your choice to continue taking part in this discussion is at your discretion, and yours alone. Thus, you may choose to cease cooperation at any time. Risks in participating in this focus group are minimal to nonexistent.

**Expectations:** This study involves focus groups as a form of data collection. All participants will be asked a series of about 5-8 questions for each topic, which concern issues and behaviors surrounding oral health, nutrition and fitness, and asthma. Participants may also be asked to elaborate from time to time to give the interviewer more insight into the topic at hand and to form sound conclusions upon the completion of this focus group. As a participant, the facilitators will give you ample time to answer the questions posed to you.

*Your choice to take part in this study will help not only the facilitators, researchers, and citizens understand the impact that oral health, nutrition and fitness, and asthma have upon the CHNA's ten communities.*

By signing your name below, you agree to participate in this study. ***If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Patton*** (spatton@stoughton-ma.gov) ***Larissa Swenson*** (lswenson88@hotmail.com), respectively.

# Appendix: Focus Group Script

This script was read aloud to the participants prior to the start of each focus group.

*"Thank you for taking the time to talk to us today about your experiences in Brockton. I am Stephanie Patton and I am the Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator for Stoughton OASIS (Organizing Against Substances in Stoughton), and I am Larissa Swenson, the graduate intern for the Community Health Needs Assessment. We are here today on behalf of the Greater Brockton Community Health Network Area (or CHNA for short). We are a group of social service and health organizations working to improve the health of residents of the towns in this area. Right now, our group is involved in a process called a community health assessment, which means that we're trying to talk to groups of community members about health problems in their communities so we can find out what is going on in the fields of substance abuse, oral health, asthma, and nutrition and fitness. When we collect this information from community residents and put it all together, the CHNA will be able to fund projects related to these four focus areas.*

*We want to emphasize that the discussion today will remain confidential. The results of this discussion, which will be reported thematically, will be used as part of the CHNA's health assessment process to determine how it can best address health care needs in the area. Your names will never be shared or linked with anything that you say. We want to likewise remind you that we are audio-taping the discussion so that we will remember your important and helpful responses. The recording will give us the opportunity to review what you said at a later time when we prepare a summary report."*

# Appendix: Focus Group Questions

## **Substance Abuse Questions:**

1. What circumstances have made it more likely for you to use / abuse alcohol and other drugs?
2. What circumstances have made it less likely for you to use / abuse alcohol and other drugs?
3. What challenges have you experienced obtaining substance abuse treatment?
4. What do you find most challenging about recovery?
5. What aspects of recovery are the easiest?
6. What are you most worried about throughout your recovery?
7. What else would like to tell us.

## **Asthma Questions:**

1. How has asthma affected yours or a family member's life?
2. What kind of things make your asthma worse?
3. What aspects of your asthma do you find easiest to manage?
4. What aspects of your asthma do you find most difficult to manage?
5. How has your doctor aided you in treating / managing your asthma?
6. Has your doctor referred you to an asthma / lung specialist?
7. How do you manage your asthma?
8. Where do you get info on how to manage your asthma?

## **Nutrition and Fitness:**

1. What makes it easy to obtain healthy foods?
2. What are the barriers in obtaining / purchasing fresh produce and healthy foods?
3. What has made it easy to be physically active in within your community?
4. What has made it difficult to attain sufficient levels of physical activity in your community?
5. What make it easier to eat healthier?
6. What are you most worried about throughout your recovery?

## **Oral Health:**

1. In what ways is oral health important to your family?
2. What have been the barriers in obtaining oral health care for you / your family?
3. In what ways have oral health issues prevented you from regular activities (like school / work)? Please explain.
4. When faced with an oral health issue, through what avenues do you seek relief?
5. What else can you tell us about oral health?

# Appendix: Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee

In February 2013, the CHNA Steering Committee voted to form a subcommittee that would handle matters related to the assessment. Membership for this subcommittee was recruited from the general CHNA membership. The subcommittee met approximately six times during the assessment process.

The completion of this assessment would not have been possible without the advice, guidance, and dedication of this subcommittee. Listed below are the members, mission statement, and vision statement of this subcommittee.

## **Greater Brockton CHNA Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee Members**

John Eastman, Self-Help, Inc.  
Stephanie Patton, Stoughton OASIS/Youth Commission  
Hilary Lovell, Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital  
Alan MacDonald, South Shore Hospital  
Larissa Swenson, Bridgewater State University  
Paulo Gomes / Monique Allemande, Stewart Good Samaritan Hospital

## **Mission of the Greater Brockton CHNA Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee**

The mission of the Greater Brockton CHNA Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee is to gather information about the health and well-being of residents within the communities within the Greater Brockton CHNA and determine the areas of greatest need. We will then use this information to assist the CHNA in directing resources toward the coalition's four focus areas: asthma, oral health, nutrition and fitness, and substance abuse.

*Our primary goals are to:*

- Collect, organize, and analyze data to share with the community
- Engage community leaders, health and social service providers, and community members in discussions about how the environment of a community promotes or detracts from the health of its residents
- Identify vulnerable populations within the community so the CHNA may assist them in obtaining resources to achieve an environment in which health and well-being are sustainable for all
- Promote partnerships among community members, service providers, and community leaders to sustain a healthy environment for community residents

## **Vision of the Greater Brockton CHNA Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee**

The Greater Brockton CHNA Community Health Needs Assessment Subcommittee envisions a future in which community members, service providers, and community agencies will mobilize using information about community health status and environment to work together toward a healthy, safe environment for all residents.