

Date of Interview: _____
Location of Interview: _____
Interviewer: _____
Interviewee: Male or Female? _____

Interview ID #: _____
Data Entered: _____

Comment [HA1]: Prior to implementing this interview tool, we had been working with food pantries for several years. Each food pantry had the opportunity to review and edit the interview, prior to it being implemented. Several pantries added their own questions, specific to their pantry. We conducted interviews at five food pantries, with two interviewers at each site.

Comment [HA2]: We offered each interviewee a \$10 cash stipend for participating in the interview. Interviews took approximately 15-20 minutes each.

- Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a volunteer with Healthy Peninsula [or Healthy Acadia].
- The purpose of this interview is to get a better understanding of your food needs, and to hear your ideas about how to better meet those needs.
- We want to hear your opinions and experiences – there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions.
- Your participation in the interview is voluntary.
- I'm going to be writing your answers down. However, your individual answers will not be shared with anyone and your confidential responses will not affect your eligibility to receive food from the pantry or any other source, such as food stamps.
- You don't have to respond to any question that you're uncomfortable with.
- I'll do my best to keep the interview to about 15 minutes, to be respectful of your time.
- Feel free to interrupt me with your questions at any time during the interview.

First, I'm going to ask a few background questions about you and your household:

1. What town do you live in? _____
2. How many people, including yourself, live in your household? _____
3. What are their ages? _____
4. Where do you go to get most of your food/groceries?
*Probes: Grocery store? Food pantry? Convenience store? Restaurant?
Relative's home? Other? _____*

Next I'm going to ask you a few questions about your food preferences and needs:

5. Do you or does anyone in your household have any special dietary needs or restrictions?
Probes: For instance is anyone a vegetarian, does anyone have food allergies, diabetes; is anyone on a low-salt or low-fat diet? Other?

Yes No

↓
If yes:

A. What are they?

B. What foods do you need for your diet?

C. Can you get foods that you need for your diet at the food pantry?

Yes No

6. Would you like to change anything about how you eat?

Yes No

↓
If yes:

A. What would you like to change?

B. What would help you make that change?

Probes: Would it help to have more information; expanded food choices; new recipes; more money; someone to advise you; other?

Comment [HA3]: The responses to this series of question were really interesting, and valuable to us. Part of our goal was to assess peoples' readiness to make behavior changes.

Now I'm going to ask a few questions about fruits and vegetables.

7. Do you eat fruits and vegetables every day?

Yes No

A. How much do you eat? _____

8. What kinds of fruits and vegetables do you like to eat?

9. Are the fruits and vegetables that you eat generally fresh, canned or frozen?

Fresh Canned Frozen Other _____

10. Are you able to eat fruit and vegetables as much as you like?

Yes No

If no:

A. What might help you to eat more fruits and vegetables?

11. How often do you shop at a farmer's market or farm stand?

Often Sometimes Rarely Never

If rarely/never:

A. What keeps you from shopping at farmer's market or farm stands?

Probes: Don't know where they are; don't know how; too expensive; can't get there; not interested; don't have foods that I like; don't accept food stamps; other?

12. Do you have a vegetable garden?

Yes No

If no:

A. What keeps you from gardening? _____

Probes: Don't have space; too much time & energy; don't know how; don't enjoy gardening; difficult to garden; don't like vegetables; other?

Comment [HA4]: We had a hard time drafting this question. At first, we had a diet analysis section of the interview, asking people for specific numbers of servings of different food groups. After much back and forth, we realized these questions were incredibly hard for people to answer. The question that we used is a little too vague. Perhaps using a tangible portion size chart would help give people a visual to compare their consumption with?

Comment [HA5]: People eat some of all of these things. To make this question useful, it might ask which people prefer to eat, then ask which they eat most often. I found that people's answers were all over the map, for instance "well, it's frozen or canned in winter, but fresh in summer whenever I can get it" etc. Could perhaps ask people which they prefer?

Comment [HA6]: It's hard to make this question sound positive and non-accusatory. Might be reframed in a positive way with a series of questions like: "Are you interested in growing your own vegetables?" "If yes, what would help you make that happen?"

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about how well your food needs are being met.

13. Tell me how often this statement is true for your household: "I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more."
Often Sometimes Never

14. How often have you, in the last year, skipped a meal or cut the size of your meal because you didn't have enough money for food?
Often Sometimes Never

15. Do you ever have to make choices between spending money on food or spending money on other needs (such as medications, heating fuel, rent, car repairs, etc.)?
Yes No

↓
If yes:

A. Can you give me an example of a time when you had to make this kind of choice?

16. Which food programs, besides the pantry, do you participate in?

- Food stamps? Yes No
- Eat Well Program (Home-visiting Nutrition Aides)? Yes No
- Other: _____

Probe if young children in household:

- WIC? Yes No

Probe if school-aged children in household:

- Free/reduced school lunch? Yes No

Probe if senior citizen in household:

- Meals for ME? Yes No
- Senior Farm Share? Yes No

If no to one or more that they might qualify for:

↓
A.

Can you tell me what prevents you from taking part in these programs?

Probes: Do you not know about the program? Is it lack of transportation? Do you not know if you qualify? Do you not know how to sign up? Are you too shy or embarrassed to participate? Do you feel that others need it more than you do? Other?

Comment [HA7]: Here I would add A. (below) instead of having that part of the question at the end of this section. Getting an explanation relative to each program would be helpful.

Comment [HA8]: Perhaps replace this with: 1) Are you interested in this program; 2) What would help you to participate in this program.

Now I'm going to ask a few questions about making meals.

17. How often during the course of a week do you make meals for yourself or family?

↓

If not every day:
A. What do you do for your other meals?
Probes: Family member; restaurant; Meals for ME; church member; friend?

18. Are there any kitchen utensils/equipment you don't have that would help you prepare meals?

19. Would you like to know more about how to cook or prepare food?

Yes No

↓

If yes:
A. Specifically what would you like to know?

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your experience with food pantries. Again, please remember that all of your answers are confidential – that is, your responses will not be shared with anyone who works at the food pantry, and they won't affect the food or benefits that you receive.

20. How often do you visit this pantry?

21. What do you like about this food pantry?

22. Are there foods that are not offered at the food pantry that you would like to get from the pantry?

23. Do you ever go to more than one food pantry in a month?

Yes No

24. Do you ever have difficulty getting to the pantry to get food?

Yes No

↓

If yes:

A. Why?

Probes: Hours of pantry are inconvenient; do not have a car; do not have money for gas; other?

25. Do you have any advice for this pantry?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview!

We will compile your answers with those of other people who visit this pantry. The information that you have shared with us will help Healthy Peninsula/Healthy Acadia, the food pantry, and other community partners learn what we can do to better meet local food needs. We really appreciate you taking the time to help us!

Comment [HA9]: We gave each food pantry the opportunity to change any questions on the interview tool that they were uncomfortable with. We also gave them the opportunity to add questions specific to their pantry.