



Primer on Obtaining Valid & Reliable PAM® Responses

To get the most reliable and valid PAM responses, we recommend the following approach, which is based on research studies and the experiences of our diverse roster of clients.

Introduction is key: Ensure the individual understands the intent of the survey, how it will be used, and the personal benefits to the individual.

- Set the stage: “I’ll read you a set of questions designed to help me know how to best support you. There are no right or wrong answers, only what is most true for you today.”
- Emphasize that all answers and results are confidential, yet might be viewed by a health coach, if appropriate, to build the best support program.
- Reinforce that the answers will not be used to decrease their health care benefits or services, or be used against them in anyway.
- To achieve the best results, the individual must be completely honest in responding.

Give the individual space and time

- Set the stage: “This is important, so please feel free to take as much time as you need to answer the questions.”
- Allow the individual adequate time to answer each statement. Do not coax the individual for a response.
- Silence is OK; the individual is being thoughtful in his/her answers.
- Avoid rephrasing or re-interpreting the statement if the individual does not respond quickly.

Read each question exactly as it appears on the survey. Do not add, remove, change, or interpret words, or ask the questions out of order.

- Set the stage: “Let me read the question again.” “Is there a particular part of the question I can repeat for you or better explain?”
- If the individual hesitates or asks for clarification, read the statement and response categories a second time. This is generally sufficient.
- If the individual still doesn’t respond or is confused after reading the questions twice:
 - Read the statement a third time, or
 - Explain or re-phrase the statement in a simpler manner. See the next page for rephrasing of statements 7 - 13. (Statements 1 - 6 typically don’t pose a problem, and statements 7 - 13 only rarely cause confusion.)
- If you’ve tried the above steps without a response, select N/A for the answer.
- If an individual cannot or will not respond to a PAM statement, select N/A.



Re-phrasing Options for PAM Statements 7 – 13 (Use only after reading a statement twice.)

7. I am confident that I can follow through on medical treatments I may need to do at home.

Potential trouble spots: Correct and contextual understanding of the terms “confident,” “medical treatments,” and “follow through.”

Rephrase: *I’m sure I can do what my doctor tells me to do at home. (Provide an example of a medical treatment that has relevance for the individual – dietary change, smoking cessation, take Rx’s correctly.)*

8. I understand my health problems and what causes them.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “understand,” and “health problems.”

Rephrase: *I know a whole lot about my illness and what causes it.*

9. I know what treatments are available for my health problems.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “treatments,” and “health problems.”

Rephrase: *I know about the things that can be done to help me get well or feel better.*

10. I have been able to maintain (keep up with) lifestyle changes, like eating right or exercising.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “maintain,” “keep up with,” and “lifestyle changes.”

Rephrase: *I have been successful making and staying on track with healthy behaviors like eating right or exercising.*

11. I know how to prevent problems with my health.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “prevent,” and “problems.”

Rephrase: *I know how to stop health troubles from happening in the first place.*

12. I am confident I can figure out solutions when new problems arise with my health.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “confident,” “solutions,” and “arise.”

Rephrase: *I’m sure that I will know the right things to do when I have a new health problem come up.*

13. I am confident that I can maintain lifestyle changes, like eating right and exercising, even during times of stress.

Potential trouble spots: Correct, contextual understanding of the terms “confident,” “maintain,” “lifestyle changes,” and “times of stress.”

Rephrase: *I’m sure I can keep doing healthy things, like eating right and exercising, even when I am having a lot of stress in my life.*