



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Investments in Comparative Effectiveness Research for Evidence Generation

The Need: Coordinated Investment

The Nation needs a coordinated investment in comparative effectiveness research to focus on important research questions for the health care system and its users with a concentration in under-represented populations. Defined interventions compared may include medications, procedures, medical and assistive devices and technologies, behavioral change strategies, and delivery system interventions.

The Solution: Evidence Generation

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) intends to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) funds to establish a coordinated national investment in practical/pragmatic comparative effectiveness research. This will be accomplished through the following endeavors:

CHOICE Studies. The Clinical and Health Outcomes Initiative in Comparative Effectiveness (CHOICE) will represent the first coordinated national effort to establish a series of pragmatic clinical comparative effectiveness studies in the United States. These pragmatic studies will measure effectiveness — the benefit the treatment produces in routine clinical practice — and will include novel study designs focusing on real-world populations. Each CHOICE study will address at least one of the 14 priority health conditions: arthritis and nontraumatic joint disorders; cancer; cardiovascular disease, including stroke and hypertension; dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease; depression and other mental health disorders; developmental delays, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and autism; diabetes mellitus; functional limitations and disability; infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS; obesity; peptic ulcer disease and dyspepsia; pregnancy, including preterm birth; pulmonary disease/asthma; and substance abuse.

This initiative will concentrate on under-represented populations (children, elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, and other under-studied populations) and oversample or deliberately obtain information on under-represented populations to make sure that this effort achieves the goals of understanding treatment effects in under-represented populations.

Funding Method: 10 grants of up to \$10 million each

Project Duration: 3 years with 2 options years (possibly funded with annual appropriations based on availability of funds)

Funding Amount: \$100 million

Request for Registries. Disease registries are databases that collect clinical data on patients with a specific disease or keep track of specific medical tests, devices, or surgical procedures (joint replacements, heart valve replacements, etc.). Clinical areas within the 14 priority conditions listed above will be targeted. Ongoing and completed projects on patient registries for studying outcomes in real practice settings funded by AHRQ will inform future investments in registries

by AHRQ. AHRQ will also continue to consult with other agencies across the Department of Health and Human Services on existing registries, registries in need of expansion, and areas where registries are needed but do not exist. It is expected that grantees will develop registries that are sustainable so that registries will continue once AHRQ funding has ended.

Funding Method: 5 grants will be awarded up to \$10 million

Project Duration: 4 years

Funding Amount: \$48 million

DEcIDE Consortium Support. The DEcIDE (Developing Evidence to Inform Decisions about Effectiveness) Network conducts accelerated practical studies about the outcomes, comparative clinical effectiveness, safety, and appropriateness of health care items and services. The network is comprised of research-based health organizations with access to electronic health information databases and the capacity to conduct rapid turnaround research.

AHRQ will enhance its investments in establishing a learning health care system by funding the DEcIDE Network to expand multicenter research consortia comprised of academic, clinical, and practice-based centers. These centers will study diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and other priority conditions. AHRQ will also fund distributed data network models using clinically rich data from electronic health records and will use Recovery Act funds to continue support for the DEcIDE Network's research to advance study designs and methods for comparative effectiveness research.

Funding Method: 5 to 8 task orders, up to \$5 million each, competed among DEcIDE Centers

Project Duration: 2 to 3 years

Funding Amount: \$24 million

Unfunded Meritorious Applications. AHRQ will use Recovery Act investment to fund meritorious grant applications that were not funded in previous cycles due to limited funding. Research projects selected for funding may have either a clinical or methodological emphasis but will focus tightly on the study and use of comparative effectiveness research.

Funding Method: Multiple grants

Project Duration: 2 to 3 years

Funding Amount: \$1 million

Further details about grant funding announcements can be found on www.grants.gov or <http://www.gold.ahrq.gov/>. Information on contract solicitations can be found at www.fbo.gov.