Samples of Session Descriptions
2010 Annual Research Meeting

Health Care System Interventions to Reduce Chronic Disease Disparities
Roundtable: The panel will discuss considerations and consequences of system-wide interventions aimed to reduce chronic disease disparities. Panelists will discuss how disparities have been affected by a community systems approach in child health, the Massachusetts health reform, the use of genomics into routine care in the VA health care system, and pay for performance in California health plans.

Better Care and Lower Cost: High Performing Communities in American Health Care
Special Session: Despite the widespread barriers to effective health care delivery reform—in payment, policy, habits, and more—some communities in the United States have managed to achieve remarkably low costs while preserving or enhancing above-average quality of care. This session will explore possible factors for success with leaders who are achieving such success, or intend to do so.

Spatial Data and Methods for Socio-Ecological Research
Methods Workshop: This session will showcase the online availability of geo-spatial contextual variables in a new public-use database; multilevel modeling methods used to study relationships between person-level outcomes and contextual (environmental) factors; and spatial regression methods for small area ecological analysis. Topics include considerations that arise from geocoding, working with spatially aggregated data at different spatial scales, and spatially correlated data. Level of Difficulty: Intermediate.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling
Methods Workshop: This is an introductory session on hierarchical linear models, also called multi-level models and random effects models. The goal of this session is to understand the nature of clustering in data, why simple linear regression is inappropriate when clustering exists, and how to model clustering within data using fixed and random effects. Level of Difficulty: Introductory—Attendees should be familiar with simple linear regression.

HCUP Data for Health Care Research
Research Resources: This introductory session will provide an overview of the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP). HCUP provides all-payer, multi-year, claims-based data on hospital inpatient, emergency department, and ambulatory surgery care. HCUP also includes analytic tools, free on-line statistics, and research reports based on these data. Attendees will receive an overview of the data as well as information needed to access and use these resources.

Building a Successful Career in Academia
Career Development: This session is aimed at graduate students and junior faculty and will provide strategic advice on building a successful research career in health policy and health services research in the academic setting. The panelists, a department chair and recently tenured faculty at highly ranked academic institutions, will share insights about factors that made a difference in their own careers. They will also offer advice for junior investigators on matters such as building a reputation in the field, developing a portfolio of scholarship, having an impact on policy and practice, finding mentorship, achieving independence from mentors, and preparing for promotion review.