

## Appendix B:

# How Information Was Obtained for the 2016 Report

**THE HEI 2016 REPORT INCLUDES 2,061 HOSPITALS AND OTHER** healthcare facilities from throughout the U.S. rated on their commitment to LGBT equality and non-discrimination. These ratings come from three sources:

● HEI survey participants	568
● Non-Respondent researched hospitals	904
● Other Non-Resp. hospitals/healthcare facilities	589
Total = 2,061	

Information about how we obtained the information from each of these sources is detailed below.

### The Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) Survey

This year, 568 healthcare facilities actively participated in the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). In order for a facility to actively participate in the HEI, a facility representative must complete and submit the free, online HEI survey. The primary source of data shown throughout the report was aggregated from these surveys. Invitations for the HEI 2016 survey were first mailed in May 2015 with a survey submission deadline of October 31, 2015.

The HEI 2016 survey included criteria to assess facilities' LGBT inclusion in patient care, incorporating the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) and The Joint Commission (TJC) requirements and recommendations. Through its line of questioning, the survey aims to highlight and encourage the use of best practices and policies for LGBT-inclusive care by providing links to sample policies, TJC and CMS requirements, and other guidance through the HRCF website. Throughout the open survey period, HRCF Health and Aging Program staff provided additional assistance and advice to complete the survey, and once submitted, HRCF staff reviewed and verified documentation for appropriate language and consistency with required criteria. If any criteria were not met, healthcare facilities were given the opportunity to work with staff to update the deficiencies and submit the required additional information necessary to meet the Core Four Leader criteria.

### Non-Respondent Researched Hospitals

As a service to the LGBT community, the HEI 2016 also researched the policies at hospitals from across the U.S. that have not responded to our invitations to actively participate in the survey. In total, 904 hospitals that had not previously participated in the HEI survey were researched and are included in this report. Researched hospitals were selected based on a variety of criteria including their size and geographic location, including being either a part of the 100 Largest hospitals in the U.S., a part of the largest hospitals in each of the 50 states, District of Columbia

and Puerto Rico, or a part of the largest hospitals within a 25-mile radius of the 50 largest LGBT metropolitan areas.

HRCF staff researched the patient, visitation and employment non-discrimination policies for each of these hospitals from January through June 2015. Hospital facilities' public websites were exhaustively searched for these policies using search terms such as "non-discrimination," "visitation," "EEO," "bill of rights," "sexual orientation" and "gender identity." HRCF staff searched facilities' websites much like an internet-savvy potential patient, visitor or applicant attempting to learn whether a hospital had:

- An LGBT-inclusive patient non-discrimination policy
- An equal visitation policy
- An LGBT-inclusive employment policy

In an effort to ensure that these results were correct and to provide ample opportunity for facilities to update their results, HRCF staff also researched email and postal mailing information for the CEO and at least one other C-Suite executive, specifically executives responsible for Human Resources, Diversity, Marketing, Patient Care, Compliance and Nursing.

Multiple emails with our findings were sent to CEOs and other contacts at each hospital between June and October 31, 2015. These emails invited the hospitals to actively participate in the HEI 2016 and encouraged them to submit documentation regarding incorrect policy listings. The CEO of each facility was also mailed a letter with this information in July of 2015.

By June 2015 just over 1,000 hospitals were researched for inclusion in the HEI 2016 report. Of these hospitals, 54 facilities accepted our invitation to actively participate in the 2016 survey and 38 of those facilities became Equality Leaders. In addition, from June through October, approximately 108 hospitals submitted information updating one or more of their policies, which were updated if LGBT-inclusive language was included. To update its policies, researched hospitals were required to send us a copy of the policy, a link to the updated policy on their website or, at a minimum, a quote from their policy with the relevant language.

In one final measure to ensure that hospital policy findings were correct, in January 2016, hospital findings were researched once again to ensure the results for the HEI 2016 report were up-to-date and as accurate as possible. We found that an additional 153 hospitals had updated one or more of their policies, and had placed these updates on their public websites. Also in January,