



Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Health Plan Advisory 15-22

July 27, 2015

Topic: Managed Care Organization (MCO) Marketing Guidance for Focus Groups

The Bureau of Health Services Financing (BHSF) is providing the following guidance for MCOs that wish to conduct focus groups. BHSF considers any focus group that includes non-member participants to be a marketing effort and subject to these parameters.

- The MCO must obtain prior written approval from BHSF for all **focus group concepts**. This includes, but is not limited to, focus group objectives, number of planned participants, cumulative number of non-members who have participated in previous focus groups during the current contract year and methods for the recruitment of non-members. Neither the MCO nor its subcontractors may hold a focus group or begin focus group outreach without written consent of its focus group concept.
 - BHSF will review the submitted focus group concept(s) and either approve, deny or request changes within ten (10) calendar days from the date of submission.
- The MCO must obtain prior written approval from BHSF for **focus group materials**, as it does for all marketing and member materials. Focus group materials include, but are not limited to, scripts and other materials used in the focus group. In the case of focus group materials, the layout or presentation must be approved as well as the text.
 - BHSF will review the submitted focus group materials, and either approve, deny or request changes within 30 calendar days from the date of submission.
- The MCO must obtain prior written approval from BHSF for any **focus group event**. A focus group event is defined as an event where members and/or potential members are brought together in order to be questioned about their opinions about health insurance, Medicaid, Bayou Health Plans, Medicaid Managed Care, or any related subject. The proposed focus group event should be submitted to DHH using the [Event Submission Calendar](#). Required data elements include, but are not limited to, Event Date, Event Start Time, Event End Time, Street Address and City. Information as to whether or not inconspicuous observation is possible at the chosen venue should be included in the “Comments” field.
 - Focus group events should not be submitted for BHSF review until all materials for that focus group concept have been approved.

- BHSF will review proposed focus group events and either approve or deny within seven (7) calendar days from the date of submission.

- The MCO must limit total non-member participation to 50 individuals in any one (1) contract year.
- There is no limit placed on member participation in focus groups.
- The maximum incentive that may be offered to each individual non-member participant of a focus group is \$100 in an urban area (East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Orleans and St. Bernard parishes) or \$125 in a rural area (parishes not specifically listed above).
- The MCO shall provide BHSF or its representatives access to any focus group event, where inconspicuous observation is possible, upon request.
- Data and its analysis resulting from all focus group events must be submitted to BHSF for informational purposes upon request.