

## DRAFT

DATE:

TO: Research Investigators

FROM: Center for Health Services and Outcomes Research

RE: Guidelines for Conducting Research

This memo is for a specific audience, researchers who will be asking the Center for Health Services and Outcomes Research (CHSOR) to assist them with their investigation. The guidelines that follow are intended to help the Investigator and the Center Staff. If any of the guidelines are not clear please call the Center, 388-9910, and ask to speak with someone about the process.

### Guidelines:

1. If you plan on asking the CHSOR to assist you with your research, contact with the CHSOR **must** be made prior to submitting your proposal to the Institutional Review Office.
2. You can contact the CHSOR by calling 388-9910.
3. Prior to receiving consultation, the CHSOR staff will ask that you –
  - Define the **problem**, what is your research question?
  - Initiate the **literature review**
  - Construct **specific hypothesis** to be examined during the conduct of the research.
4. If defining the problem is a challenge and you have a grasp of the literature, the staff can assist you with constructing the research question and hypothesis. Simply creating a dialogue with another researcher can often result in the investigator finding the appropriate words to express his/her ideas.
5. Another step in the process the staff can assist you with is the all-important question of **data acquisition**. Is the research based on use of secondary data or primary data collection? If the data are already collected in some format, the investigator will need to describe how they plan to acquire the data. If your research requires chart review, then you must come up with the resources for abstraction. In any case, the staff can assist you with identifying the variables to be collected and if necessary creating a paper or electronic instrument for data collection. NOTE: variable identification follows from the specific hypothesis and knowledge of the literature. This step should not come prior to the other step.
6. **Data analysis** is another important component of the research process. During the proposal phase, staff can assist you with identification of statistical tests to use that are appropriate to the hypothesis and the type of data being collected for the study. Finally, after data are collected staff can assist with data analysis.

7. **Data Interpretation** – defining the result. This is the responsibility of the investigator.
8. **Developing proceedings (paper)**: this is the primary responsibility of the investigator. If you need assistance, staff can help. We can help edit your paper, critique your presentation or just listen as you talk and provide feedback. In fact, you may want to have the staff member(s) who work with you as co-investigators.

The CHSOR thanks you for taking time to read the guidelines. We hope this process will be mutually beneficial.