

**MAINTAIN AND EXPAND
THE HEALTH CARE COST AND UTILIZATION PROJECT (HCUP)
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H·CUP
HEALTHCARE COST AND UTILIZATION PROJECT

**PLAN FOR MARKETING AND OUTREACH, 2011
DELIVERABLE #172.05**

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Submitted to:

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PLAN FOR MARKETING AND OUTREACH, 2011

WHAT: AHRQ, Thomson Reuters (TR), and the American Institute of Research (AIR)—here on referred to as the HCUP Outreach Team—have discussed a number of activities that could be undertaken to better identify how to reach audiences of interest, build on the successes of our Year 4 Outreach activities, and develop new projects to grow and strengthen HCUP’s relationship with current and future users.

For Contract Year 5, we propose conducting research on how to best reach new or under-reached audiences, continuing high-profile and successful projects, meeting contractual items to update and create marketing material, and undertaking new tasks that could increase excitement, participation, and product development in the public. Additionally, projects that were started yet not completed during the Year 4 contract year will also be evaluated and undertaken as seen fit.

WHY: The HCUP Outreach Team had several great successes in Year 4, including the presentation of the first Outstanding Researcher Awards. The project highlighted the interest that current HCUP researchers have in the databases, software, and tools, plus the value that HCUP data can provide to meaningful health services research. We would like to continue enhancing our relationship with current users through established means, as well as to increase the value and user of HCUP to a wider audience. By determining the best methods for reaching high-profile and high-impact audiences where we have not been able to gain a strong foothold—namely media and federal Congressional staff—we aim to increase HCUP’s visibility and awareness to these underutilized groups.

WHEN: We propose that efforts begin at the end of 2010 and continue throughout 2011. Based on the Year 5 contract modification, activities will be initiated by June 17th, 2011.

HOW: Year 5 activities will center on the following projects that aim to build audiences and engage users:

- Audience Outreach research
- Data contest
- HCUP-US revisions
- Outstanding Research using HCUP Award
- Five new materials
- Five updated materials
- Completing outstanding projects

Key Activities and Timing

1. Audience Outreach Research. In 2005, TR and its former marketing firm GYMR performed message-testing research with HCUP users and potential users. The learnings primarily informed outreach to the health services researcher audience. AIR will explore potential audience research strategies to better understand communication opportunities AHRQ may have to increase awareness of the value of HCUP among policy makers and policymaker influencers and their organizations without directly conducting outreach activities to policymakers. AIR will provide recommendations for conducting audience research representatives of the target audience on the federal and state level. Based on AHRQ’s approval of a research approach, AIR will conduct the audience research and provide a toplline findings report to AHRQ with communication and outreach recommendations. Potential information to be gathered how Congressional staff members receive their healthcare

information, which resources they use most often, and credible organizations who service as their resource for data and statistics on health services research.

AHRQ will review and approve research protocols and any data collection instruments (i.e., survey, interview guide etc). Information gleaned from this research will be used to implement new Outreach strategies.

2. Data contest. Federal online contests have witnessed significant growth in both agency sponsorship and consumer participation in very recent years. As we continue to explore new avenues to increase HCUP's visibility and presence on the Web and through many new and social media outlets, we recommend researching the process of designing, implementing and promoting an online HCUP data contest using the government platform Challenge.gov. This research would result in a comprehensive plan and timeline for conducting an online contest in 2011. It would take into consideration internal AHRQ steps that may need to be addressed (including support from different departments and leadership at AHRQ) in order for a plan to be in place and ready for rollout ideally in the summer of 2011.

3. Outstanding Research Using HCUP Award. AHRQ presented the first Outstanding Researcher Awards at their 2010 Annual Meeting: one for published research, one for policy impact, and one to a student. Despite a short application period, 27 applications were received. The Award presentation was well received by AHRQ staff, conference attendees, and researchers. We propose presenting the Awards again in 2011, with additional awards being given in new categories. Possibilities include media organizations, government agencies, and hospitals or other organizations that use HCUP in their daily work.

Discussion on sessions for the 2011 AHRQ Annual Meeting will begin in February 2011. TR and AIR will put together informative material on the benefit of presenting the Awards (as well as the advantages of including new audiences) to enhance decision-making discussions.

4. Create five new materials. In AHRQ's Year 5 contract modification, TR was tasked with creating five new marketing materials by July 1, 2011. Staff has agreed that items do not need to be determined immediately, but can be decided upon as Year 5 Outreach projects are implemented. Potential new material items include:

- Developing an historical information page on HCUP-US that discusses notable events in HCUP history (e.g., stages in its development and the release of new types of data)
- Creating an interactive map that would be based on a popular hand-out provided at conference exhibits booths, and will include a hover-over option that provides information on the availability and content of data in each State (e.g., types of databases, years of available data, number of inpatient stays; records in the State's applicable databases; number of hospitals within the state; and region of the U.S.)
- Developing tabletop signage for exhibit booth displays promoting individual events, HCUP activities, or new product releases
- Writing text and producing two new brochures to hand out at conferences and training events, focusing on HCUPnet and the Nationwide Emergency Department Sample (NEDS)
- Designing and ordering new giveaways for conferences and presentations

- Promotion of an upcoming geographic variations article, currently under review with *Medical Care Research and Review*

5. Update five materials. Similar to creating new material, TR has been tasked with updating five current HCUP materials by August 26, 2011. It was determined that products do not need to be decided upon immediately, but rather as Year 5 Outreach efforts are underway. Potential items for updating include:

- Updating graphics and text in HCUP presentations to be more engaging and interesting to audiences
- Updating graphics in HCUP reports to be more engaging and interesting to readers
- Redesigning the HCUP eNews logo to incorporate the HCUP 20th Anniversary logo and catch readers' eye
- Update text and layout on the HCUP-US Website to be more user-friendly and informative

6. HCUP-US Text Revisions. TR and AIR will work to update the text and layout of HCUP-US' web pages to make the Website more user-friendly and the information more attention-grabbing. Current text will be reviewed and recommendations for simple changes to the page text and format will be provided to AHRQ for final decision.

This project could be undertaken as its own task, or as an update to existing material.

7. Completing outstanding projects. While the Outreach Team accomplished many of its Year 4 goals, several proposed tasks are still outstanding. For 2011, we propose that we determine which outstanding projects would be beneficial to reaching new audiences and improving relations with current audiences. Potential items include:

- Developing an historical information page on HCUP-US that discusses notable events in HCUP history (e.g., stages in its development and the release of new types of data)
- Creating an interactive map that would be based on a popular hand-out provided at conference exhibit booths, and will include a hover-over option that provides information on the availability and content of data in each State (e.g., types of databases; years of available data; number of hospitals within the state; and region of the U.S.)
- Promotion of an upcoming geographic variations article, currently under review with *Medical Care Research and Review*

Items could be undertaken as their own projects or could be considered as part of the effort to create new materials.