



# Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: Division of Priority Populations

## Introduction

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is the lead Federal agency charged with improving the safety and quality of America's health care system. AHRQ develops the knowledge, tools, and data needed to improve the health care system and help Americans, health care professionals, and policymakers make informed health decisions.

Within AHRQ's Office of Extramural Research, Education and Priority Populations (OEREP), the Division of Priority Populations leads the Agency's efforts to achieve measurable improvements in the quality, equity, and outcomes of health care for priority populations. AHRQ's priority populations and areas specified as priorities in the Healthcare Research and Quality Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-129) include the following:

- Racial and ethnic minority groups
- Low-income groups
- Women
- Children
- Older adults
- Individuals with special health care needs, including individuals with disabilities and individuals who need chronic care or end-of-life care
- Rural areas, including frontier areas
- Inner-city areas

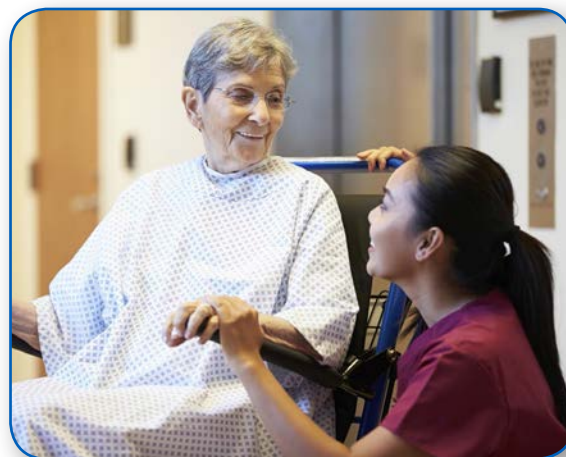
**AHRQ Mission:** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) mission is to produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used.



## Mission and Vision

AHRQ's Division of Priority Populations leads the Agency in its efforts to accomplish the goals of improving health care quality and outcomes and reducing disparities in care for priority populations and areas. We achieve this mission by—

- Influencing AHRQ leadership and working closely with AHRQ colleagues, leadership within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other public and private sector partners.
- Conducting studies, providing advice regarding relevant research, and facilitating the dissemination and implementation of research findings.
- Engaging with internal and external partners to promote additional research and implementation of evidence in the form of tools and strategies to improve health care quality, equity, and outcomes for priority populations and areas.



## Core Values

In working toward our mission, AHRQ's Division of Priority Populations adheres to the following core values:

### Integrity

We strive to act honestly and ethically with all colleagues and constituents, maximize transparency in communications, and create an environment that fosters trust and mutual respect.

### Collaboration

We work with internal and external stakeholders toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability.

### Commitment

We commit to achieve the goals of our mission.

### Diversity and Inclusion

We ensure that priority populations and areas are represented in research, dissemination, and implementation activities, and we work to address the research needs of diverse communities.

## Policy Drivers

Examples of policies that guide activities within AHRQ's Division of Priority Populations include the following:

- Healthcare Research and Quality Act of 1999
- HHS Secretary's Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities
- AHRQ Action Plan to Reduce Disparities in Health and Health Care
- National Quality Strategy
- Healthy People 2020
- Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act
- HHS National Prevention Strategy
- White House Executive Orders

## Goals

The Division of Priority Populations is constantly working toward the following goals:

- Align identified research strategies with AHRQ's evidence, tools, and data resources.
- Stimulate collaboration within and across AHRQ, including sharing resources to achieve our goals.
- Identify key topics of emphasis for research, partnership, and dissemination and implementation activities.
- Develop research strategies that produce evidence to address key gaps in quality, equity, and outcomes.
- Identify strategies for disseminating and implementing evidence-based approaches to reduce gaps in quality, equity, and outcomes.

## Strategies

The Division of Priority Populations employs the following strategies to achieve our mission and goals:

- Collaborate with AHRQ's leadership to build bridges between AHRQ's research activities and the dissemination and implementation needs of diverse stakeholders.
- Support research activities that have the potential to lead to significant advances in quality health care and health outcomes for priority populations.
- Support and conduct research activities to identify methods for disseminating and implementing evidence-based strategies to reduce gaps in quality, equity, and outcomes.
- Participate with Agency leadership and AHRQ's subject matter experts in budget development and execution.
- Create and maintain formal and informal networks of AHRQ champions to address the research needs of priority populations and stakeholders.
- Establish partnerships with HHS and other Federal and external stakeholders to create, disseminate, and implement evidence-based findings to address key gaps in quality, equity, and health outcomes.



## For More Information

To learn more about the mission and activities of AHRQ's Division of Priority Populations, please visit the AHRQ Web site at [www.ahrq.gov/health-care-information/priority-populations/index.html](http://www.ahrq.gov/health-care-information/priority-populations/index.html).

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