

## SCCW9. VOLUNTEERS' RELATIONSHIP SKILLS SCALE

### USE WHEN YOU WANT TO EVALUATE:

#### Outcomes

- ✓ Improved capacity of service providers and volunteers
- ✓ Capacity to access to care, treatment and support

#### Intervention types:

- ✓ Training and skill building sessions to increase the capacity of service providers and volunteers
- ✓ Activities to improve collaboration, coordination and networking

#### Worked well with these populations:

- ✓ People living with HIV

Interventions relevant to:

- ✓ HIV
- ✓ STIs
- ✓ Hepatitis C

### DESCRIPTION

**Description:** Short interview assessing quality of volunteer services received by people living with HIV, in terms of volunteers' capacity to develop trust and comfort level in discussing personal matters.

#### WHY THIS TOOL MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

- ✓ Self-reported health and quality of life of PLWHIV improved after volunteer care; service recipients also reported reduced self-stigma as a result of positive interactions with volunteer providers. Quality of services received was related to the program benefits; poor relationships with these service providers were associated with disclosure-related stress and loneliness.
- ✓ Could also be applied to people living with hepatitis C.
- ✓ Suitable for before and after testing of a program's effects.
- ✓ Short interview, easily completed and analysed.
- ✓ Could easily be programmed to be given electronically

#### Developed in:

- ✓ English

### ADMINISTRATION, DESIGN, SCORING and ANALYSIS CONSIDERATIONS

#### ADMINISTRATION

- This questionnaire should take about 5 minutes to fill out each time.
- Tell participants why you are using the questionnaire, being clear that it is to evaluate the intervention to help make it better, and not them.
- Participation should be voluntary, so tell participants that it is ok if they do not complete the questionnaire, and assure participants that there are no negative consequences if they don't want to complete it. Give them a way to do something else at the same time that is similar to completing the questionnaire so that confidentiality of this decision is protected. (For further information on ethical considerations in carrying out evaluations, see [Ethics Resources](#))
- If used in a group setting, ensure that people feel safe and that the space is confidential; no one can see their answers (can see their screen or papers), and put completed questionnaires into a sealed envelope.

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### DESIGN OPTIONS

**Measuring before and after intervention** (this is the best option because it measures real change)

1. **WHEN TO USE:** Have the questionnaires filled out before the intervention or at the very beginning of it, and again after, as close to the end as possible (often the very last session is not suitable because it may be a celebration, or have low attendance).
2. **LINKING RESULTS:** Include a way to match the same person's pre and post questionnaires while protecting confidentiality, for example using a [password](#) or unique identifier that respondents generate and remember.
3. **SCORING:** Create each person's total Volunteer's Relationships Skills score by calculating the [average](#) over all 5 questions. Average scores can range from 1 to 4.
4. **ANALYSIS:** Compare the pre and post scores for each individual, noting how many people improve, how many stay the same, and how many get worse. If a volunteer works with more than one client, you can also average the score for all that volunteers' clients.

**Measuring change only after the end of an intervention:** (this is the second best option, because people often think the intervention has had more effect than it really did)

1. Adapt all the questions so that they ask people what their answer is now and what it was before the intervention  
For example, for question 1 ask: *"How positive is your relationship with the volunteer?"* AND *"At the beginning of your relationship, how positive was your relationship with the volunteer?"* (see an [example](#))
2. **SCORING:** Create each person's total Volunteer's Relationships Skills score by calculating his or her [average](#) of the 6 questions. Average scores can range from 1 to 4.
3. **ANALYSIS:** Compare the pre and post scores for each individual, noting how many people say they improve, how many stay the same, and how many get worse.

**SCCW9. VOLUNTEERS RELATIONSHIP SKILLS SCALE**

|  | <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Not very</b> | <b>Quite</b> | <b>Completely</b> |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. How positive is your relationship with the volunteer?                             | 1                 | 2               | 3            | 4                 |
| 2. Do you trust the volunteer to maintain confidentiality about your health status?  | 1                 | 2               | 3            | 4                 |
| 3. How comfortable are you discussing your relationships with the volunteer?         | 1                 | 2               | 3            | 4                 |
| 4. How comfortable are you discussing your health concerns with the volunteer?       | 1                 | 2               | 3            | 4                 |
| 5. How comfortable are you discussing your feelings and emotions with the volunteer? | 1                 | 2               | 3            | 4                 |

**Source:**

Adapted from Boryc, K., Anastario, M. P., Dann, G., Chi, B., Cicatelli, B., Steilen, M., . . . Morris, M. (2010). **A needs assessment of clients with HIV in a home-based care program in Guyana.** *Public Health Nursing, 27*(6), 482-491.