

*MEDICARE OUTCOME STUDY: INFORMATION SHEET*

**WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?** The study is being done jointly by Dartmouth Medical School and the University of Massachusetts Center for Survey Research.

**WHO IS SPONSORING THE STUDY?** The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, which is part of the United States Public Health Service.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?** The purpose of the study is to get a picture of the effects of prostate radiation on a wide sample of men like yourself. It will help physicians and patients have better information about what to expect after radiation.

**WHAT KINDS OF QUESTIONS WILL BE ASKED?** Questions about your general health, how radiation affected you, and how you are feeling now.

**HOW DID YOU GET MY NAME?** Your name and address were selected from the records of the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the administrators of the Medicare program. HCFA participates in important studies designed to help evaluate the effectiveness of medical care in different parts of the country.

**DO I HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?** Participation in the study is voluntary. In particular, you should know that participation will have no effect at all on your Medicare benefits. However, if you don't choose to participate, we will lose the benefit of your experiences and lower the accuracy of the study. If there are any questions you prefer not to answer, you can skip those questions.

**HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?** The length depends somewhat on your answers. Some people have more to say than others. However, the average time to complete the questionnaire is about 20 minutes.

**ARE MY ANSWERS CONFIDENTIAL?** Yes. Your answers will never be used in any way that would identify you. They will be combined with answers from other respondents to make a statistical report. The ID number on the questionnaire and envelope are just so we know you returned a form.

**HOW WILL THE DATA BE REPORTED?** The research results will be reported in scientific journals and will provide important data for patient information materials that will be created to help patients who have prostate cancer decide how they want to be treated.

**Figure 4.6.** Example of a Fact Sheet

down your answers word for word. In other cases, you will be given a list of answers and asked to choose the one that fits best. If at any time during the interview you are not clear about what is wanted, be sure to ask me.

Such an instruction does two things to improve measurement. First, it teaches respondents what to expect. It makes them more likely to answer by choosing one of the categories provided or to answer slowly when they are required to provide narrative responses, so interviewers can record answers completely. Second, once interviewers have told