

# WOMEN'S INTERAGENCY HIV STUDY QUESTION-BY-QUESTION SPECIFICATIONS FORM 26r: HISTORY OF ABUSE

## SECTION B: EVER PHYSICAL ABUSE

This section deals with the participant's experiences with physical abuse and coercive and controlling relationships. It is important to realize that a woman may have strong feelings in answering these questions, yet she may also welcome an opportunity to talk about her experience. Another important issue is to be prepared to provide the appropriate resources for a woman who discloses a history of physical abuse and to assess the woman's current situation in terms of her immediate physical safety.

The questions in this section are asking about physical abuse occurrences in the participant's entire life, including threatening, intimidating and controlling behavior, the ability to negotiate for safer sex, and an assessment of her immediate physical safety. Reemphasize that the questions in this section deal with the physical abuse in the participant's **entire** life.

- B3. This question determines the nature of the relationship of the offender to the participant. This question has three subquestions which apply to a number of possible relationships (a – j). Ask the participant, *“Please tell me the person or persons who injured you.”* If the participant chooses to decline answering at this point, go back to **Question B2** and recode it as “2.” Write a note in the margin explaining the correction, then skip to **Question C1**. If the participant does answer, record her answer to the main question. Do not record the name of the person who injured her, record the relationship to her. For example, if she says, “It was Calvin,” ask her, “What is Calvin's relationship to you?” If she says Calvin is her boyfriend, circle “1” at **Question B3g**. If the participant indicates his relationship to her is something other than the options listed in **Questions a** through **j**, record this relation verbatim under **Questions k, l**, and/or **m** – “OTHER.” Go to **Question B3i** and ask the participant, *“How old were you when this first happened?”* Record her answer in years only. Then go to **Question B3ii** and ask *“Has it stopped?”* If her answer is “YES” circle “1” and then go to **Question B3iii**, *“How old were you when it stopped?”* If her answer is “NO, it hasn't stopped,” pause for a few moments and then use the **probe** for **Question B3**, *“Anyone else?”* If the participant indicates that there isn't anyone else who has injured her, circle “2,” indicating “NO” for all the remaining people/relationships, then skip to **Question C1**.

## SECTION C: EVER DOMESTIC ABUSE

The same care and concerns applied to reading **Section B** should also be applied when reading the questions in **Section C**, Domestic Violence. Reemphasize that the questions in this section are asking about the participant's experience with domestic violence in her **entire** life.

## SECTION D: EVER SEXUAL ABUSE

Dealing with disclosures of sexual abuse experiences can be an extremely painful and possibly traumatic experience. Participants who have had this experience may be at different stages of dealing with their own personal history of sexual abuse. Some may have buried memories of being victimized or are in the process of actively dealing with such a history that could result in deeply disturbing emotions while answering questions on the topic. Reemphasize that the questions in this section are asking about the participant's experience with sexual abuse in her **entire** life.

- D1. The intention of this question is to establish whether the participant woman has experienced sexual abuse of any kind. The definition provided in the question is broad enough to include touching, sexual intercourse, penetration of any orifice and/or active or passive oral sex. If she answers “NO,” “DON'T KNOW” OR “DECLINED,” skip to **Question D5**.

At the end of the interview, be sure to provide the participant with appropriate intervention or referral information as indicated by her responses during the interview.