



HCD Participant Comms Guidance, CoE Playbook

Best practices for communicating with prospective participants

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Some of our best practices when we initiate contact with our HQR users for any type of research:

- We use a **pre-planned template of language**
 - Since we often run multiple studies per PI, this takes out the labor of creating brand new language each time, we only adapt small parts of it to adjust for each study
 - Depending on our target audience, we may make slight modifications to the language and tone. For example, when recruiting quality directors, we might change “Hey!” to “Hi!” so that it sounds slightly less informal, but still approachable.
- We are **explicit and direct** in what we are looking for
 - Our initial email is also used as a screener, after a short introduction we layout clearly what type of user we are hoping to recruit
 - Example from our template:

We’re specifically looking for users who are...

(1) [participant criteria 1]

(2) [participant criteria 2]

- We end the message with a **simple “Next step” response** pre written for our participants to respond with if they are interested
 - This helps remove the cognitive load of our participants; they don’t have to figure out what to write to us or how to respond. Simply replying they are interested is easy and lets them know we will take care of what’s next.
 - Example from our template:

Interested? *Just respond to this email with a “Yes, I’m interested” and I’ll work with you to schedule a 45-60 minute session with our lead designer, [lead designer name], on this project.*



Lessons learned

- Hospitals and other healthcare facilities often have security in place that prevents emails with links from getting through. Check your signature block and message and remove any links if you aren't getting many responses.
- Have a PDF of the consent form available in case the link to it is blocked.
- Time your recruitment emails so potential participants see them when they're checking email as they settle into their work day.

Our full template

Participant Recruitment Outreach - Touch 1

Subject Line: HQR User Feedback Opportunity for [Feature/Project]

Body:

Hey {{first_name}},

A while back, you responded to a listserv expressing interest in helping the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) modernize the Hospital Quality Reporting (HQR) site.

Our application development team at the CMS HQR is working on [brief description of the feature or study]. We want to share a prototype of these designs with actual users to see if we're on the right track to improving the user experience of the HQR system before committing to development.

We're specifically looking for users who are...

(1) [participant criteria 1]

(2) [participant criteria 2]

Interested? Just respond to this email with a "Yes, I'm interested" and I'll work with you to schedule a 45-60 minute session with our lead designer, [lead designer name], on this project.



Thank you!
[recruiter name]