

Attachment A: Interview Guide for Contractors

Section I. Introduction and Consent

Hello, my name is [*interviewer name*] and I am from [IMPAQ or RAND]. Thank you again for agreeing to be interviewed today about your involvement in [x project] regarding the prevention of healthcare-associated infections. I'm joined today by [*names and affiliations of other team members, if applicable*] and [*note-taker name*] from IMPAQ who will be taking notes for the interview.

We're part of the IMPAQ/RAND team that the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, or "AHRQ," has contracted with to develop a synthesis of the results of AHRQ funded HAI projects.

Project Background & Purpose of Interview:

AHRQ has contracted with IMPAQ International and the RAND Corporation to conduct a synthesis of healthcare-associated infection projects funded by AHRQ between fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2010. The goals of the synthesis are to:

1. Document the main results from these projects
2. Disseminate key findings from the HAI projects
3. Identify gaps in the HAI knowledgebase and help outline potential future directions for HAI research

As one part of our data collection efforts, we are speaking with individuals who either lead, or have led, AHRQ-funded HAI projects to learn more about those projects. We've asked you for an interview because the AHRQ-funded HAI project you [*"are leading" or "have led"*] falls within the scope of our synthesis project.

Consent

You should have received an attachment to the email confirmation for the interview with information on background and informed consent for the project. Do you recall seeing that document?

If respondent RECALLS seeing the BACKGROUND & CONSENT SHEET

Do you have any questions about the background and informed consent information on that sheet?

[*If yes, answer any questions*]

Do you have any questions about the interview before we begin?

[*If no*]

We would like to record the interview. Only the project team will have access to the recording and it will be destroyed at the completion of our project.

May we record our conversation and begin the interview now?

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[If yes, skip to Section II question 1.]

If respondent DOES NOT RECALL seeing the BACKGROUND & CONSENT SHEET

I will just take a minute to review the informed consent materials and obtain your consent for this interview.

Review informed consent:

- We will use the information you share with us for research purposes only.
- All of your responses will be kept confidential.
- No one, except the IMPAQ/RAND research team and the AHRQ project officers for the synthesis project, will have access to the information you provide, and we will only produce summary information from our collective set of interviews.
 - We will not report information in any way that identifies you or the organization you are affiliated with to anyone outside the research team, except with your permission or as required by law.
 - We will destroy all information that identifies you after the end of the study.
- I would also like to emphasize that your participation is completely voluntary:
 - Your participation or nonparticipation will not be reported to anyone.
 - You can stop the interview at any time for any reason, and you should feel free to decline to discuss any topic that we raise.

We would like to record the interview. Only the project team will have access to the recording and it will be destroyed at the completion of our project.

May we record our conversation and begin the interview now?

If you have any questions about this research, feel free to contact the leaders of the IMPAQ/RAND evaluation team:

- Dr. David Baker (dbaker@impagint.com)
- Dr. Peter Mendel (mendel@rand.org)

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee at 310-393-0411, ext. 6369. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Section II. Project Description and Role of Participant

Interviewer Note:

The project team will have already emailed a document with the basic information such as project #, funding vehicle, project abstract, key outcomes and findings to date. This information will be extracted from documents we collect from AHRQ regarding each project.

Refer Interviewee to Project Summary Sheet

We would like to confirm that the information we have collected on your project thus far is correct and ask a few more background questions for clarity and allow you to elaborate on any of these issues.

1. Is all the information on the project summary sheet accurate?
2. Please tell me about your role on this project. What are your responsibilities and the activities you are most involved with?
3. What are the other key roles on the project, and who on the project team is responsible for those activities?
4. Please tell me about the specific HAI conditions your project addresses. [Note to interviewer: prompt for the six HAIs cited in the HAI-NAP: CLABSI (central-line associated bloodstream infection), CAUTI (catheter-associated urinary tract infection), VAP (ventilator-associated pneumonia), SSI (surgical site infection), MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), and *C. Diff.* (*Clostridium difficile* infection).] Does it focus on a specific healthcare setting? What patient populations does the project target?
5. Would you classify this effort as primarily focused on:
 - a. Research (i.e., developing new knowledge),
 - b. Tool or strategy development (i.e., developing new interventions or resources),
 - c. Knowledge transfer and dissemination (i.e., bringing an evidenced based practice to scale),
 - d. Some combination of these activities or something else?
6. Would you classify this project as *investigator initiated* (i.e., you and your research team developed the project and it was funded by AHRQ) or *AHRQ initiated* (i.e., AHRQ developed a specific statement of work for which they contracted with you organization to perform the project)?

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Section III. Interview Questions for AHRQ Contractors

Interviewer Note:

Refer Interviewee to Project Summary Sheet

A. Introduction and Background:

Referring to the project summary sheet, you responded to [Interviewer notes RFP Number] when you applied to this contract. The purpose of this contract was to [Interviewer describes contract purpose, which is listed on the project summary].

