

**Information Requirements:** To volunteer to participate as an additional testing site, please provide the following information:

1. Volunteer site(s) name(s) and location(s).
2. Contact person information including name and title, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address.
3. Coordinator for site data collection information (if different from contact person) including name and title, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address.
4. The following are examples of the types of studies that may be useful. Additional ones may be identified as a result of the June 27th Federal Register Notice. Please provide information about what types of studies you will or will not be willing to participate in.
  - a. Test of mode effects (mail versus telephone).
  - b. Test the effect of intervening stays in other facilities.
  - c. Psychometric analyses to evaluate the equivalence of English and Spanish HCAHPS forms.
  - d. Test the effect of lag time on HCAHPS scale scores.
  - e. Test the effect on response rate of different survey materials (e.g., personalized cover letters), taking into account incremental changes in cost.
  - f. Evaluate the covariation of HCAHPS scores with clinical indicators of hospital performance.
  - g. Evaluate HCAHPS instrument psychometrically.
  - h. Sampling procedures that worked well or caused problems.
  - i. Survey operations procedures that worked well or caused problems.
  - j. How easily or readily HCAHPS is integrated into a hospital's existing sampling and survey operations procedures.
5. Number of hospitals proposed for inclusion in the testing.
6. Evidence that hospital(s) is/are willing to participate (i.e., acknowledgement or confirmation from CEO).
7. Average number of discharges per month from participating hospitals, and the average number of discharges for each of the following services: medical, surgical, and obstetrics.
8. Name of current surveys being used in the site and modes of administration of each survey used.
9. Name of current survey vendors working with the site(s).
10. Name of survey vendor who has the largest share of the hospital market in which the volunteer facility, organization or association operates.
11. Statement or affidavit indicating authorization to commit the

organization(s) to pay the specific estimated cost of sample selection, data collection, database preparation and coordination with AHRQ.

12. Current schedule for data collection of patient survey data, if you have one.

13. Process and schedule for selecting a vendor for the proposed testing or name of vendor already selected.

**DATES:** Please submit requested information on or before September 2, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submissions should include a brief cover letter and the requested information about the potential site(s). They may be in the form of an e-mail with attachments, or a letter, preferably with an electronic file in a standard word processing format, (e.g., Microsoft Word or Word Perfect) on a 3½ inch diskette. E-mail submissions are preferred and will be acknowledged upon receipt.

E-mail Responses to this request should be submitted to: *hospital-cahps@ahrq.gov*. Written or faxed responses should be submitted to:

Charles Darby, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Center for Quality Improvement @ Patient Safety, 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850. Phone: (301) 427-1324; Fax: (301) 427-1341.

In order to facilitate handling of submissions, please include all requested information about the candidate facilities. Please do not use acronyms. Electronic submissions are strongly encouraged.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Charles Darby, Center for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; Phone: (301) 427-1324; Fax: (301) 427-1341; E-mail *cdarby@ahrq.gov*.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has been a leading proponent and supporter of the development of instruments for measuring patient experiences within the healthcare system of the United States. Through prior CAHPS® patient survey development efforts, AHRQ has been able to provide valuable information to consumers and purchasers alike. The CAHPS survey for health plans is widely accepted as an industry standard. Therefore, as the research partner of CMS, AHRQ is charged with the development of a hospital patient experience of care instrument as well as the development of reporting strategies to maximize the utility of the survey results. In an effort

to provide a firm foundation of evidence-based research for the HCAHPS instrument, the AHRQ is requesting voluntary participation from acute care facilities as potential sites for additional field-testing of the draft HCAHPS survey instrument to provide analytic data that will complement the results of the pilot testing done by QIOs for CMS.

Once HCAHPS is finalized, it will be made available to "The Quality Initiative: A Public Resource on Hospital Performance", which is a public/private partnership that includes the major hospital associations, government, consumer groups, measurement and accrediting bodies, and other stakeholders interested in reporting on hospital quality. In the first phase of the partnership (which has already begun), hospitals are voluntarily reporting the results of their performance on ten clinical quality measures for three medical conditions: acute myocardial infarction, heart failure, and pneumonia. HCAHPS reporting will comprise the second phase of the effort.

For more information or to participate in the Quality Initiative please visit <http://www.aha.org> under "Quality and Patient Safety, Quality Initiative," or at <http://www.fah.org>, under "Issues/Advisories," or at <http://www.aamc.org> by going to "Government Affairs," "Teaching Hospitals" and then "Quality."

Dated: July 24, 2003.

**Carolyn M. Clancy,**

*Director.*

[FR Doc. 03-19462 Filed 7-30-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4160-90-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Contract Review Meeting

In accordance with section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act as amended (5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), announcement is made of an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Technical Review Committee (TRC) meeting. This TRC's charge is to review contract proposals and provide recommendations to the Director, AHRQ, with respect to the technical merit of proposals submitted in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) regarding "Communications Support". The RFP was published in the Federal Business Opportunities on June 3, 2003.

The upcoming TRC meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with