



Advancing Research, Policy and Practice

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AcademyHealth Supports Comparative Effectiveness Research to Improve Health and Health Care

As the professional society representing health services researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, AcademyHealth is pleased to join Representative Tom Allen (D-ME) and Representative Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) today to urge Congress to support new research on the comparative effectiveness of drugs, devices, medical procedures, and other treatments as a way to improve health and health care.

“Comparative effectiveness research is an emerging science in the field of health services research that can inform national health policy decision-making and help improve the way health care is delivered,” said W. David Helms, president and CEO of AcademyHealth. “We commend Representatives Allen and Emerson for recognizing the promise of comparative effectiveness research and for leading the charge to make a serious—and needed—investment in this research.” AcademyHealth believes increased funding for comparative effectiveness research will provide evidenced-based and data-driven solutions to our most pressing health policy challenges.

AcademyHealth’s 2007 vision and priorities for health services research policy states:

“Congress should increase and expand the sources of funding for conducting and coordinating a wide spectrum of comparative effectiveness research, including systematic reviews of existing literature, analysis of administrative data and clinical registries, and pragmatic, prospective, head-to-head trials. Doing so would ultimately help patients, providers, payers, and policymakers make rational choices about new and existing health services...Since the findings of the research would benefit all people, its sources of funding should be broad based. Independence and scientific integrity should be emphasized.”

We believe the “Enhanced Health Care Value for All Act” is an important first step in achieving this goal.

AcademyHealth also believes that increased investment in comparative effectiveness research must be coupled with greater investment in the research infrastructure—the data, methods, and researchers needed to conduct this work. “The field of health services research has experienced an erosion of investment in its data, methods, and researchers,” said Helms. “If left unchecked, these declining investments in the next

generation of researchers could threaten the field's capacity to address the nation's research needs.”

A copy of AcademyHealth's vision and priorities for health policy is attached.

AcademyHealth is the professional home for health services researchers, policy analysts, and practitioners, and a leading, non-partisan resource for the best in health research and policy. AcademyHealth promotes interaction across the health research and policy arenas by bringing together a broad spectrum of players to share their perspectives, learn from each other, and strengthen their working relationships. For more information, view our Web site at www.academyhealth.org.

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