

# Interview Guide

## EMPOWER Study - Qualitative section

6 months post-intervention

### I. INTRODUCTION

*Mr. X / Mrs. Y, Hi,*

*First off, we would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in all the steps of the EMPOWER study. During the course of this research project you received an educational brochure which allowed you to come to your own conclusions on your use of medication XY. The objective of the interview today is to collect your opinion of the whole intervention process in order to better evaluate what happened with the intervention. As you already know, we wish to discuss with you your experience during this process and to collect your opinion on various aspects of your experience.*

*This interview is conducted for a University study and all information shared today will be confidential and anonymized. There are now right or wrong answers here, all that is important to us is to capture your honest opinion and experiences.*

*If you have no objections, we would like to record this conversation in order to facilitate the full collection of this interview.*

*Lets start with a small introduction, my name is.... And here is ....*

*Our colleague XX, the person who previously contacted you has indicated that you would be a good candidate to be interviewed. Although you have already discussed some of your experiences with her, we would like to start over from the start in order to capture all the details of your experience.*

### II. Aging, disease and medication

1. How old are you? Are you still active? Do you still work? Do you volunteer? Are you close to your family?

*Relaunch on:*

*Perception of aging*

*Physical psychological and social difficulties associated with aging.*

2. How would you describe your current health status?
3. I would like to discuss your attitude towards medications in general.

What do medications represent at your age? Tell me about your current prescriptions. How do you manage taking your daily medications?

*Relaunch:*

*Do they take/manage them themselves?*

*Do they use a Dispill?*

*Do you get any help managing them?*

*Do you ever forget them?*

4. Now, let's talk about the medication for which you received the educational brochure. Tell me, how do you take your benzodiazepine? For which reasons do you take them and under which circumstances did you start taking this medication?

*Relaunch:*

- *Sleeping pill?*

- *Anxiolytic?*

5. How long have you been taking this medication for? How has the use of this medication evolved over time?
6. Do you still find this medication effective? Why? Do you have any side effects from this medication?

*Relaunch:*

*Falls?*

*Dizziness?*

*Etc.*

*(As a whole, what are the advantages and disadvantages associated with taking this medication?)*

7. Have you ever intended on ceasing your benzodiazepine (or actually attempted to) before receiving the educational brochure?
- If yes, how did it go?
  - If no, why?
8. *Question only for those who intended to but did not try ceasing medication:*
- How important is ceasing your medication to you

- b. How confident if your ability to stop using this medication?
- c. How do you think you would feel if you ceased the medication?

For the interviewer: If the participant mentions having attempted of ceased the medication AFTER the brochure, just mention that this will be discussed later on in the interview.

### **III. Prescription and the patient-physician relation**

- 9. Who prescribed your benzodiazepine? Tell me about your experience (first interaction? and after?). What did your doctor tell you about taking this medication?
- 10. Do you see your doctor often? Tell me about your relation with him/her?
- 11. Is it always the same physician who prescribes you your medications? (Multiple physicians? Family doctor?)
- 12. Before receiving the brochure, had you previously discussed or been approached by your physician about the possibility to switch/stop your benzodiazepine?
  - a. If so, what were your expectations? What was their reaction? How did it go?
  - b. If not, why?

### **IV. Acquisition and relation with the pharmacist**

13. Now let's talk about your pharmacist.

How do you manage buying your benzodiazepine? Tell me about your experiences.

→ Do you go see your pharmacist yourself? Do you have your medications delivered? At what frequency?

What has your pharmacist told you about this medication? How does he interact with you?

- 14. Before receiving the brochure, had you previously discussed or been approached by your pharmacist about the possibility to switch/stop your benzodiazepine?
  - a. If so, what were your expectations? What was their reaction? How did it go?
  - b. If not, why?

### **V. Reaction to the intervention**

- 15. What was your first reaction when you read the information contained in the brochure that we sent you?
  - a. What did you learn about the potential alternative treatments?

- b. What did you learn about benzodiazepine cessation and withdrawal?
- c. How do you now perceive the potential risks associated with your benzodiazepine prescription?

16. Please explain to me what happened once you read the brochure? (Did you read it more than once, discuss it with others?)

*Relaunch:*

*Did you intend on initiating the tapering protocol after reading the brochure? Why?*

17. Did you try implementing the tapering protocol suggested at the last page?

- a. If yes: For what reasons did you decide to initiate the tapering program?

How was the process? (What were your withdrawal symptoms?) What helped you succeed your tapering? What were the obstacles? How do you feel since tapering off the medication?

- b. If no: For what reasons did you decide not to initiate the tapering program?

What were the barriers? Do you have any questions or preoccupations regarding the tapering process? Do you think you could change your mind in the future? What would be the required criteria for you to stop your benzodiazepine?

18. For you, what are the important criteria/results that are most important to determine the success of a stopping a medication?

19. To conclude, what is your appraisal of the intervention? In what measure was the information provided useful to you? Would you recommend this intervention to someone else? Why?

20. To what degree do you value the importance of your implication in the management of your medication?

21. Are there any other subjects that were not discussed in the context of this interview but that you feel are important and that you would like to discuss?