

New Mexico Drug/DWI Courts Peer Review Process

Tips for Participant Focus Group

- Peer review team members should designate one individual to moderate the focus group.
- When leading the focus group, the moderator should work to create a conducive and relaxed environment where all participants feel comfortable providing their feedback.
- Moderator should work to obtain information from participants regarding best practices of the court and priority areas that are identified by the peer review team (based on the program's survey responses, other interviews, etc.).
- Avoid asking leading questions:
 - Do ask "What kind of words would you use to describe the judge?"
 - Do not ask "Do you like the judge?"

 - Do ask "What would you do to improve the program?"
 - Do not ask "Do you have a problem with drug testing/treatment schedule/attending meetings/etc.?"
- To encourage responses from participants, questions should be:
 - Short and to the point,
 - Open-ended,
 - Asked using "Why" and "How"(to minimize simple "Yes" and "No" answers)
- Ensure all best practices information and priority areas are addressed before focus group is completed.
- Moderator should actively listen to all participants, remain neutral, and refrain from commenting on participant feedback.
- Moderator should probe for additional information when applicable: Moderator can ask participants:
 - For specific examples.
 - To talk more about the points they are making.
- Moderator may need to re-focus participants at times or work to get involvement from other participants. This should be done carefully, as all focus group participation is voluntary. When addressing the entire group, the moderator can ask what others think or prompt others to join the conversation.
- The focus group is **not** a place to debate issues, facilitate group therapy, or try to solve problems/conflicts.