Program Goal

The primary goal of this program is to stimulate quality and patient safety research at UVa. Priority will be given to applications proposing research specifically related to quality and patient safety in academic medical centers, and research that is generalizable to multiple services or venues of care delivery within the academic medical center.

Types of Research

IQPS will establish best practice for academic health centers in target areas unique to the academic medical center to improve quality and safety both at UVa and at academic medical centers across the country.

Both quantitative and qualitative research projects are appropriate, as are meta-analyses of quality and patient safety research literature. Projects involving the development of new quality and patient safety materials must have a strong evaluation component.

Potential Topics

This program seeks to stimulate new, innovative projects directed toward enhancing patient safety in academic medical centers. The program’s objective is to promote studies leading to the prevention of human errors, system errors, patient injuries and the consequences of such adverse events in the health care setting. Proposals are solicited for research and development that is broadly related to identifying the causes of preventable injuries and errors and/or developing prevention strategies and methods to implement them. While projects that promise improved methods of patient safety with a defined and direct path to implementation into patient care settings are encouraged, of equal importance are studies of problems for which deeper understanding is needed before effective solutions can be applied. Patient care setting is considered to be any environment in which health care is provided, including but not limited to inpatient, outpatient, extended care and home care. Innovation and creativity are strongly encouraged, as are cross-disciplinary research teams.

Areas of interest include but are not limited to:

- Delivering expert care in a teaching environment – What is the effect of learners on quality and safety? What is the best model for training? What are appropriate levels of supervision for trainees at various levels of training? How can we use simulation to enhance both cognitive and technical skills “off line”?

- HOC – Improving communication and hand off of care between trainees, attendings, and between disciplines. What types of information are essential to a safe and efficient handoff at each training level? Can a common process be developed for information transfer that is utilized by all disciplines and is patient/family centered? Can we develop an information system to support a patient/family-centered handoff process?
- Reducing variation in care/Improving adherence to national guidelines – When and how do academic physicians utilize guidelines? When and why do we function outside of guidelines? What is the role of the academic medical center in advancing medical care, and how should academic medical centers be evaluated in relation to guideline-based medicine?

- Operational opportunities that integrate research and education to advance of quality and safety in academic medical centers – How can research databases be utilized to improve quality? How can trainees be integrated into quality and safety initiatives to enhance education and enhance quality? How can clinical informatics research be utilized to enhance quality and patient safety?

- Reduction of Health Disparities
  - Advancing care of the uninsured and underinsured
  - Expert care in the setting of high service volume and patient crowding

Proposal Review

Please respond to each question below, using your responses to determine your final score. Please give priority to criteria 1-4.

1. Does the proposed research qualify as “quality and patient safety research”? In other words, does this program seek to set a best practice (research), or to implement a known best practice (performance improvement)?

2. Is the proposed research specifically related to quality and patient safety in academic medical centers?

3. Is the proposed research generalizable to multiple services or venues of care delivery within the academic medical center?

4. Is this an innovative proposal addressing an important or neglected area of care delivery?

5. Is the research plan well-described with defined and measurable outcomes? Is the plan feasible within the time limits of the funding program (2 years)?

6. Are the plans for publication and dissemination of results acceptable? (Plans must be in addition to a yearly presentation at the IQPS Research Conference)

7. Are the investigators qualified to conduct this research?

8. Should this proposal be funded, are the required letter(s) of support from Department Chairs or Division Heads attached (indicating that the investigators will be protected to perform this research and that access to systems or subjects will be facilitated)?

9. Is the budget commensurate with the proposed activity (may include investigator effort, support personnel, supplies and is limited to $5,000 to $25,000 per year for a maximum of 2 years)? Any recommended changes (if we could only fund a portion of this budget, what could be eliminated without undermining the primary goal of the project?)?

10. Overall Score: Please score the application on the NIH scale of 1.0 – 5.0.
    1.0 = Outstanding, 2.5 = Average, 5.0 = Unacceptable