

Key Informant Interview Guide: EHC Research Centers Staff

Date:

Interviewer:

Respondent Name:

Organization:

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS:

All numbered and lettered questions should be asked of the interviewee.

[PROBE] questions are to be asked after the interviewee has an opportunity to answer the question, and if the interviewee is unclear about what we are trying to ask.

Italicized text between the interview topic sections is provided for the interviewer to use when moving from questions related to one topic to questions related to the next topic, or to introduce a section.

INTRODUCTION

Hello/Good morning/Good afternoon.... May I speak with _____? (If not available, leave a message).

My name is [Interviewer name]. I am calling from IMPAQ International (or Abt Associates). You are scheduled to conduct an interview regarding AHRQ's Effective Health Care Program. Is this still a good time to do the interview?

If No – May I reschedule the interview at a time that is convenient for you?

If Yes – Before we begin the interview, I need to review a few details about the study with you:

[READ CONSENT SCRIPT]

[DESCRIBE THE GOVERNANCE:]

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, the estimated time required to complete the interview. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: AHRQ Reports Clearance Officer Attention: PRA, Paperwork Reduction Project (0935-XXXX) AHRQ, 540 Gaither Road, Room # 5036, Rockville, MD 20850.

*Attachment C2: Key Informant Interview Guide
EHC Research Centers Staff*

Governance refers to the administrative structures, policies, processes, and decision rights and responsibilities that support the operations of the EHC program by providing strategic direction, allocating resources, coordinating or controlling activities, managing risks, and using resources responsibly and with accountability, and ensuring objectives are achieved. Governance describes both the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented.

Governance element in this study refers to a specific element, aspect, or dimension of the EHC program's governance structure or approach that are the focus of this study. Examples of governance elements/aspects/dimensions of interest include: priority-setting, engaging stakeholders, transparency, and accountability.

Governance dimension in this study includes, but is not limited to:

- *Vision and mission statements*
- *Strategic plans*
- *Administrative roles or job descriptions (e.g., the stakeholder group)*
- *Organization charts*
- *Bylaws or guidelines for operation (e.g., priority-setting, engaging stakeholders)*
- *Formal and informal communication channels and processes*
- *Funding mechanisms*
- *Steering committees, advisory groups, or expert panels*
- *Public-private partnerships and other collaborative work structures]*

Do you have any questions?

[If necessary] If you have any questions that I may not be able to answer at this time, or at any time after this interview, you may contact _____

Given the information that I have just reviewed with you, do you still wish to participate in this study/interview?

If Yes, _____[Interviewer's initials]. Great. Let me begin with the first question.

If No, _____ [Interviewer's initials]. That is fine. We appreciate your time. Thank you.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. What is your title or role in the EHC program?
2. How long have you been involved in the EHC program?
3. What are your responsibilities related to the EHC program?

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT, COLLABORATION, AND GOVERNANCE

First I'd like to ask you about the general management and governance of the EHC program. By governance, I mean:

"the set of responsibilities and practices, policies and procedures, exercised by the program to provide strategic direction, ensure objectives are achieved, manage risks, and use resources responsibly and with accountability."

4. What is the mission and goal of your Research Center?
 - a. How does your center's goal relate to the goal of the EHC program (e.g., overlap, one in the same)?
5. What role does your Research Center serve in the EHC program?
 - a. How is your Research Center accountable to the EHC program and management?
6. What is the level and nature of interaction between the AHRQ Task Order Officers, AHRQ Program Directors, and the Research Centers?
 - a. How do the Research Centers work together or collaborate?
 - b. Is there meant to be collaboration? Among which Research Centers?
 - c. How, if at all, is the current structure of the EHC program conducive to the collaboration between researchers from the different Research Centers?
 - d. What facilitates collaboration in the EHC program?
 - e. What hinders collaboration in the EHC program?
7. What is the funding mechanism and funding levels by which your Research Center is funded to conduct research (or other activities) for the EHC program?
 - a. How does the funding amount or mechanism affect your ability to conduct research (or other activities) for the EHC program to fulfill its mandate?
8. Based on your understanding of the EHC program, does the program logic model [provide interviewee the logic model] accurately capture the EHC program's activities and outputs?
 - a. Would you recommend any changes to better reflect the program's activities and the groups involved?
 - b. What do you see as the EHC program's intended [short, intermediate and long-term] outcomes?

- c. What are some of the external influences or factors that impact the EHC program?

