



Biographies

**PCORI Merit Review:
Learning from Patients,
Scientists and other
Stakeholders**

**Webinar
October 30, 2013**

PCORI Moderators



Laura Forsythe, PhD, MPH
Program Officer, Research Integration and Evaluation

Laura Forsythe, Ph.D., M.P.H., is a Program Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She is responsible for evaluating PCORI's activities. Dr. Forsythe is experienced in conducting research on facilitating adjustment to chronic illness. Her work has examined how psychological factors, the social context, and interventions affect pain, mood, and functioning among chronic pain populations.

Most recently, Dr. Forsythe was a Cancer Prevention Fellow at the National Cancer Institute. Her work there focused on the development of a more effective approach to caring for cancer survivors through the study of survivor, provider, and health care system influences on health and well-being after cancer.

Dr. Forsythe received her Ph.D. in Clinical Health Psychology from the University of Alabama and completed her clinical residency at the VA Maryland Healthcare System/University of Maryland School of Medicine Internship Consortium. She also obtained her Master of Public Health with a concentration in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from Johns Hopkins University and her bachelor's degree in Biology and Psychology from the University of North Carolina.



Lori Frank, PhD
Program Director, Research Integration and Evaluation

Dr. Lori Frank is Program Director of the Research Integration and Evaluation program at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Her current research focus is on bringing the patient perspective to comparative effectiveness research to enhance the meaningfulness of outcomes and to improve decision making by health care consumers and providers.

Prior to joining PCORI, Dr. Frank worked as a Director in Health Outcomes and Pharmacoeconomics at MedImmune, LLC, with a focus on oncology, and prior to that she spent 13 years with MEDTAP International/ United BioSource Corporation, where she was Senior Research Leader and Executive Director of the Center for Health Outcomes Research.

Her research on patient-based health outcomes assessment centers on psychiatric disorders. She initiated and served as Principal Investigator of the Cognition Initiative, a multi-sponsor patient-reported outcome (PRO) development consortium and has continued in an advisory role for that work, now part of the Critical Path Institute PRO Consortium. Dr. Frank has collaborated with the Georgetown University Department of Psychiatry through an adjunct appointment, where she served as Associate Director and led the Mental Health Outcomes Team for the Center for Trauma and the Community, a consortium of researchers focusing on health care for underserved populations. Her other work addresses psychological, ethical, and legal aspects of memory screening and medical treatment decision making by older adult patients. Dr. Frank serves on the

Memory Screening Advisory Board of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, bringing the patient perspective to this work to maximize patient autonomy and optimize patient and caregiver care decision making.



James Hulbert
Pre-Award Manager, Contracts

James Hulbert is a Pre-Award Manager for the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). He is responsible for all aspects of application receipt to include developing application guidelines and policies, overseeing PCORIs helpdesk, developing applicant and reviewer training, and implementing merit review. Hulbert has ten years of experience in program development and research administration. Prior to joining PCORI, Hulbert served as a manager at a non-profit foundation supporting military medical research. For more than six years, he worked closely with investigators to develop, apply, and manage federally funded and industry sponsored research programs around the world.

The year prior to joining PCORI, Hulbert worked alongside researchers and clinicians at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to build new research opportunities. Hulbert attended Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, where he received two degrees, in Sociology and Social Work.



Suzanne Schrandt, JD
Deputy Director, Patient Engagement

Suzanne Schrandt, J.D., is the Deputy Director of Patient Engagement at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She is responsible for supporting the Director of Patient Engagement in creating networks and engaging patients across the nation to provide broad-based input on the development and execution of PCORI's research. Schrandt has been involved in patient education and advocacy since being diagnosed with a form of rheumatoid arthritis as a teenager. For more than 15 years, she has advocated on behalf of children and adults with arthritis and has been engaged in numerous patient and provider education initiatives aimed at increasing early diagnosis and appropriate, patient-centered management of chronic disease.

Schrandt most recently served as the Health Reform Strategy Team Leader for the Kansas Health Institute, where she educated Kansas policy makers, providers, and consumers on the implications of the Affordable Care Act. While there, Schrandt also led the Kansas Legislative Health Academy, an intensive educational experience for select Kansas legislators. Schrandt also previously served as the Coordinator of Public Health and Public Policy for the Arthritis Foundation in Kansas City and as a Research Associate for a Human Genome Research Institute Ethical, Legal, and Social Issues project. Schrandt is a member of the Kansas Bar and the American Health Lawyers Association.

