

# We Ask Because We Care

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Understanding our Patients' Race, Ethnicity and Language



## Session overview

### The goals of today's session are to:

- improve your understanding of why we ask patients about race, ethnicity and preferred language; and
- explain how you can gather this vital information while effectively addressing any patient concerns that arise.





# What do we mean by race and ethnicity?

Race	Ethnicity
White	Hispanic
Black or African American	Non-Hispanic
American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	



# Why do we ask about race and ethnicity?

- ✓ To provide all patients the highest quality of care
- ✓ To identify the needs of individual patients
- ✓ To guide work to eliminate disparities in the patient population
- ✓ To provide hospitals with information on the cultural needs of each patient
- ✓ To monitor and analyze health outcomes at the population level

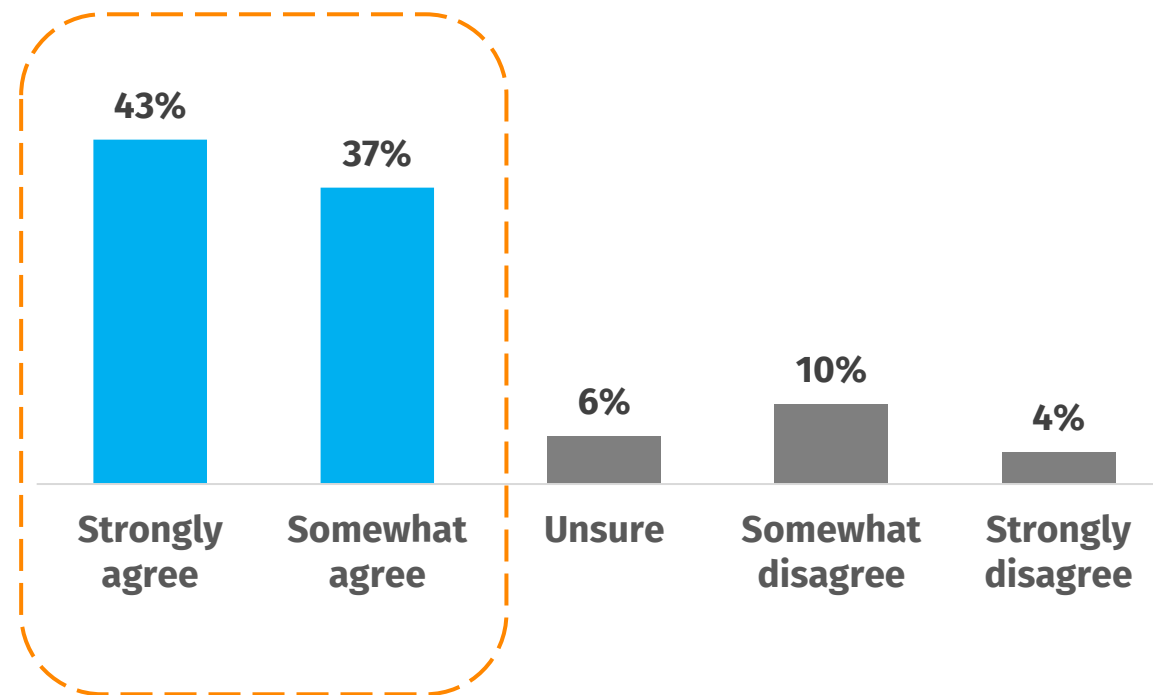




# Findings from a patient survey

## 80% of patients agree

that it is important for hospitals and clinics to collect information from them about their race or ethnic background.



