

## Research vs. Public Health Practice vs. Quality Improvement

### Research:

- New, untried practice or treatment intervention
- Presence of risk, however slight, to the participants
- Primary audience is the scientific community and consumers
- Information is *generalizable*
- Data collected from multiple organizations
- Subject selection may involve randomization or differential subject selection

### Public Health Practice:

- Activity involves a corresponding governmental duty to perform the activity to protect the public's health
- The activity is designed to improve the health of a population; it is not designed in whole or in part to contribute to generalizable data. The activity is not a knowledge-seeking enterprise independent of routine medical care or public health practice; instead, the activity is standard public health activity conducted according to the responsibilities of public health agencies.
- The activities as described do not to confer differential benefits on certain groups, in the sense that one group benefits at the expense of another, or benefits more than another.
- This activity is conducted using standard public health methods, and does not involve experimental methods.
- The activity does not involve randomization or differential subject selection
- The activity is not FDA-regulated

### Quality Improvement:

- Accepted practice or treatment intervention not previously implemented
- Absence of risk to participants
- Primary audience is the organization and information is applicable only to the organization
- Data collected from a single organization

### Citations:

- See *Public Health Practice vs. Research: A Report for Public Health Practitioners Including Cases and Guidance for Making Distinctions*. Hodge and Gostin, et al. 2004.  
<http://www.cste.org/pdffiles/newpdffiles/CSTEPHResRptHodgeFinal.5.24.04.pdf>
- Reinhardt AC and Ray LN (2003) Differentiating Quality Improvement from Research.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12624857>