

Differentiating QI/QA from Research

POINTS TO CONSIDER	RESEARCH	QA/QI
Purpose	To test a hypothesis OR establish clinical practice standards where none are accepted	To assess or promptly improve a process, program, or system; OR improve performance as judged by accepted/established standards
Starting Point	To answer a question or test a hypothesis	To improve performance
Design	Typically a fixed protocol with fixed interventions that are not revised as data is collected	Typically interventions are adjusted based on data collected if quality goal is not being attained
Benefits	Designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge and may or may not benefit subjects	Designed to promptly benefit a process, program, or system and may or may not benefit patients
Risks/Burdens	May place subjects at risk and stated as such	By design, does not increase patient's risk, with exception of possible privacy/confidentiality concerns
Data Collection	Systematic data collection	Systematic data collection
End Point	Answer a research question	Promptly improve a program/process/system, typically has a quality goal to measure improvement
Testing/Analysis	Statistically prove or disprove a hypothesis	Compare a program/process/system to an established set of standards