

ASHT Research Division

Standard Set of Hand Therapy Demographic Questions – FAQs

Q: Is an attribution required for use of the demographic questions?

A: The questions are free to download, and no attribution is required for their use. If you would like to emphasize that the demographic questions were pilot tested, you can reference the related abstract from the ASHT 2020 Annual Meeting.** However, if you have made substantial changes to the wording of the questions and/or response choices, please explicitly acknowledge your changes.

***This abstract will be available in Journal of Hand Therapy - Packham et al. - "Questioning how we describe our practice: Using cognitive debriefing to develop standardized demographic questions for surveys of hand therapist practice." This document will be updated with the reference when available.*

Q: Do I have to use all the questions?

A: The optional set of questions goes into greater depth than one would expect for a typical survey, but individual questions may be helpful in specific instances. Regarding the core set, we encourage the use of most or all of the core questions to facilitate cross-survey comparisons. However, we acknowledge that there may be times when questions are inappropriate or irrelevant for your specific survey topic.

Examples:

- If your survey focus is US therapists, collecting data on Canadian provinces may be irrelevant for analysis. If your focus is Canadian therapists, collecting data on US states may be irrelevant for analysis. (However, if you are sampling ASHT membership, be cognizant this includes international members.)
- If you include the optional zip code question, including the core states/provinces questions would be redundant.
- If your survey takes a deeper dive into diagnostic categories because of the research question, the standard diagnostic question in the optional set would be redundant.

Q: Do I have to use all the response choices?

A: The survey questions were piloted with all the response choices. However, we acknowledge there may be times when response choices are inappropriate or irrelevant.

Examples:

- Question: "What is your profession?" If a survey inclusion criterion is an occupational or physical therapist/therapy assistant and you already have a screening question, you may

not want to include the response choices of physician, nurse, etc. for the question on profession.

- Question: “Are you a certified hand therapist (CHT)?” If you are limiting your survey to US therapists, you may only want the response choices of “Yes, current certification through the Hand Therapy Certification Commission,” “No, but am pursuing certification,” “Not currently, but held previously,” and “No.”

Q: My IRB/ethics board wants me to change questions or response choices. What should I do?

A: It is essential to follow your IRB/ethics board’s guidelines and recommendations although you can try to explain your scientific justification for including the original question/response choice.

Specific considerations:

- The age question currently has response categories from 18 to 100. Some IRBs may request aggregation of data above a certain age (e.g., 90+).
- Including the optional zip code question may necessitate increased scrutiny by an IRB as the data may be considered personally identifiable.

Q: I use an electronic survey platform other than LimeSurvey or Qualtrics. What options are available to me?

A: As of now, you will have to manually enter the questions and response choices when building your survey. If you develop an importable file format that you think will help others, please share it with the ASHT Research Division. Similarly, if you can export the demographic questions template from your survey platform in a format that can be shared with other users of that platform, please share it with the ASHT Research Division. Please specify whether your file includes all the questions, the core questions, or selected questions and if you made any changes to questions or response items.

Q: I, or my participants, notice something wrong with the questions or response choices. What should I do?

A: Please contact the ASHT Research Division at research@asht.org.

Q: I have a question that is not answered by this document. Who should I contact?

A: Please contact the ASHT Research Division at research@asht.org.