



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SEMI-ANNUAL FOLLOW-UP GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (5/16/2018) (GNF, VERSION 1, 12/20/2017)

### I. General Instructions

The semi-annual follow-up general interview questions (GNF) are completed during the semi-annual follow up interview following the semi-annual follow-up core questions (SAF). The GNF interview is **not** administered to proxy respondents or contacts who answer the SAF questions about the ARIC study participant, nor is the GNF interview administered to ARIC participants who refuse the SAF.

### II. Detailed Instructions for Each Item

- 0a. Enter the date of the interview. This date should fall between the scheduling windows on the Semi-Annual (Participant) Tracing Report.
- 0b. Enter the staff ID for the telephone follow-up interviewer ID.

#### A. Physical Activity

1. In general, you are trying to assess the participant's current physical activity levels with a single question. This single question was selected from the ARIC/Baecke Physical Activity Questionnaire, collected at Visits 1, 3, and 5, to obtain a RANKING of participant physical activity levels in comparison to their peers. With similar data collected at Visits 1, 3, and 5, we will also be able to examine changes in physical activity ranking overtime.

**Script:** “In comparison with others your own age, do you think your physical activity during your leisure time is...”

The focus of this question is to determine how participant’s physical activity levels rank compared to their peers. The five possible response options range from much less to much more. If the participant states that they do not know what is the level of physical activity of other their own age, please ask them to think about the physical activity of their friends or family members who are of about the same age.

For consistency with previous administrations, this question pertains to leisure time physical activity. Most of the ARIC participants are by now retired and they may state that all of their physical activity occurs during leisure time. This is entirely acceptable, as the question does not refer to physical activity occurring under other circumstances.

#### B. Functional status

In general, you are assessing the participant's current functional status. This time period (i.e., the last 4 weeks rather than the day of the interview) has been chosen because we do not want to document decreases in functional ability that might be due to temporary conditions such as a headache, a cold or the flu, or a sprained ankle, etc. The intent of these questions is to record

the individual's overall ABILITY to perform the various activities (i.e., heavy work around the house, walk upstairs without assistance, walk half a mile, or work outside the home).

**Script: “Are you able to do your usual activities, such as work around the house or recreation?”**

2. The focus of this question is to determine whether the ability to pursue one's normal activities around the house has been compromised by poor health. If a participant indicates that s/he is able to carry on with the usual activities around the house, but is not able to do his/her usual recreational activities -- such as walking, or performing any form of recreational exercise which they have been able to do until recently, record the question as “No”.

**Script: “Are you able to walk half a mile without help? That's about 8 ordinary blocks.”**

3. Again, the emphasis is on the ability to do the activity, in this case, to walk half a mile. The concept of help in this item refers to persons helping. Therefore, the use of equipment would not be considered assistance and you would record the question as “Yes” for a participant who reported walking half a mile with the use of a cane or a walker if they are able to use it independently. It is assumed that anyone requiring a second individual to assist ambulating is not able to walk half a mile.

**Script: “Are you able to walk up and down stairs without help?”**

4. The focus of the question is on the participant's ability to walk up and down stairs without the assistance of another person. If the participant responds that they live in a house (such as a ranch house) where they do not have stairs, say that you want to know if he/she is able to walk up and down stairs if necessary. If the participant responds that they use a seated stair-lift to get up stairs, but can access and use the lift of their own accord, record the question as “No”. If the respondent is uncertain, record the question as “No”.

**Script: “Are you able to do heavy work around the house, like shoveling snow or washing windows, walls or floors, without help?”**

5. For this question, the examples are just guidelines. If a person can do any heavy work (not necessarily all of the things specified in the question), then record the question as “Yes”. Other examples of heavy work around the house could be "cutting the grass with a hand or power mower" (but not a riding lawn mower), or "painting walls or wallpapering." If the participant states that they do not perform heavy work, the interviewer should ask again “Are you able to do heavy work?” Additional examples of heavy work can include: carrying heavy loads, gardening, (manually) washing a car. These additional tasks can be performed even by those participants who live in retirement communities or assisted living facilities and may not be exposed to heavy work.