Understanding governance as "the set of responsibilities and practices, policies and procedures, exercised by the program to provide strategic direction, ensure objectives are achieved, manage risks, and use resources responsibly and with accountability."

9. What do you see as potential barriers to the effective management (or governance) of the EHC program, given its aims, scope, and size?
 - a. How can these barriers be mitigated?
10. What do you see as the strengths of the overall governance approach in the EHC program? How and why?
 - a. What do you see as the weaknesses of how the EHC program is run? How, if at all, can these be improved?

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Now I'd like to ask you about the engagement of stakeholders and users in the EHC program. The first set of questions will focus on stakeholders in general, then I will ask you questions about the formal EHC Stakeholder Group.

For stakeholders in general:

11. What role, if any, have you played in engaging stakeholders? Please describe.
12. Who do you see as the EHC program's stakeholders?
 - a. Who do you see as its users?
 - b. Are there other beneficiaries of the program?
13. To the extent that you are aware of the process for engaging stakeholders, for what purposes or when are stakeholders engaged?
 - a. How is stakeholder input communicated or incorporated into the program processes (e.g., topic nomination, topic selection, etc.)?
 - b. How is the EHC program held accountable for engaging stakeholders, and by whom?
 - c. From your perspective, is the EHC program's approach for engaging stakeholders transparent? In what way? If not, why not?

14. Which, if any, stakeholder groups have not been sufficiently engaged in the EHC program? Why is that?
15. Do you understand how your input is considered by the EHC program?
16. What has worked well about the EHC program's approach to engaging stakeholders?
 - a. What has not worked so well? What has been the limitation, and why?

Now, as I mentioned, I will shift to questions about the EHC Stakeholder Group specifically.

17. Are you familiar with the EHC Stakeholder Group and its makeup?
18. What is the role of the EHC Stakeholder Group? Please elaborate.
 - a. How, if at all, does the EHC Stakeholder Group hold the EHC program accountable for engaging stakeholders?
 - b. How is EHC Stakeholder Group input used in the governance of the EHC program?
19. Do you think there are ways that the EHC Stakeholder Group could be better utilized or structured to assist the EHC program? Please elaborate.

TOPIC SELECTION PROCESS AND SETTING PRIORITIES

Now I'd like to switch gears and ask you about the process for selecting topics and setting priorities for the research and reviews conducted by the EHC program.

20. What role(s) have you played in the process for selecting research topics of EHC?
 - a. What role have you played in prioritizing or refining topics for research reviews or new research, for example?
21. Do you think the EHC program's topic selection process has been appropriately guided by the mandated criteria (below)? Please elaborate:
“health care items or services that:
 - o impose high costs on Medicare, Medicaid, or SCHIP programs,*
 - o may be over or underutilized, and*
 - o those which may significantly improve the prevention, treatment, or cure of diseases and conditions which impose high direct or indirect costs on patients or society.”*

22. The EHC program also has priority conditions to focus on. Do you think the EHC program has been sufficiently responsive in providing research on these conditions? [read list of conditions if needed].
 - a. Which conditions do you think warrant additional research by the EHC program? Why?
23. Are there certain populations whose diseases or unique needs have not been sufficiently addressed in the research to date? Please elaborate.
24. What do you see as the strengths of the EHC program's approach to selecting and prioritizing topics?
 - a. What are the weaknesses of the approach? How can these be mitigated?
25. From your perspective, is the process for selecting research topics transparent? How can it be made more transparent, and for whom?

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND IMPACTS

Lastly, I'd like you to ask you about the effectiveness and impact of the EHC program research.

1. The EHC program has a mandate to provide rational, timely, and rigorous assessments of therapeutics and other health care interventions. To what extent do you think the EHC program is meeting this mandate? Please elaborate.
2. Do you think the EHC program provides effective translations of complex research findings into user-friendly products for stakeholders? If so, to what extent? Please elaborate.
3. What have been the potential impacts of the research you've conducted for the EHC program?
 - a. Did your research provide a new tool, research method or technique, or challenges current thinking on a topic? Please elaborate.
 - b. Does your research have the potential to change policies (e.g., clinical guidelines, health plan formularies, etc.)? Please elaborate.
 - c. Does your research have the potential to contribute to effective clinical practice? Please elaborate.
 - d. Does your research have the potential to change patients' behavior? Please elaborate.
 - e. Does your research have the potential to improve health outcomes? Please elaborate.

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4. What has been the value to your Research Center in being a part of the EHC program?