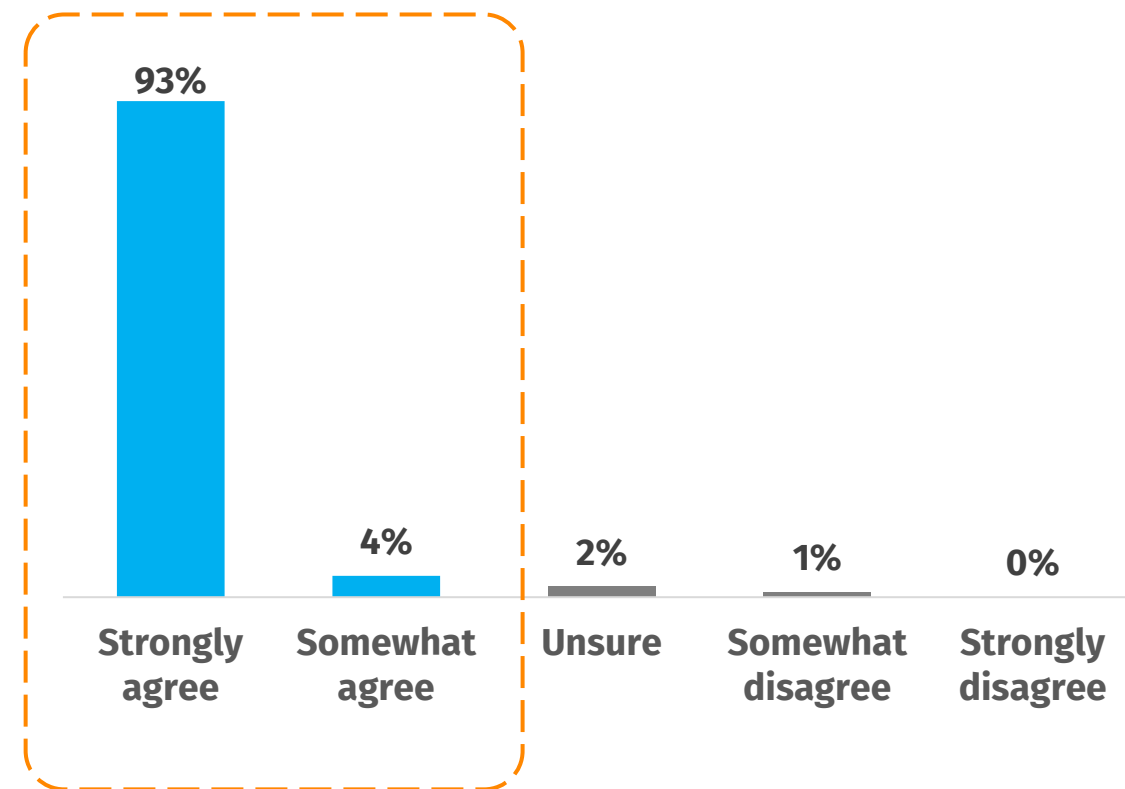
Source: Romana Hasnain-Wynia, PhD, Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data Collection: Nuts and Bolts, <https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/datainnovations/raceethnicitytoolkit/ca11.jsp>



## Findings from a patient survey (continued)

### 97% of patients agree

that it is important for hospitals and clinics to conduct studies to make sure that all patients get the same high-quality care, regardless of their race or ethnic background.



Source: Romana Hasnain-Wynia, PhD, Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data Collection: Nuts and Bolts, <https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/datainnovations/raceethnicitytoolkit/ca11.jsp>



# Why is patient-reported data important?

Self-reporting is the most accurate and consistent source of information.



We should never make assumptions based on a person's name or appearance.



Patients are more likely to select the same categories to describe themselves over time than staff who are assuming or guessing.



**All patients** should be asked about their race, ethnicity and language.



# Where, when and how do I ask?



## Where

During phone registration or in-person check-in

## When

Ask at the same time as all other registration information

## How

Ask in the same way as for all other registration information





# What if a patient does not want to or does not know how to respond?

## Choose one of the following:

**Declined:** *if the patient is unwilling to choose or provide a race category or cannot identify themselves with one of the races listed.*

**Unknown:** *if the patient is unable to respond, there is no family member or caregiver to respond for the patient, or if, for any reason, the demographic portion of the medical record cannot be completed.*



## Suggested script

“To provide our patients with the highest quality of care, we are asking all patients about their race, ethnicity and preferred language. How would you like your race and ethnicity recorded in our system?”

“Are you of Hispanic or Spanish background?”

“What race do you associate with?”

“What is your preferred language?”





# How can I address patients' questions and concerns?



## Reassure patients that:

- the data they provide will serve a positive and valuable purpose;
- their care will not be affected by their responses;
- their privacy and patient rights are being respected;
- data collection will take only a few minutes, so it will not cause them to be late for their appointment; and
- they are not required to provide the information.

# Patient FAQs

## Why is it important to collect data on race, ethnicity and language?

Better patient data helps us track diseases, conditions and procedures by race and ethnicity, and identify disparities. Understanding healthcare disparities helps us focus our quality improvement work and improve the quality of care we provide to our diverse patient population.

## Is my information kept confidential?

Yes; your information is protected by HIPAA.

## Who are you collecting this information from?

We are asking all our patients for this information.

## How does this benefit me?

By answering these questions, we can better serve you and your community and ensure we provide the best quality of care.

## Available resources

### For patients:

- *We Ask Because We Care* brochure
- *We Ask Because We Care* posters
- *We Ask Because We Care* FAQs

### For staff:

- Staff FAQs on collecting REaL data
- Understanding our Patients' Race, Ethnicity and Language slide deck
- Sample responses for patient questions

[Resources available here](#)



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# Questions?

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