

1 Patient Information Sheet

You are invited to participate in a 30-45 minute interview to share your experiences about receiving healthcare at the VA. Your participation in this interview is part of a quality improvement project funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). You have been invited because you received primary care from a VA doctor in the past year. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to know why the evaluation is being done and what it will involve. This includes any potential risks to you or potential benefits you might receive.

Please read the information below closely, and discuss it with family and friends if you wish. If you do decide to take part, you will express your verbal consent to the project staff when you speak to them on the phone before the interview. You will also be able to discuss any questions and concerns you have with a member of the project team at that time.

This information sheet provides you with information about an evaluation project you are eligible to participate in where you will be interviewed about your health care experiences at the VA. The goal of this project is to improve the quality and safety of patient care. Please keep this form for your records and in case you may have further questions and/or wish to contact the evaluation team.

Your participation in the interview is completely voluntary. If you do not wish to continue with the project, please contact the project team member to inform us of your decision. If we don't hear from you, we'll call you one week after the mailing of this letter to tell you more about the evaluation, answer any questions you may have, and see if you are interested. If you decide later you do not wish to participate in the interview, you can contact the project team at the same number.

Why are we doing this?

This project plans to learn more about patients' experiences with their VA healthcare.

What happens if I agree to participate in the interview?

If you agree to participate in the project, you will be called by a member of the evaluation team at a time that is convenient for you and interviewed over the phone. During the interview, we will ask questions regarding your overall health, how you manage your health, medications you take, and your experiences in receiving care at the VA. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer and can stop the interview any time. Your responses will be kept private and be known only to the members of the evaluation team.

We will ask for your permission to record the interview to assist our team during analysis. The audio recording will be stored on a secure VA drive accessible only by the evaluation team. The audio recording is strictly for quality improvement purposes and will not be shared outside of the VA. If you are interested in being interviewed but prefer not to have it recorded, we would still be grateful to talk with you.

Your participation is only for one 30-45 minute telephone interview.

Up to 30 veterans will participate in the project.

We will keep all project records that contain your identifiable health information private to the extent allowed by law. Records about you and the recordings of the interview will be kept on a password-protected computer behind a secure VA firewall at the Seattle VA Puget Sound Healthcare System.

You will not get paid for participating in the interview and there will be no cost to you for participation. If you choose not to take part, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw your participation you will still receive the care you have otherwise received.

What are possible discomforts or risk?

The risk of participation is that your participation in the interviews and the content of your interviews could be found out by someone outside of the project team. We will make every effort to keep your participation records private. Your name will not be put on interview papers and only a code number will identify your records. Some of the questions during the interview may make you feel uncomfortable. Please remember that you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. The evaluation may include risks that are unknown at this time.

What are the possible benefits of this evaluation?

This evaluation is designed for VA to learn more about patients' experiences with the quality improvement projects the VA has started and to further improve patient care. This evaluation is not designed to treat any illness or to improve your health. Information gathered in the evaluation may help improve future care for veterans nationwide and may help Veterans seek care, though you may not benefit directly yourself by participating.

Who do I call if I have any questions?

If you have questions, would like to contact us about participating in the study, or would not like to participate, you can call **[name of project staff contact and phone number]**.

Thank you!

[name and contact information for project staff member]