

DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VALUE IN MEDICINE: LEVERAGING PCORI THROUGH REAUTHORIZATION

Patients and persons with disabilities are increasingly concerned about whether they can afford the tests and treatments they need. As stated by the Partnership to Improve Patient Care (PIPC) in 2010, comparative effectiveness research can form the foundation for meeting “the critically important challenge of controlling health care costs while avoiding oversimplified rationing of patient care.” Now more than ever, we need solutions that are both evidence-based and patient-centered.

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) offers important infrastructure to meet this challenge. With key reforms included with its FY2019 reauthorization, PCORI’s work can be focused to ensure its research is timely and responsive to the needs of those making decisions about new drugs and other treatment options, and that its research findings are more readily available to decision-makers.

As PCORI’s reauthorization is considered, it should include provisions that align the organization with the evolving needs of health care decision makers. To ensure PCORI’s work is supporting the shift towards a patient-centered value in health care, PIPC proposes to strengthen PCORI and drive accountability for value by directing PCORI to:

- **Establish a set of national research priorities that focus its research on high-impact disease areas and treatments.**

PCORI should set research priorities that target particular diseases, conditions, and care interventions that impose significant burdens on patients, family caregivers, the health care system, and the broader society. In setting priorities, PCORI should specifically target a portion of its resources to fund research on comparative clinical effectiveness of high cost items and services, including innovative drugs, a step that has been called for by a range of stakeholders.¹ Additionally, PCORI should annually develop a Priority Therapies List of interventions with significant financial implications for the health system.

- **Conduct quick-turnaround evidence reviews for priority treatments that compare treatments’ effectiveness in useful, readily applicable formats.**

In determining its research agenda, PCORI should conduct a comprehensive evidence synthesis within its identified priorities, starting with an assessment of available evidence on the value of treatment options, and explicitly identify what we

know from existing research, the limitations of existing research, and gaps in research. Based on gaps that are identified, PCORI should create a list of specific projects that, taken together, would fill those gaps and improve the ability of patients to make informed health decisions.

- **Improve public transparency and access to patient-centered evidence on value.**

PCORI should establish two complementary databases to assist decision-makers in identifying patient-centered value, gaps in research and decision aids:

- a) First, PCORI should develop a database of evidence on the comparative value of drugs and other medical products and services, as identified through its evidence synthesis; as well as a list of valid decision-support tools by priority area, to improve health decision-making.
- b) Second, outcomes that matter to patients, as identified by patients and measured in PCORI-funded research, should be listed in a national registry. This information will be useful to inform quality measure development, indicators of quality improvement for value-based payment programs, and innovation, thereby promoting a patient-centered health system that seeks to achieve outcomes that matter to patients.

- **Identify high-quality decision-support tools to inform patient choice.**

Tools may include: shared decision-making tools, clinical pathways, clinical practice guidelines, and value assessments. High quality tools would meet PCORI standards for methodologic rigor, transparency, and patient-centeredness. The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) could utilize PCORI's validated tools in its demonstration projects, such as in Accountable Care Organizations and the Beneficiary Engagement demonstration on Shared Decision Making.

In creating PCORI, Congress committed to build the evidence base for improved health decisions, seeking to empower patients and drive innovation and value in health care. Reauthorization is an opportunity for Congress to further drive patient engagement in PCORI's research and ensure that it meets the needs of an evolving health care system. PCORI can and should play an elevated role in driving accountability for value in medicine.

ⁱ Center for American Progress "Enough is Enough: The Time Has Come to Address Sky High Drug Prices." September 2015. Available at: <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/15131852/DrugPricingReforms-report1.pdf>.