

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH'S ROLE IN COVID – NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Sampling: Interview Occupational Health providers across VA's VISNs, with snowball sampling

#### INTRODUCTION

Hi I'm [NAME] from the Palo Alto VA working with Dr. Giannitrapani on a project to gather needs and best practices for Occupational Health across the VA. Is now a good time to speak with you?

I emailed you a copy of the Information Sheet. Have you had an opportunity to review it?

**[YES]** Do you have any questions about the Information Sheet or the study? (*Answer questions*)

**[NO]** May I go over it briefly with you? I would like to briefly point out some key points before obtaining verbal consent if you have time.

As mentioned previously, this study is being conducted to identify role and process recommendations to help support Occupational Health providers in managing their new role of facilitating the identification of employee COVID-19 cases while reducing risk of exposure to other employees and patients (in coordination and in response to dynamic changing guidance from leadership).

I would love to record this interview so that I can focus my attention on you. If that is ok with you, I'll turn on the recorder.

Is that ok?

**[YES]** *If Yes – turn on recorder – internal recording (e.g., Teams).*

Please say your name and the date and that it's ok for me to record.

Finally, I want to be respectful of your time. How long do you have to talk to me today? Do you have a hard stop we need to pay attention to?

Great! Thank you! Ok, let's chat about your role and experience in Occupational Health

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### BACKGROUND

What is your role?

*[Appreciative Inquiry]*

What did you like best about your job prior to COVID?

How large is your site?

How many people do you work with in OH?

### CHANGE IN PRACTICES WITH COVID

*[Forensic experiential trauma interview]*

What is your typical role?

How has your role changed with COVID?

### EMR (variability and implementation)

What are your VISN and facility doing with data tracking and EMR around COVID?

How is this approach meeting your needs or missing the mark?

What has your role been with respect to the EMR?

How has the new EMR roll-out for COVID tracking been?

What is working well?

What needs to change?

### IDEAL

What is your ideal approach to managing Occupational Health now that we have some experience with a global pandemic?

What helps you move towards this ideal?

What barriers keep you from this ideal?

What breakdowns in coordination/collaboration have you experienced?

How have you adjusted to manage or avert breakdowns?

### INFORMATION

Where do you get your information about COVID?

How about the VA's response to it nationally? and locally?

Are you aware of the forum?

What resources do you use to keep up-to-date about new policies?

How useful do you find these resources?

How have you been communicating new policies to others?

How are you integrating emerging evidence into practice?

### POLICIES

What policies have you been able to use or adapt?

What has been your process for adapting these policies?

What additional policies are needed at the national, VISN, and local levels?

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### STAFFING

What staffing model do you use?

What would be the appropriate staffing model for managing a pandemic like COVID?

How have you known you were under-resourced or sufficiently-resourced?

### SERVICE ALIGNMENT

What service is Occupational Health aligned with at your facility?

Has this ever changed?

Are changes in service disruptive?

What service should Occupational Health be aligned with?

### PPE and MASK N95

What are your local protocols for PPE and masks?

How have these changed over time?

What triggered their change?

### TELEWORK

How has telehealth impacted Occupational Health?

How, if at all, are you preparing for any health changes from increased telework?

### FLU SEASON PREPAREDNESS (2020 summer and fall interviews only)

How are you planning to deal with flu and COVID-19 at the same time?

How, if at all, have you updated approaches for PPE and environmental safety related to flu season?

### MENTAL HEALTH

We've heard that mental health concerns for employees have become increasingly important with continued COVID stressors.

What is the role of Occupational Health in addressing mental health needs, if at all?

What is the volume of this need?

What is happening around this at your site (both within Occupational Health and outside of Occupational Health)?

How would you ideally want or need to support mental health needs for health care workers?

How about for you and your Occupational Health team?

What ideas do you have for preventing burnout in the workforce?

What other ideas do you have to help healthcare workers?

### COVID-19 VACCINATION (2021 interviews only)

Considering the COVID vaccine, what is the role of Occupational Health?

Who are you coordinating with?

What are your competing demands?

What are the trade-offs?

What is harder to get done?

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What is working well at your facility?

What needs do you have to deliver the COVID vaccine?

What are your barriers?

What do you need leadership to know about your role vis a vis the vaccine?

How is your site preparing people to understand what they need to know?

Communication?

Badge stickers?

How are you managing any vaccine hesitancy?

What do you wish you could do, and how would you do it differently?

What would make vaccine delivery go better?

### OTHER NEW ROLES

What other new roles has Occupational Health taken on?

### LIGHTNING REPORT

What's working about how your local Occupational Health group is managing new responsibilities with COVID?

What needs to change for you in order for you to provide better Occupational Health care?

### INNOVATION

Have there been any benefits from COVID in your role or Occupational Health?

What, if any, innovation have you or your Occupational Health team implemented?

Have those innovations been successful?

What has contributed to them being successful or not?

### SAMPLING - SNOWBALL

Who else should we talk to about the role of Occupational Health and COVID?