

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLLECTING PATIENT RACE, ETHNICITY, & LANGUAGE (FOR HOSPITAL STAFF)**

**Target Audience:** Hospital Admissions/Registration Staff

**Purpose:** This document provides answers to questions that patients frequently ask hospital staff during the registration process. Hospitals may use this document to train admissions/registration staff on eliciting race, ethnicity, and language abilities and preferences from patients. Hospitals are encouraged to have this document available at registration areas, as a reference for the staff.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLLECTING PATIENT RACE, ETHNICITY, & LANGUAGE (FOR HOSPITAL STAFF)**

### **Q: WHAT DO MY RACE AND ETHNICITY HAVE TO DO WITH MY HEALTH?**

**A:** Although we are all individual people, our racial and ethnic backgrounds may place us at differing risks for some diseases. We can work to reduce these risks by making sure that everyone gets high quality health care.

### **Q: WHY AM I BEING ASKED THESE QUESTIONS?**

**A:** We are collecting race, ethnicity, and language information from all of our patients to help us get to know them better. By knowing more about your racial and ethnic background, we can get a better idea of health risks you may have and better meet your health needs.

### **Q: WHAT WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED FOR?**

**A:** Information you give us on your race, ethnicity, and language will help us provide better services and programs to everyone. For example, with this information, we can provide health information in languages spoken by our patients and offer effective programs that can improve health.

### **Q: WHO WILL SEE MY INFORMATION?**

**A:** Your information is kept private and confidential and is protected by law. The only people who will see your information are members of your care team and others who are authorized to see your medical record.

### **Q: WHO ARE YOU COLLECTING THIS INFORMATION FROM?**

**A:** We are collecting this information from all our patients.

### **Q: WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?**

**A:** It is perfectly alright if you do not want to answer some or all of the questions. However, this information does help our hospital provide better care. Regardless of whether you answer these questions, we will provide you care.

### **Q: WHAT DO YOU CARE? WE'RE ALL HUMANS.**

**A:** Information about your race and ethnicity helps us make sure we provide the highest quality of care for all patients. Studies show that our racial and ethnic backgrounds may place us at different risks for certain diseases. By knowing more about your racial and ethnic background, we can get a better idea of health risks you may have and better meet your health needs.

### **Q: CAN'T YOU TELL BY LOOKING AT ME?**

**A:** Every person is different, so we do not make any assumptions based on how a person looks.

### **Q: I WAS BORN IN \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY, BUT I'VE LIVED HERE ALL MY LIFE. WHAT SHOULD I CHOOSE?**

**A:** It is really up to you. You can choose any term that you are most comfortable with.

### **Q: ARE YOU TRYING TO FIND OUT IF I AM A U.S. CITIZEN?**

**A:** No, definitely not. This information is confidential and used only to improve health care. No questions regarding citizenship or documentation are asked.

### **Q: ISN'T THAT AN ILLEGAL QUESTION TO ASK?**

**A:** No, it is not illegal to ask. Collecting and reporting race, ethnicity, and language are legal under the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and several California State laws. However, you may choose not to answer any question.

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**Q: WHAT IF I BELONG TO MORE THAN ONE RACE?**

**A:** You can check off all the races that you belong to.

**Q: WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW MY RACE OR ETHNICITY?**

**A:** If you don't know your race or ethnicity, you can leave these questions blank.