

# MTN-016 Training

## General Interviewing Techniques

Things to Consider When  
Administering  
Interviewer-administered CRFs

SSP Section 13.5



# MTN-016

## Interviewer-administered CRFs

Form	Completed at:
Demographics (woman)	Screening and Enrollment Visit
Genetic Screening History (woman)	Screening and Enrollment Visit & updated at each follow-up visit
Social Harms Assessment Log (woman and infant)	When indicated

## **MTN-016**

### **Interviewer-administered CRFs**

- For simplicity, none of the interviewer-administered CRFs are translated
- When interviewing participants, the interviewer will not read the items word for word, but must ask about each item on the CRFs using appropriate language

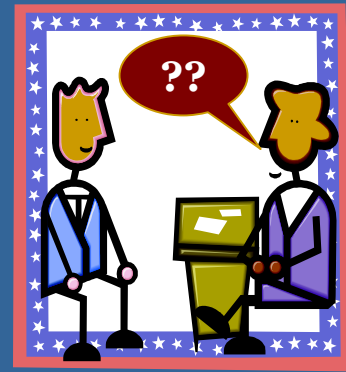
# Overview

- Tasks to complete before the interview
- Basic interviewing skills
- Minimizing bias
- Considerations during the interview
- Review at the end of the interview

## Before the interview ...

- Familiarize yourself with the interviewer-administered forms
  - Read through each question
  - Read through **form instructions**
  - Learn wording, definitions, skip patterns
- Review SSP Section 13.5

# Basic Interviewing Skills



When a new participant arrives at the clinic, everything about the study is new. Help make the participant feel comfortable.

- Introduce yourself.
- In general, create rapport (connection) between yourself and the participant to help her feel comfortable during the interview.

# Basic Interviewing Skills

## Important Considerations:

- Privacy
- Interview pace
- Interviewer comfort asking personal and sensitive questions
- Interviewer's encouragement
  - no "right" or "wrong" answers
- Interviewer's assurance of confidentiality

# Basic Interviewing Skills

## Important Considerations (cont.):

- Monitoring participant cues (verbal and non-verbal)
- Interviewer's response to participant feedback, such as:
  - negative reactions
  - questions
  - requests for information
  - sharing of information requiring follow-up, such as counseling or referral



# Basic Interviewing Skills

Listening is key. However ...

As a general rule, interviewer should not offer feedback during the interview. He/she should defer general questions, information requests, and referrals until after completion of the interview.

# Basic Interviewing Skills

- Conduct interviews with a non-biased, non-judgmental approach.
- Help a participant feel comfortable sharing personal information and opinions while asking the study questions in a consistent manner.

**Why is this important?**

# Minimizing Bias

- Interviewer should limit his/her influence on participant responses to avoid
  - “socially desirable reporting”
  - collecting inaccurate data
  - missing data
  - possibly enrolling an ineligible participant

## **During the interview ...**

- **When clarification is needed, repeat the item and/or response categories**
- **Do not read response categories unless form instructions state otherwise**
- **Select category that best fits the participant's response**

# During the interview ...

- Choose “other, specify” if available and response does not match existing category
  - provide English translation of the participant’s response

3. Does the participant earn an income of her own?.....  yes  no → *If no, go to item 4.*

3a. How does she earn her income? *Mark all that apply.*

3a1. formal employment

3a2. self-employed

3a3. other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- For items requiring a description, record the description in English

11. Has the participant had any illnesses (including fever/rashes) during this pregnancy? .....  yes  no

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Record response  
in English here

# Interviewing Probes (SSP Section 15.5)



*Probing* is a technique used to help participants:

- remember an answer
- clarify a response
- decide between two similar, but different answers
- report something more precisely

## Interviewing Probes *cont.*

Effective probing **should not:**

- bias a participant's responses
- judge a participant's responses

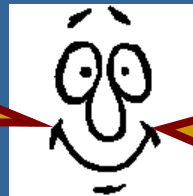
Therefore, all probes  
must be neutral.

# Interviewing Probes *cont.*

## Repeat Probe

The repeat probe is used by repeating the item

Let me repeat the question ...



So what you are saying is...

## Echo Probe

The echo probe is usually used by repeating back to the participant exactly what she says to you.



# Interviewing Probes *cont.*

## Silent Probe

The silent probe is used by pausing briefly after a participant gives what seems to be an uncertain answer.

If I am quiet I can give her extra time to think about her response.



## Non-verbal Probe

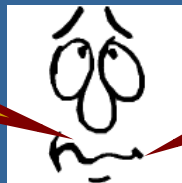
The non-verbal probe is used by giving hand or facial gestures that may help the participant with a response.

# Interviewing Probes *cont.*

## Specification Probe

The specification probe is used by asking the participant to give a more precise answer.

Can you be more specific?



Let's look at a calendar.

## Historical Probe

The historical probe is used by asking whether the event in question occurred anytime around major holidays or personal events. *This helps with recall of dates (e.g., when capturing medical history and medication use)*

# During the interview ...

- Watch for skip patterns - It is **extremely** important for the interviewers to be very familiar with these forms **before** conducting his/her first interview.

6.	Has the participant ever drunk alcoholic beverages regularly (three or more drinks each week)? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ <b>If no, go to item 7.</b>		
6a.	During this pregnancy, did/does the participant drink alcoholic beverages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ <b>If no, go to item 7.</b>		
6b.	During this pregnancy, how often did/does the participant drink alcoholic beverages? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<i>&lt; once a month</i>	<i>each month</i>	<i>each week</i>	<i>daily or almost daily</i>	
6c.	During this pregnancy, how often did/does the participant drink five or more alcoholic beverages in one day? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>never</i>	<i>&lt; once a month</i>	<i>each month</i>	<i>each week</i>	<i>daily or almost daily</i>
7.	Has the participant ever smoked cigarettes regularly (one or more cigarettes per week)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ <b>If no, go to item 8 on page 4.</b>		
		<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>			

## During the interview ...

- When possible, clarify inconsistent responses *during* the interview
  - Each interviewer should be familiar with responses requiring consistency *before* conducting his/her first interview.

## **At the end of the interview ...**

- Review completed questionnaires while participant is still with the interviewer. This way, errors and inconsistencies can be addressed with the participant.
- Each questionnaire is a source document

# *Questions?*

