

## **Additional File 1 - Interview Guide**

### **Are you ready? Exploring readiness to engage in exercise among people living with HIV and multi-morbidity in Toronto, Canada: a qualitative study**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I am meeting with you today to try to get a better understanding of your perceptions on physical activity and exercise. Exercise has been proven to be an effective self-management strategy for people living with HIV to improve muscle strength, endurance and quality of life; however, not many people living with HIV exercise. This may be due to a variety of reasons, including someone's sense of readiness to exercise. There is not much known about the readiness to engage in exercise among people living with HIV, particularly in those who are also living with other health conditions in addition to HIV, which can lead to additional social and health challenges.

I am interested in learning about how ready you feel to start exercising. I am also interested in hearing about your thoughts on physical activity and exercise, the types of activities you do to be physically active, your feelings on starting to exercise, and finally, I'm also looking to understand what makes it easier and harder for you to start exercising (or continue to exercise if you already are). I would like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers during this interview.

The results of this study will help us to understand readiness to engage in exercise and the influence of disability and intrinsic and extrinsic contextual factors among people living with HIV.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Throughout the interview, I would like to take some notes in addition to the recording. Do I have your permission to do this?

#### **Perceptions of physical activity and exercise**

Many people have different thoughts and ideas when they hear the words physical activity or exercise. I am interested in hearing your thoughts.

##### **1) What does exercise mean to you?**

Probes: What comes to mind when you think of exercise?

Can you give examples of exercise?

What are some activities that someone who exercises might do?

What don't you consider to be exercise? Why?

#### **Extent and nature of physical activity or exercise**

##### **2) What has been your experience with exercise?**

Probes: Can you please describe how you kept active in the past?

Has this changed? If so, how?

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What would you say led to this change?

*(If current different than in the past)* What is your current level of physical activity? Explain.

How physically active are you in a day? In a week?

How many minutes/hours do you spend exercising each session?

What types of physical activity do you participate in? (Aerobic, strengthening, balance)

What do you do in a day that doesn't involve sitting? In a week?

What amount of time per day are you physically active? Per week?

How often? How intense is your physical activity? (Light, moderate, heavy)

Where do you participate in the physical activities you have described?

Can you describe how much you are able to do before you need to take a break? (e.g. how far of a distance walked)

*(If working)* Does your job involve a high level of physical activity? What types of tasks do you do?

### **Influence of disability, intrinsic and extrinsic factors**

**3)** In your opinion, do you think exercise is important?

Probes: Among the tasks and activities that are important for you to do on a regular basis, how do you prioritize exercise?

**4)** Are there any things that make it difficult for you to exercise? If so, can you explain?

Probes: You mentioned several health conditions (recap some of those listed in the demographic questionnaire), how do each of these affect your ability to exercise?

What may be holding you back from exercise?

What are some of the more important things for you nowadays? Do these keep

you from exercising?

For example, if you saw a flyer for a free exercise class would you go?

What would be your initial thoughts or concerns about going? What would stop you from going?

What would be some things that would probably make you hesitate about going?

**5)** Are there things that may make you more likely to exercise? Can you explain?

Probes: For example, some people find that having a buddy to work out with makes it more fun and challenging. What would you say would encourage you to exercise?

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#### Readiness to engage in exercise

So far in our discussion, we have talked about some of the aspects that make exercise difficult for you to participate in and other aspects that make you more likely to participate in exercise. We are interested in taking a few steps backwards and asking about the experience of *thinking about starting exercise* in the first place.

*(Recap some barriers and facilitators they named)*

I want you to keep these in mind when answering the following question.

#### 6) *(If he/she do not currently exercise)*

As of right now, how ready do you feel to exercise?

Probes: Do you feel you *ready* to start being more active? To exercise? Explain.

*-If not, why don't you feel ready?*

What tools/resources are currently not available to you that may be holding you back from exercising?

What kinds of things are holding you back from exercise?

*If yes, why do you feel ready?*

What tools/resources do you have that make you ready?

What kinds of things are holding you back from exercise?

What kinds of things might help you feel more prepared to start exercising?

-Support from health personnel?

-Support from friends or family?

-Safe and friendly environment?

-Easy to get to?

-Personalized exercise program for your needs?

#### *(If he/she does exercise)*

You described how you are engaged in regular exercise, but many others we speak to are not exercising.

In your opinion, do you think that people living with HIV and concurrent health conditions are ready to participate in exercise? Explain.

Probes: What tools would they need to have to feel ready?

Based on other people you have met who are also living with HIV, what would you say makes someone feel more prepared to start to exercise?

What kinds of things are holding you back from exercising more regularly?

*If yes, why do you feel ready?*

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What tools do you have that make you ready?

What kinds of things might help them feel more prepared to start becoming more active?

- Support from health personnel?
- Support from friends or family?
- Safe and friendly environment?
- Easy to get to?
- Personalized exercise program for your needs?

In your opinion what would be the ideal way in which to start exercising?

Can you describe some activities that might be good to start with?

What would you consider to be the ideal frequency to begin with?

Where do you feel you would likely feel most comfortable exercising?

- 7) If Casey house were to organize a weekly community exercise class for members, how **ready** would you feeling to participate in the program?

Probes: How **willing** would you feel to participate in the program?

What are some things holding you back from participating? And how could we address these things?

Aspects of Disability (Accessibility? Personalized?)

Intrinsic Factors (Perceptions? Living strategies? Age? Gender? Education?)

Extrinsic Factors (Social supports? Buddy system? Distance?

Accessibility? Fun or challenging/interesting program?) Inclusive environment (age, gender, sexual orientation, people living with HIV)