**Appendix.** Interview Guide

**Introduction**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and I am working as part of a team to better understand the experiences of patients who have had to be in the hospital a lot. We are interviewing patients who have been in the hospital multiple times in a year.

Would now be a good time to talk so that I can learn more about your experiences?

1. If “YES” go to Prefatory statements
2. If “NO” – would there be a better time for me to come back to talk to you?
   1. If “YES” – identify date and time
   2. If “NO” – OK. Thank you for your time today.

**Prefatory Statements:**

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me. I really appreciate the opportunity to hear about your experiences. We are trying to understand how the health care system can do a better job and help support patients. I will ask you questions about your experiences both inside and outside of the hospital. Please answer the questions based on your *own* personal experiences and let me know if any of the questions do not make sense to you. The interview will take about 20-30 minutes, but we can stop before that if needed. Please only answer questions you are comfortable answering.

**[AUDIOTAPE CONSENT]** Also, to ensure I capture everything that you tell me in your own words, I would like to audiotape our discussion. All audio records will be destroyed at end of the study.

Do you give me permission to audio tape our discussion today?

**(1) If “YES,”** Great, I am going to turn on the audio recorder now.

**(2) If “NO,”** OK, that’s fine. We can still do the interview. I may pause every once in a while to make sure I can write down everything you are telling me.

***Research Question: From the patients’ perspective, what factors contribute to patients’ high/recurrent use of hospital services?]***

**Question 1:** To start off, please tell me about the time when you feel that you first started having to be in the hospital a lot.

* + PROBE: About how long ago was that?
  + PROBE: What was going on with your health around that time?
  + PROBE: What other factors do you think may have contributed to you having to be in the hospital a lot?
* PROBE: How was this time different from other times in your life when you were not in the hospital as much?

**Question 2:** So that I know a little bit more about what you experience, please describe your condition/disease to me.

**Question 3:** What is it like living with [disease/condition identified here] on a daily basis for you?

* + PROBE: what symptoms do you have?
  + PROBE: how do you normally manage those symptoms when you are at home (that is, not in the hospital)?
  + PROBE: What parts of your life, if any, do you think make it easier for you to live with [disease/condition] on a daily basis?
  + PROBE: What parts of your life, if any, do you think make it harder for you to live with [disease/condition] on a daily basis?

**Question 4:** In your opinion, what is it that changes, or what is the trigger for you to come and seek care at the hospital as opposed to managing your health at home?

* + PROBE: what are some reasons that you think keep bringing you back to the hospital?

**Question 5:** I mentioned at the beginning that we are focused on talking to patients who have been in the hospital multiple times a year. Can you describe to me a time in your life when your health seemed to be better?

* PROBE: In your opinion, what was different for you then compared to now?
* PROBE: Please describe to me anything that has worked for you in the past that you think helped keep you out of the hospital?

**Question 6:** I have asked you a lot of questions today – but before we end, what other comments or thoughts do you have for me that I may not have asked?

**Thank you very much for the time that you spent with me/us today. Your ideas and feedback are very helpful.**