

Activity:

Responding to Challenging Comments

► PURPOSE

Challenging responses to race and Latino ethnicity questions are to be occasionally expected. The responses below are common challenges and this activity is time to practice a thoughtful response.

Instructions

Break into small groups or pairs and write down short responses to the challenging questions that you think are appropriate to the situation and helpful to encourage the type of answer desired.

Alternate Instructions: Use the Challenging Comments for the Active Listening Activity.

Patient Response	Suggested Response
"I'm American. "	Would you like to use an additional nationality, or would you like me to just put American?
"Can't you tell by looking at me? "	Well, sometimes I can but we think it's important for people to tell us how they identify themselves. It is also more accurate than staff making a guess.
If using open-ended option: "I don't know. What are the responses?"	You can say Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian, White or some other race; or any combination of these. You can also use more specific terms like Irish, Jamaican, or Chinese.
"I was born in Nigeria, but I've lived here most of my life. What should I say? "	That is up to you. It is fine to say that you are Nigerian. (If Nigerian is not an option write in the response under Other).
A patient returning for care with the "UNKNOWN" or "Unable to provide information" code.	Proceed to ask for the information per routine. Unknown should not be used when a person declines to answer any of the questions. Prefer not to answer or decline to answer is appropriate, and the person should not be asked again.
"I'm human. "	Yes, we are all human and we ask this information as one way to better know you as a person. If you rather not answer I can just say that you didn't want to answer.
"It's none of your business."	I'll just put down that you didn't want to answer, which is fine.
"I don't know, I'm adopted."	We want to know you better by how you think of yourself when thinking about race and ethnicity. This is not about your ancestry so there is no wrong answer.