

## Student Focus Group: Instructions

**Introduction:** It is ideal that a focus group is run with some of the students who have had teaching including topic(s) from the WHO Patient Safety Curriculum in order to evaluate their views after a period of reflection. This section of materials includes some guidance on the suggested format of the focus group, a short questionnaire for basic demographic details from each participant and a discussion guide.

**Sampling and Participants:** It is critical to select participants purposively. In the context of evaluation the introduction of the Patient Safety Curriculum, participants should be selected on the basis of their involvement in delivery or receipt of the Curriculum.

It is not essential to include all tutors and all students in focus group discussions; rather the aim is to recruit participants who represent all key groups. For example, if the teaching Faculty includes tutors from different clinical backgrounds (surgery, anaesthetics, general medicine), you should try to ensure that these different groups are represented in the focus group(s). You may also want to think about the following variables, where they exist, in relation to purposively sampling participants for tutor focus groups: gender, where trained (e.g., home or overseas), new to teaching versus well-established medical educators, where based (small vs large hospital, university hospital vs non-university hospital, community vs hospital setting), specific teaching training and qualifications or not, etc.

Similarly, when selecting participants from the student group, you should consider stratifying your sample by gender, age (mature or school-leaver), origin (home or overseas), etc, to ensure a range of representative views.

Focus groups work best with 6-10 participants. Our preference would be to run separate focus groups for tutors and students as student discussion may be inhibited in the presence of tutors.

Depending on tutor numbers and the size of the student body, and the number of stratifying variables (above), you may need to run several focus groups for each target group.

**Participant recruitment:** This will be most easily done through the usual channels of communication in your Medical School – student and staff portals, letters of invitation, or announcements at meetings and lectures. We find it is most effective to state where and when the focus group will take place on the invitation, as well as ensuring potential participants confirm their attendance in advance.

**Participant Consent:** A consent form is provided for participants. One copy should be given to participants to keep for their own records. The second copy should be kept by the local project lead. Participants must be allowed to read the information provided at the beginning of the demographic data questionnaire prior to signing the consent form and should be advised whether audio-taping or detailed notes will be used for the collection of data.

**Demographic data:** It is important to collect anonymous demographic data from focus group participants. Simple questionnaires for this purpose are provided and should be handed out as participants arrive, then collected at the end of the focus group and returned with the transcript of the focus group.

**Facilitator/Moderator:** Running an effective focus group is a skill. If you do not feel skilled in this technique it is useful to approach a local expert to run the focus groups if possible. Ideally the facilitator should be a neutral party (i.e., is not directly involved in the delivery of medical education) as this is likely to encourage participants to talk freely, without fear of giving offence to a colleague.

**Discussion guides:** A discussion guide (provided with this document) should be used to stimulate focus group discussion. The guide ensures all topics are covered but is not to be used rigidly, like a checklist or questionnaire: rather the purpose of the group setting is to encourage participants to explore topics in depth, to reflect, to raise their own issues, etc.

**Data collection:** Ideally, the discussions should be audio-taped with consent (see below), and transcribed verbatim for analysis. If this is not possible, a colleague (not a participant) should take detailed notes.

**Time and Place for Focus Group:** Ideally, around one hour should be set aside for the focus group discussion. Participants should be provided with clear details of where and when the focus group will take place and how long it will last.

## CONSENT FORM

### **Pilot study for the evaluation of the World Health Organisation Patient Safety Curriculum Guide for Medical Schools.**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information on this study provided with the starting questionnaire for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. The project involves an open-questioning technique and that I have the right to decline to answer particular question(s).
4. I consent to being audio-taped or for detailed notes to be taken during the focus group.
5. My participation should not lead to any potential harm or discomfort or any benefit. Participation will not affect my assessments.
6. The results of the project may be published but my anonymity will be preserved.
7. I agree to take part in the above study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date Signature  
Name of participant

\_\_\_\_\_ Date Signature  
Name of Person taking consent

1 copy for participant; 1 for the local research organiser.

**This project has been reviewed by the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee and by the ethics committee of your institution.**

## WHO Medical School Curricular Guide for Patient Safety

Dear Colleague,

The WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety has developed a curriculum guide for Medical Schools for teaching patient safety to medical students. A pilot study is being undertaken to evaluate how materials from this curricular guide can be incorporated into existing curricula in medical schools across the world. The data from this study will guide future revision of the curriculum to make it more effective and responsive to student needs. The evaluation process will ask for the views of both students and tutors. This focus group was designed to evaluate the views of students who have been involved in the delivery of materials from this curricular guide on the curriculum and the implementation process. This short questionnaire will help define the characteristics of participants across pilot sites. Completion of the questionnaire should take around five minutes. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential. The data will only be reported at a group level, not individually. Please note that to allow the accurate collection of data for analysis this focus group may be audio-taped or detailed notes will be taken.