Panelists



Vernal Branch
Patient Reviewer
Patient Advocate

Vernal Branch was diagnosed in 1995 with stage two breast cancer at 45 years of age. While in the midst of her treatment she became active with Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organizations & the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC). She then went on to take all of the Project LEAD courses through NBCC, where she then became a reviewer for the Dept. of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program/Ad-Hoc member for the Programmatic Review, reviewer Komen Foundation and reviewer for the California Breast Research Program.

For the last ten years, Ms. Branch has served at NCI/Director's Consumer Liaison Group, recruiter for NIEHS/Sister Study, Board of Directors for Breast Cancer Action, Board of Directors for HER2 Support Organizations, Board of Directors for Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, Advisor for Silent Spring, External Advisor Committee for Duke Cancer Institute, Advisor for a Department of Defense (DOD) funded research project at University of Virginia Breast Center, Advisor for a DOD funded project for Duke Cancer Institute, and Advisor for a Health Disparities project at the California Breast Research Program. Presently, Ms. Branch is working as the Public Policy Advisor for the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation.

Four years ago, Ms. Branch was diagnosed with asthma, after having gone through several bouts of pneumonia over a course of five years. She has also been the caregiver for her son who also was diagnosed with asthma as an infant. Her knowledge of health-related issues has included researching the problem and evaluating the right course of treatment. Because of her preexisting conditions of cancer and asthma, Ms. Branch was asked to speak at the White House and a congressional hearing for the Affordable Care Act.



Julie A. Panepinto, MD, MSPH
Scientific Reviewer
Professor of Pediatrics Hematology
Director, Center for Clinical Effectiveness Research
Vice Chair of Value, Department of Pediatrics
Medical College of Wisconsin/Children's Hospital of Wisconsin

Julie Panepinto is a Professor of Pediatric Hematology and the Director of the Center for Clinical Effectiveness Research of the Children's Research Institute at the Medical College of Wisconsin/Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. She also serves as Vice Chair of Value, Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Panepinto has a special interest in sickle cell disease and is considered an expert in the measurement of patient reported outcomes/health-related quality of life (HRQL) in sickle cell disease. She leads research in this area, as is evidenced by her multiple publications, external grant support, and involvement in other investigator's NIH funded multi-center trials. It is her research goal to advance the understanding of alternative outcomes in health beyond tradition medical endpoints and to

help frame the impact of therapy from a patient's perspective.

Dr. Panepinto completed her fellowship in Pediatrics Hematology/Oncology/bone Marrow Transplant at the University of Colorado Health Sciences in Denver, Colorado, where she also earned a Master's of Science in Public Health. She recently served as a member on the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) for the Sickle Cell Disease Clinical Research Network (2006-2010), and Currently serves as a member of the Blood and Marrow Transplant Clinical Trials Network, protocol team: "Unrelated Donor Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation for Children with Severe Sickle Cell Disease Using a Reduced Intensity Conditioning Regimen." She has been active in mentoring and teaching in clinical research and served as the co-director of the American Society of Hematology's Clinical Research Training Institute from 2011-2013. Dr. Panepinto has served as a grant reviewer for PCORI, the NIH, and the American Society of Hematology.



Greg Sawchyn, MD, MBA

Stakeholder Reviewer

President Caduceus Capital, LLC

Senior Director, Clinical Guidance Councils for OhioHealth

Greg Sawchyn is President of Caduceus Capital, LLC, a healthcare operations and financial consulting firm. In addition, he serves as the Senior Director – Clinical Guidance Councils of OhioHealth, a \$2.5 billion, 8 hospital system based in Columbus, OH. Dr. Sawchyn received his MD and MBA from The Ohio State University and has since served in a variety of roles with a healthcare focus.

Dr. Sawchyn has extensive experience in healthcare finance through his work as an investment banker where he worked with critical access and other community hospitals to fund major renovations and replacement facilities. In addition, he has worked with many small overseas medical device and diagnostic companies to help them access US capital and commercial markets. Currently, Dr. Sawchyn consults with healthcare provider groups to help make their practices more efficient. He also works with OhioHealth to ensure its Clinical Guidance Councils, made up of physicians, administrators, and other providers, are able to execute on evidence based value enhancing initiatives for the system.