5 Things to Remember About Reducing Disparities
Courtesy of Finding Answers: Disparities Research for Change

1. **ACT NOW.** Don’t put equity efforts on hold when race, ethnicity, and language (REL) data are not available. Use qualitative methods (surveys, interviews) to identify disparities if quantitative data are not yet available.

2. **CHANGE THE CULTURE.** A culture of equity lays the foundation for successful disparities interventions. Make equitable health care an institutional goal and mission. Build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the patient population.

3. **INVITE INPUT.** Include patient and community perspectives. Use a community advisory board to test ideas. Develop ties to community-based organizations.

4. **INVEST RESOURCES.** Deploy or develop staff and financial resources for disparities reduction. Appoint staff, protect their time, and recognize champions. Leverage existing resources, incorporate efforts into funded quality improvement initiatives, and look for grants and government funds.

5. **BE PATIENT.** Improvements take time. Be realistic about the time necessary to move the dial on disparities. Plan long-term follow-up to demonstrate statistically significant outcomes.

These reminders are informed by:
- **8 years of disparities intervention** research and dissemination
- **33 evaluations** of innovative interventions to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in care
- **12 systematic reviews** of the disparities intervention literature
- **6 equity improvement projects** with Aligning Forces for Quality communities

**About Finding Answers**

Since 2005, Finding Answers has been testing a variety of quality-improvement initiatives to find out what works—and what doesn’t—to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health care. Learn more at [www.solvingdisparities.org](http://www.solvingdisparities.org).