## C. Falls

**Script:** “Next I will ask you about falls you may have experienced during the past 12 months.”

A fall is a sudden, unintentional change in position that causes landing at a lower level, on an object, the floor, or the ground. Do not include reported falls that occurred due to sudden paralysis, a seizure, a stroke, heart failure or being pushed.

6. Ask the participant if they have fallen in the past 12 months. If they answer “Yes” proceed to question 7. If they answer “No” or “Do not remember” proceed to the question 8.
7. Ask the participant “In the past 12 months, how many times did they fall. The answers are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or more, or “Do not remember”.

## D. Living Arrangements

**Script:** “Now I would like to ask you a question about your living arrangements. Do you currently live with anyone, such as a family member or a friend, or do you live alone?”

8. Please read the question as stated above. Some participants may be reluctant to let others know that they live alone. If asked why we would like to know about their living circumstances, you may respond that we are interested in how living circumstances may affect a person’s health. It is acceptable for a participant to refuse to answer this question. A participant who lives in a retirement community, assisted living, or nursing facility is not living alone.

A participant who lived alone prior to a recent hospitalization, but is currently living with someone (friend, relative, or is in a nursing care facility) should be categorized as not living alone, even if the current living arrangement is considered temporary.

## E. Time Spent Watching TV

9. After reading the question, please tell the participant that they should select their responses from the following categories; “never”, “seldom”, “sometimes”, “often”, “very often”. The “day” specified in the question can be thought of as continuous 24 hours. For consistency purposes, if asked, please provide a time frame of the past four weeks. Response categories are the same as in previous administrations of this question. We are relying on the participant’s subjective assessment of their TV viewing time as proxy for sedentary behavior. A TV on in the background does not constitute frequent TV viewing time.

## **F. Social Support**

**Script:** “Can you count on anyone to help you when you need to make difficult decisions or talk over problems?”

10. Please read the question as stated. We would like to know if the participant has a friend, neighbor, family member, or someone in the community that they live in or someone who they are in regular contact with whom they can rely on for emotional support and advice. The person does not need to live close to the participant. It is acceptable to refuse to answer this question. This question and the next one will help us assess participants’ social network. We are interested in how the presence of social support for emotional and physical needs may affect a person’s health.

**Script:** “Can you count on anyone to help you with daily tasks like grocery shopping, housecleaning, cooking, telephoning, or giving you a ride?”

11. Please read the question as stated. We would like to know if the participant has a friend, neighbor, family member, or someone in the community that they live in who can help them with instrumental activities that may be difficult to perform independently. A response that the participant knows someone who can help them with rides (to the doctor, for example), but that s/he does not have anyone to help with shopping or housecleaning is still a “Yes” response.

## **G. Cognitive Complaints**

**Script:** “Now I have a question about your memory.”

Please ask the questions as written. The purpose of these questions is to ascertain participant’s self-reported memory function. This information can be useful for informing on demographic, social, and behavioral and comorbidity correlates of cognitive aging. The first question (Q12) is asking participants about their own perception of their memory. Question 13 is asking about whether they worry about their changes in memory function. Asking about memory in many different ways could lead to frustration, but try to encourage a participant response using the clarifications provided below. Please code the responses as “Yes”, “No”, or “Do not know”.

12. For question 12, if asked to clarify, indicate that we are asking about whether they have more difficulty remembering things (e.g. phone numbers, names of people they just met) than usual. Please skip to Q14 if the response to Q12 is “No”, or “Do not know”.

13. For question 13, if asked to clarify, indicate that we are asking about whether you are concerned about your changes in memory.

## F. Administrative Information

14. sAFU general interview questions completion status. Enter the code that describes whether or not the sAFU general interview questions were completed.
- A. **Complete**: Direct contact was made within the given time frame. The contact provided all the questionnaire information they could offer. The contact is not required to answer every questionnaire item to have completed the interview.
  - B. **Partially complete, contact again within window (interruptions)**: Direct contact was made, but the questionnaire could not be fully administered due to an interruption – not because of a refusal. This status is not a final status, as the interviewer will be attempting another contact to continue the interview. The final sAFU General Interview Questions Completion Status for the given time frame must be a. Complete, or c. Partially complete; unable to complete within window (done).
  - C. **Partially complete, unable to complete within window (done)**: Direct contact was made, but the questionnaire could not be fully administered in the given time frame.