1. Could you please describe for me the primary objectives of this contract and how you view each of their importance?
2. Have the objectives changed at all since you started the project? If so, what are the changes and why were they made?
3. What motivated you or your organization to submit a proposal to this RFTO/RFP? [Prompt: the subject matter, the focus on HAI, the particular methods, a desire to develop or test an intervention, or something else?] What other projects has your organization completed in this area?
4. Are you working collaboratively with other organizations to conduct this project? If so, what organizations? Please identify key staff members and the roles they fill on the project.

B. Tasks and Project Deliverables

The purpose of this section is to examine the project's statement of work related to the project tasks, activities, deliverables, and milestones. Our goals are to understand AHRQ's objectives for the project, how the contractor proposed to meet these objectives, and the contractual requirements.

1. Can you describe the specific work plan you proposed to AHRQ for successfully completing this project? Is the contract you received consistent with this work plan? If not how has it changed?
2. Have you updated or changed the work plan since the beginning of this contract? If so why?

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3. If your project focuses on a specific intervention, please describe what it is and how it was developed. What was the existing evidence? What are the remaining questions about this intervention?
4. Can you identify and describe the major deliverables associated with this contract?
5. What kinds of data do you intend to collect/are you collecting to develop these deliverables?
6. Please identify the project's key outcome measures, and explain how your team quantifies progress on them. Can you describe how and why your team selected these over other possible measures? What do you think the independent or predictor variables are?
7. What are the challenges your team has encountered/anticipates in collecting this information and conducting this research? How has your team overcome these challenges?
8. What methods are you and your team using to analyze the data?

C. Findings and Results

The purpose of these questions is to collect information on the current status of the project.

1. What are the key findings or outcomes from your project to date? Which deliverables have been produced and submitted to AHRQ thus far? When is/was the final deliverable due?
[NOTE: If no findings or deliverables have been produced to date ask what and when findings or deliverables are anticipated.]
2. How does your work advance or confirm the existing evidence base for [*insert project objectives here*] related to your project?
3. Who are or will be the primary audience for your deliverables?
4. What impact do you anticipate your work will have on the delivery of care? How can your findings or work be translated to delivering care at the bedside? What additional work might be required to help with this translation?
5. Can you describe in what ways the project's findings are likely to be applicable to:
 - a. All or some HAI conditions, including those not explicitly addressed in this project? (Please identify which conditions.) [*Note to interviewer: prompt for the six HAIs cited in the HAI-NAP: CLABSI (central-line associated bloodstream infection), CAUTI (catheter-associated urinary tract infection), VAP (ventilator-associated pneumonia),*

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SSI (surgical site infection), MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus), and C. diff. (Clostridium difficile infection).]

- a. All or some healthcare settings? (Please identify which settings.)
 - b. All or some patient populations? (Please identify which other patient populations.)
6. What information produced by the project do you think would be useful for other HAI researchers or future research?
 7. What do you consider to be the key lessons or principles learned from this project regarding HAI prevention or prevention practices?
 - a. What common lessons or principles can be applied across all HAIs and what can be applied to specific HAIs?
 - b. What strategies do you see as essential for HAI prevention?
 - c. What tools do not currently exist that you think are necessary for HAI prevention?
 8. What dissemination strategies do you think have been or will be most effective at sharing your findings?
 9. Which deliverables from this project are ready (or nearly ready) for dissemination? Which do you think should be widely disseminated?
 - a. Who should receive this information?
 - b. How should dissemination occur?
 10. What has your team learned about strategies that are (or are not) effective at preventing HAIs?

D. Gaps/Next Steps

The purpose of these questions is to identify future requirements and existing gaps in the evidence base.

1. To what extent do you think the results of this project are filling gaps in knowledge and prevention of HAIs?
 - a. What gaps persist? What new questions or gaps have emerged as a result of your work?
 - b. How can the gaps best be addressed?

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2. What types of projects could AHRQ fund to best address those areas and contribute to reducing HAI rates?
3. In your view, what are the most important existing knowledge gaps regarding HAI prevention that AHRQ should pursue through funding additional research?

E. Closing

1. What changes do you see on the horizon that might affect the progress made toward reducing HAIs? *(Prompt: policy or legislative changes, changes in the science of HAI prevention)*
2. As we compile and synthesize research across AHRQ's HAI-related projects, we would greatly appreciate any documents or publications you could share that describe the project's methods, results, and significance. In particular, are there any papers, reports, peer-reviewed articles or presentations on the research from this project that you could share? Can you share electronic files, citations, or links to such materials?
3. Is there anyone else on your project team with whom we should speak to better understand your work and accomplishments?

Thank the Participant

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