

## **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW – DETAILED GUIDE WITH POTENTIAL QUESTIONS**

### **KEEPING UP WITH DEVELOPMENTS: THE NEEDS OF ONCOLOGY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS**

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*This focus group interview is part of a research project by the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, to investigate how oncology healthcare professionals keep up with developments that affect their work and the support they offer to cancer patients.*

*There are many opportunities to become aware of developments, especially if you use services that are available for free via the World Wide Web. If we want to recommend services or make suggestions on how you can make the most effective use of such services, we however, need to know as much as possible about your work situation, your need for information, how you feel about the importance of information to do your job and whether you think you have the skills and opportunities to find the information.*

*All information will be treated as confidential. Names of institutions taking part in the study will only be mentioned with their consent. Findings from the study will be shared with participating institutions. Findings from the project may be used for publication or presentations.*

*Your time and support is much appreciated.*

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#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the interview is to explore the group's knowledge of special services to keep up to date with developments and new information that concerns their task and support to cancer patients. Such services are called current awareness services<sup>1</sup>. The intention is also to explore the group's opinion on a selection of aspects concerning the need for the latest information as well as the use of current awareness services.

Information collected through the focus group interview will be supplemented with information collected through individual questionnaires and personal interviews with Management.

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<sup>1</sup> Current awareness services (CAS) are also referred to as alerting services, information monitoring services or selective dissemination of information services (SDI). The purpose of the services is to bring the latest (current) information to people's attention.

# Question schedule

## (1) Changing and dynamic working environments

“Throughout Europe cancer nurses are striving to meet the challenges of providing quality nursing care amid changing environments that are characterized by advances in drugs and technologies, ageing populations, increasing rates of cancer, increased survival rates, rising costs and increasing economic constraints”. (Baker and Fitch, as cited by Browne, Robinson & Richardson, 2002:134<sup>2</sup>)

- What do you think of the statement that there are a lot of changes in your work environment and in the field of oncology health care?
- How do you feel your job in an oncology unit is affected by the changes that are taking place such as developments in the treatment of cancer patients?
- Which developments and types of new information may affect your job and support to cancer patients (i.e. new things you need to know about)?
- How well are you aware of developments and the latest information?

## (2) Importance of keeping up with developments

- How important is it for you to keep up with new developments and the latest information?
- What do you think management is expecting from you?
- How do you feel about the expectations cancer patients may have of you?
- Do you experience any anxiety about not being aware of all developments, or are you confident that you are still successful in your job?

## (3) Searching for information

- Where do you normally search for information when you experience a work-related problem or need to make a work-related decision?

## (4) Keeping up with developments

There are different ways to keep up with developments in your field:

- Training related events (such as attending courses, workshops, further education)
- Attending conferences, seminars, etc. which are formal events where information is shared
- Reading (e.g. articles, books, newspapers, websites, newsletters)
- Discussions with people (e.g. colleagues, experts)
- Etc.

Although this project is about the resources you use to keep up with developments (current awareness services), our main focus is about *how* you become aware of the resources (i.e. the current awareness services you use to become aware of the sources where current information can be found, such as journal articles, websites or conferences you may attend).

- Which training related events do you attend (e.g. course, workshops)?
- Which national conferences do you attend?
- Which international conferences do you attend?
- Of which national professional societies/organizations are you a member?
- Of which international professional societies/organizations are you a member?
- Which professional journals do you read?

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<sup>2</sup> Browne, N.; Robinson, L. & Richardson. 2002. A Delphi study on the research priorities of European oncology nurses. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 6(3):133-144.

- Which popular magazines do you read that help you keep track of developments in your fields?
- For which professional journals do you scan the tables of content?
- To which newsletters do you subscribe?
- Which newspapers do you read on a regular basis?
- Which websites do you check on a regular basis to keep up with your field?
- Which books have you read in the last 6 months concerning oncology health care or related fields?
- How do other people (e.g. colleagues or experts) help you to keep up with developments?
- Whose responsibility is it to ensure that you are aware of resources and events that can help you keep up with developments?
- Which other methods/services do you use to keep up with developments?

**(5) Effectiveness of resources to keep up with developments**

- How effective are the resources/opportunities you are using to keep up with developments?
- Categorise the things they mention in (4), add it to our own list, and ask them to prioritise the list in terms of the following:
  - effectiveness (what offers the most useful information relevant to their task)
  - preferences (what they like best)
- How are you using information about new developments in your job?

**(6) Sharing information**

- How do you share information with others (e.g. management, colleagues, people from other institutions)?
- How do you share information with colleagues?
- Whose responsibility is it to share information?

**(7) Problems experienced**

- Which problems do you experience in trying to keep up with the latest information and new developments?

**(8) Additional information**

- Is there anything else you would like to add about your experiences with trying to keep up to date with the latest information and developments concerning your job?