**You are being asked to complete this form and participate in this focus group as part of a study. This will not form part of your final assessment.  
Completing it is not compulsory.**

### Student Focus Group: demographic details questionnaire

**Please answer the following questions (using block capitals) in the spaces provided, circle the most appropriate option, or tick the appropriate boxes.**

1. What is your year of study? 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup>

2. How old are you?.....

3. Are you a graduate medical school entrant? **Yes** **No**

4. Are you: (please tick as necessary)

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Are you: (please tick as necessary)

A home student	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Overseas	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify.....

6. Did you have any clinical attachments before receiving Patient Safety teaching)

**Yes** **No**

If yes, please give brief details.

7. Do you have experience of working in a clinical environment (other than on placements as a medical student?)

**Yes**                      **No**

If yes, please give brief details:

8. What patient Safety topic(s) did you receive teaching on? (please tick as appropriate)

1. What is patient safety?	
2. What is human factors and why is it important to patient safety?	
3. Understanding systems and the impact of complexity on patient care.	
4. Being an effective team player.	
5. Understanding and learning from errors.	
6. Understanding and managing clinical risk.	
7. Introduction to quality improvement methods.	
8. Engaging with patients and carers.	
9. Minimizing infection through improved infection control.	
10. Patient safety and invasive procedures.	
11. Improving medication safety.	

9. What teaching methods do you remember being used? (please tick as appropriate)

• lectures	
• clinical placements	
• online activities	
• on the ward activities	
• small group tutorial teaching	
• problem-based learning (PBL)	
• simulation/skills laboratories	
• traditional tutorials.	
• other (please provide details below)	

10. Overall how easy or difficult did you find learning about Patient Safety?

Very easy	
Easy	
Not sure	
Difficult	
Very difficult	

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire***

## **Student Focus Group: Discussion Guide**

### **Welcome**

- Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group
- You have been asked because your point of view is important
- You must be busy and I appreciate your time

### **Introduction**

- My name is .... and I am a ...
- The purpose of this discussion is to determine your experiences and opinions about the design and delivery of the new Patient Safety Curriculum

### **Anonymity**

- Despite being taped (*or notes taken*), I would like to assure you that the discussion will be anonymous
- (*If taped*) The tapes will be kept safely in a locked drawer and will be kept in accordance with research governance policies
- The anonymised data will go to WHO and WHO collaborators who will use it to modify the curriculum and prepare publications
- I would appreciate it if you would refrain from discussing the comments of other group members outside the focus group

### **Ground rules**

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There are no right or wrong answers
- You do not have to speak in any particular order
- When you do have something to say, please do so. There are many of you in the group and it is important that I obtain the views of each of you
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group
- Finally, because of limited time, I may need to re-direct our discussion with a few questions
- Does anyone have any questions?
- OK, let's begin

### **Warm up**

- First, I'd like everyone to introduce themselves

- Can you tell us your name and your year of study

### **Introductory question**

I am just going to give you a couple of minutes to think about your experience of receiving Patient Safety teaching. Is anyone happy to share his or her story?

### **Key questions:**

#### General

- What was your overall impression of the Patient Safety curriculum?

#### **Content**

- What are your views on the patient safety content of the curriculum?
  - Was the patient safety content new to you?
  - Is it covered elsewhere in the curriculum?
  - What are your views on the appropriateness of the patient safety content to the local setting?
  - What are your views on the level of difficulty – was this appropriate?
  - Did you find the material interesting?
  - Did you feel this was new learning?
  - Did any of the content contradict other things you have been taught or have learned at medical school? If yes, explore.
  - What are your views on the range of topics that you covered? Would you change any of the topics – if so, in what way?
- What are your views on how the Patient Safety curriculum/topics integrated with the rest of the curriculum?
- Do you think this material will be of benefit to you in your clinical practice?

#### **Delivery**

- What are your views on the methods of delivery selected for the Patient Safety teaching you experienced (as a whole and individual topics)? E.g., lectures, small group work.
- What are your views on whether or not these were appropriate for the:
  - content of the curriculum?
  - local circumstances?
- Would you change anything about the delivery of the curriculum? If yes, please discuss and provide suggestions.
- What are your views on where the Patient Safety teaching was placed in your course?
  - Was this the correct place or not?
  - Correct order of topics?
- Was the time provided for the Curriculum/individual topics appropriate?

**Concluding question**

- Of all the things we've discussed today, what would you say are the most important issues, in terms of refining the content and delivery of the Patient Safety Curriculum?

**Conclusion**

- Thank you for participating
- This has been a very successful discussion
- Your opinions will be a valuable asset to the study
- We hope you have found the discussion interesting
- If there is anything you are unhappy with or wish to complain about, please contact .....
- I would like to remind you that any comments featuring in this report will be anonymous
- Before you leave, please hand in your completed personal details questionnaire