



## New York State Partnership for Patients



May 1, 2013

# AHRQ HOSPITAL SURVEY ON PATIENT SAFETY CULTURE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND TALKING POINTS

## *HOW CAN I PREPARE THE STAFF FOR THE SURVEY?*

- Send a pre-notification letter or e-mail to all eligible staff to advise them of the upcoming survey.
- Announce the upcoming survey and distribution in multiple forums, such as notice boards, hospital newsletters, flyers, hospital intranet homepage, and pagers.
- Brief senior staff (e.g., chairman, department heads, nursing leadership, and chief residents) on the purpose of the survey and enlist their help to encourage staff to complete it.
- Ensure consistent messaging and emphasize that the survey is confidential, that responses cannot be linked back to individuals, and can be completed at work. Consider using the presentation template provided by NYSPFP to educate staff.

## *WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ENCOURAGE STAFF PARTICIPATION?*

- Employ a systematic distribution plan utilizing current organizational lines or other tested systems. Consider making immediate supervisors, managers, or quality champions responsible for information, support, and scheduling.
- Provide scheduled time if possible.
- Make reminder announcements at gatherings of senior staff, department directors, multi-disciplinary grand rounds, or other meetings.
- Send reminder e-mails and/or postcards, and make announcements via the paging system.
- Display posters or flyers encouraging participation.

*WHAT CAN I SAY TO STAFF WHO ASK WHY THEY SHOULD COMPLETE THE SURVEY?*

- The hospital is committed to patient safety and promoting a culture of safety is one of the best ways to protect patients. The safety survey is an important step in assessing our culture of safety.
- It is important to know what employees think about their work environment so we can identify where the gaps in safety are, and take steps to correct them.
- The more people who respond to the survey, the more accurate the results. If we want to use the results to make decisions about quality improvement, the answers should represent as many staff as possible.

*WHAT CAN I SAY TO STAFF WHO ASK HOW THE SURVEY RESPONSES WILL BE USED?*

- Survey responses can help drive the development of improvement teams and action plans.
- This provides a way to track our results over time and learn whether our improvement activities are working as intended.
- The survey responses will help us identify areas where we can be doing even more to improve patient safety. The hospital relies on the people who work at the front lines to notice and point out ways in which we can be even better.
- The survey responses will highlight areas where we have good processes in place that need to be shared.

*WHAT CAN I SAY TO STAFF WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT GIVING RESPONSES THAT MAY SHOW THE HOSPITAL IN A NEGATIVE LIGHT?*

- There is no reason to worry about your survey responses. The survey's purpose is to learn how we can improve, not to get anyone in trouble.
- Your responses are anonymous and confidential to both NYSPFP and the hospital.
- The most important thing is to answer as honestly as possible. We can only improve if we know what areas need attention.