Scripts for Collecting Race and Ethnicity Data

Target Audience: Hospital admissions/registration staff

(Administered in person or over the phone)

Purpose: This script is for hospital registration staff to use in asking a patient questions on his/her demographics. The script explains to the patient the importance of self-identification, the purpose of collecting this information, and ensures their confidentiality.

Self-identification is the preferred means of obtaining information about an individual’s race and ethnicity. The surveyor should not tell an individual who he or she is, or specify how an individual should classify himself or herself.

Please note: To provide flexibility and ensure data quality, separate questions for race and ethnicity should be used. Specifically, when self-reporting or other self-identification approaches are used, ethnicity should be asked first, and then race.

Keep it simple.

“We want to make sure that we identify and address each patient’s needs and ensure that all our patients get the best care possible. We’re going to ask you some questions about yourself such as: your name, your age, your address, your gender, your race, and your ethnicity. We’ll keep this information confidential and will update it in your medical record. This information will not be used for immigration purposes or reported to the authorities. The only people who see this information will be members of your care team and others who are authorized to see your medical record.”