

**Informed Consent Protocol**  
**Incorporating AHRQ QIs in Hospital Quality Improvement Practices**  
**Interviews with Evaluation Hospitals**

*The interviewer will read this informed consent statement aloud to the interviewee:*

RAND is a non-profit research organization based in Santa Monica, California, and we also have offices in Boston, Pittsburgh and Arlington VA. We are partnering with the University HealthSystem Consortium (UHC) in updating and expanding a toolkit that hospitals can use to perform initiatives to improve performance on the Quality Indicators established by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). This project is being funded by AHRQ. Your hospital is participating in a field test of the toolkit, including use of the draft updated toolkit in a hospital quality improvement process as well as providing feedback to the research team on the usability of the tools and suggestions for revisions.

As UHC works with hospitals in the field test of the toolkit, RAND researchers are performing a formative evaluation to learn about the experiences of participating hospitals in implementing quality improvements and their use of the toolkit. RAND researchers will use the information obtained to develop an understanding of how hospitals can use the Quality Indicators for quality improvement and to refine the toolkit based on feedback on its usability.

This interview is an important part of our study because it gives us an opportunity to learn from the people directly involved in the delivery of care and the QI work. In our discussions with you, we are interested in your perceptions of your current QI activities, how you have used the tools in the toolkit in those activities, changes that have occurred as a result of your QI work, successes or challenges involved, and feedback on usefulness and usability of the tools in the toolkit.

Don't worry about having a different opinion than someone else, and please respect others' opinions. RAND will use the information you provide during this group interview for research purposes only. You do not have to participate in the interview, and if you participate, you should feel free to decline to discuss any topic that we raise.

Your responses will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, including AHRQ's confidentiality statute, 42 USC 299c-3(c). RAND will keep confidential the identities of those who participate in the interview and will not attribute any comments to any specific individuals. In the notes from the interview, we will not record individuals' names associated with comments made. RAND requests that each of you also protect the confidentiality of others in the group. Please do not use the name or other identifying information of anyone as you talk about them, and do not repeat anything that is said here in a way that is attributable to particular people. However, RAND cannot guarantee that everything you say during this discussion will be kept confidential by all the participants, so please do not say anything that you do not want anyone else to know.

And finally, we're tape recording the session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. If anyone is uncomfortable with the idea of being taped, just say so and we won't

tape the session. Again, remember that we will not be able to connect the taped information with your name or anything that identifies you.

Do you have any questions about the study?

Do you agree to participate in our research interview?

We are providing you a copy of this explanatory statement, which includes information about how to contact me or a third party at RAND in case you have any questions or concerns about the study or your participation in it.

**WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT THIS RESEARCH:**

Peter Hussey, Ph.D.  
RAND  
20 Park Plaza, Suite 920  
Boston, MA 02116  
Tel: 617-338-2059, ext. 8617  
Fax: 617-357-7470  
Email: [hussey@rand.org](mailto:hussey@rand.org)

James Tebow, Ph.D.  
Human Subjects Protection Committee  
RAND  
P.O. Box 2138  
Santa Monica CA 90407-2138  
Telephone: 310-393-0411 x7173  
FAX: 310-393-4818  
Email: [tebow@rand.org](mailto:tebow@rand.org)