

Tips on collecting surveys from geographically dispersed volunteer stations for Healthy Futures measures



RSVP projects with multiple or geographically dispersed volunteer stations can face challenges in achieving high response rates for surveys to measure Healthy Futures outcomes H9 (independent living) and H14 (respite). Here are some tips on how to work with stations to collect data from clients.

1	Set expectations from the start. Include language in the memorandum of understanding (MOU) that you negotiate with each volunteer station regarding the station’s roles and responsibilities for collecting the surveys.
2	Find a partner. Identify a clear point of contact at each volunteer station to assist with local data collection. In addition to the primary point of contact, identify a backup point of contact that is knowledgeable about the process and ready to jump in on short notice if needed.
3	Put the schedule in writing. Create and implement a schedule of reminders for the point of contact at each volunteer station about survey activities. Include a reminder for volunteer station staff at least two weeks before surveys begin as well as reminders or check-ins along the way to ensure follow-through.
4	Keep the survey tasks on their radar. Gently remind volunteer station staff about the importance of the surveys whenever you engage in routine communication with them, e.g., during conference calls or annual reviews.
5	Give clients a heads-up. Work with the volunteer station to send a short note to clients in advance of the survey reminding them that the survey is coming and why their participation is important (e.g., the note can be printed on an attractive postcard).
6	Remind clients. Look for opportunities to include reminders about the survey in other routine notices or paperwork that clients might receive from stations shortly before the survey.
7	Legitimize the survey request. Include a short letter with the survey signed by someone who the recipient can easily recognize as representing the local agency or organization that serves as the volunteer station.
8	Use existing data collection schedules. Incorporate surveys into annual client assessments or other routine contact that volunteer stations already have with clients. This eliminates the need for an entirely separate round of survey collection.
9	Ask for help. For additional advice with collecting surveys from volunteer stations, please contact the Senior Corps Surveys Help Desk at 1-800-207-0750 or email SCSurvey@jbsinternational.com .