

REAL Data Collection Script and Definition

This document can be provided to staff during orientation or training on the collection of REAL data to ensure consistent screening and documentation are being collected across all points of registration. These are recommended script and suggested responses when screening patients.

Recommended Script for Patient’s Ethnicity, Race, and Language Screening

“I would like you to tell me your race and ethnic background. We use this information to review the treatment patients received and make sure everyone gets the highest quality of care.”

- *First, do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino? (See ethnicity definition at end of document)*
 - Yes
 - No
 - Declined
 - Unknown/ Unavailable

- *Which category or categories best describe your race? (See race definitions at end of document)*
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Declined
 - Unknown
 - Other Race

- *What language do you feel most comfortable speaking with your doctor or nurse (patient’s primary language)?*
 - Provide a list of options. Consider the community you serve, for example if your community is mostly Asian, provide a list of Asian languages (i.e., Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese, etc.) along with your commonly spoken language such as English and Spanish.

Patient Response	Suggested Response	Hints	Recommended Documentation
“I’m American”	Would you like to use an additional term, or would you like me to just put American?		American or other if specified.
“Can’t you tell by looking at me?”	Well, usually I can. But sometimes I’m wrong, so we think it is better to let people tell us. I don’t want to put in the wrong answer. I’m trained not to make any assumptions.		

Patient Response	Suggested Response	Hints	Recommended Documentation
"I don't know. What are the responses?"	You can say White, Black or African American, Latino or Hispanic, Asian American Indian or Alaska Native, Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian, some other race, or any combination of these. You can also use more specific terms like Irish, Jamaican, Mexican		
"I was born in Nigeria, but I've really lived here all my life. What should I say?"	That is really up to you. You can use any term you like. It is fine to say that you are Nigerian.	It's best not to ask for this information again.	
A patient returning for care with the "DECLINED" code.	DO NOT ASK AGAIN		
A patient returning for care with the "UNKOWN" or "Unable to provide information" code.	Proceed to ask for the information per routine.		
"I'm Human."	Is that your way of saying that you don't want to answer the question? If so, I can just say that you didn't want to answer.	DON'T SAY - I'll just code as a declined.	Declined
"It's none of your Business."	I'll just put down that you didn't want to answer, which is fine.	DON'T SAY - I'll just code as a declined.	Declined
"Why do you care? We're all human beings."	Well, many studies from around the country have shown that a patient's race and ethnicity can influence the treatment they receive. We want to make sure this doesn't happen here, so we use this information to check and make sure that everyone gets the best care possible. If we find a problem, we fix it.	If patient still refuses, DON'T SAY - I'll just code as a declined.	Declined
" Are you saying that this has happened at _____?"	We don't know, but we want to make sure that all our patients get the best care possible.		

Patient Response	Suggested Response	Hints	Recommended Documentation
"Are you trying to find out if I'm a US citizen?"	No. Definitely not!! Also, you should know that the confidentiality of what you say is protected by law, and we do not share this information with anyone.		

Race Definitions

- American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent,
- Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- White or Caucasian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.
- Multiracial: A person having more than one or a combination of the above origins
- Declined: A person who is unwilling to choose/provide a race category or cannot identify him/herself with one of the listed races.
- Unknown/Unavailable: Select this category if the patient is unable to physically respond, there is no available family member or caregiver to respond for the patient, or if for any reason, the demographic portion of the medical record cannot be completed.
- Other Race: A person who does not self-identify him/herself with any of the listed race categories.

Ethnicity Definition/Categories

- Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish speaking culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Non-Hispanic or Latino: Patient is not of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.
- Declined: A person who is unwilling to provide an answer to the question of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.
- Unknown/Unavailable: Select this category if the patient is unable to physically respond, there is no available family member or caregiver to respond for the patient, or if for any reason, the demographic portion of the medical record cannot be completed.

*Adapted from: [Race and Ethnicity Data Improvement Toolkit](#)

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