



PATIENT-CENTERED OUTCOMES RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Advisory Panel on Addressing Disparities Meeting Summary

February 2014

Overview

On January 13 and 14, 2014, the PCORI Advisory Panel on Addressing Disparities (AD) met in Washington, DC, for its third meeting.

The 21-member panel includes patients, caregivers, clinicians, researchers, providers, payers, and purchasers. The panel was joined by AD program staff. The meeting was open to the public via teleconference, and slides and meeting materials were posted to the website in advance.

The panelists provided guidance on the evolving AD program portfolio and activities. They also discussed 13 topics and prioritized the following five for possible funding announcements:

1. Integration of mental and behavioral health services into primary care settings to address disparities and advance equity.
2. Care coordination in primary care to address disparities and advance equity.
3. Improving the continuum of care for individuals 0 to 26 years of age with disabilities.
4. Effective communication for people with disabilities.
5. Innovative outreach to enhance use of mental health services among underserved youth.

Related Information

- [About This Advisory Panel](#)
- [Meeting Details and Materials](#)
- [Orientation to PCORI's Research Prioritization](#)
- [Addressing Health Disparities Topic Briefs](#)

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is an independent organization created to help people make informed healthcare decisions.

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Conceptual Framework

Program Officer Cathy Gurgol presented a conceptual framework developed by the staff to guide the AD program and to measure the impact of the program in reducing disparities. The current AD portfolio was mapped to the framework, providing a visual representation of gaps. Panel members discussed those gaps, particularly those at the policy and organizational levels, and the challenges and opportunities of conducting relevant research. The panel agreed to adopt the definition of health disparities proposed by the 2011 [CDC Health Disparities & Inequality Report](#): “Health disparities are differences in health outcomes between groups that reflect social inequalities.”

Progress on Previously Ranked Topics

Additional program updates included presentations on the top four topics that the panel prioritized during its [April 2013 meeting](#).

FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO PROVIDING CHRONIC DISEASE CARE IN THE SAFETY NET

Dr. Bianca Perez of America’s Essential Hospitals presented findings from a PCORI-commissioned [landscape review](#) (including interviews with 70 patients, hospital leaders and staff, and other healthcare stakeholders) on facilitators and barriers to providing chronic disease care in the safety net.

Recommended areas for PCORI-funded research include:

- further evaluating accountable care organizations and patient-centered medical homes
- determining the ideal composition of multidisciplinary teams in hospital and community settings
- evaluating care models in safety-net populations
- identifying care plans that effectively engage safety-net patients with chronic disease care
- identifying strategies for enhancing access to care
- identifying effective outreach, enrollment, and engagement strategies tailored to safety-net populations.

OPTIONS TO REDUCE DISPARITIES IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

AD Program Officer Ayodola Anise provided an overview of findings from a [landscape review](#) that PCORI commissioned to describe current evidence for cardiovascular disease disparities interventions, illuminate evidence gaps, and identify funding opportunities. Recommended areas for PCORI-funded research include:

- effectiveness of quality-improvement interventions and the contribution of individual components
- effectiveness of self-management support interventions
- relative impact of provider and patient education on cardiovascular outcomes.

HYPERTENSION DISPARITIES WORKGROUP AND PFA DEVELOPMENT

AD program staff, working with Million Hearts®, convened a [multi-stakeholder workgroup](#) to help identify research gaps focusing on clinical interventions to reduce disparities in care and improve outcomes among patients with hypertension. The workgroup [reached consensus](#) on three research questions, and PCORI is moving forward with the development of a PFA.

PERINATAL OUTCOMES WORKGROUP AND PFA DEVELOPMENT

The AD program co-hosted a [multi-stakeholder workgroup](#) with the Improving Healthcare Systems program to obtain input on comparative research questions related to perinatal care. The two programs anticipate releasing a PFA in mid-2014.

Research Prioritization

Advisory panel members presented [briefs on 13 topics](#) (see **Appendix A**). A [teleconference](#) in September 2013 had generated the first six topics, and the advisory panel had identified the others during their [inaugural meeting](#). The panel discussed the prospective impact of each topic, including the populations targeted, gaps in current research, and PCORI's potential contribution to the evidence base.

Following this discussion, panel members used Expert Choice software to rate each topic on [PCORI's Criteria for Topic Briefs and Advisory Panels](#). Members further discussed the top five prioritized topics and agreed on final language (see table below).

Top Five Prioritized Topics

Ranked Number	Short Title	Topic
1	Integration of mental and behavioral health services into primary care settings to address disparities and advance equity	Compare the effectiveness of interventions to integrate mental and behavioral health, including substance abuse treatments, into community health centers and other primary care settings to reduce disparities and advance equity.
2	Care coordination in primary care to address disparities and advance equity	Compare the effectiveness of enhanced care coordination, including multicultural approaches, on improving the healthcare process and outcomes in primary care settings to reduce disparities and advance equity.
3	Improving the continuum of care for individuals 0 to 26 years of age with disabilities	Compare the effectiveness of interventions to improve the transitions from pediatric to adult care for individuals between the ages of 0 and 26 years with disabilities, ¹ including access to care, care coordination, and quality of care.
4	Effective communication for people with disabilities	Compare the effectiveness of strategies to improve communication between clinicians and persons with disabilities or personal representative, including single or multi-cultural interventions that effectively tailor communication according to intellectual, physical, sensory, or mental abilities.
5	Innovative outreach to enhance utilization of mental health services among underserved youth	Compare the effectiveness of innovative outreach and education efforts to increase uptake of mental health services among underserved youth populations, and/or engagement of underserved youth and caregivers in mental health treatment.

Next Steps

- AD program staff will begin to address the topics prioritized at this meeting and continue to refine the conceptual framework of its growing portfolio.
- The advisory panel will next meet in-person in April 2014.

¹ PCORI will use the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of disabilities, which states: “Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.” This is found on the [WHO website](http://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/) (<http://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/>).

Appendix A: Research Topics for Prioritization

Short Title	Topic ²
Innovative outreach to enhance utilization of mental health services	Compare the effectiveness of innovative outreach and education efforts to increase uptake of mental health services among diverse youth populations, and/or engagement of adolescent patients and caregivers in mental health treatment.
Access to mental health services in rural areas	Compare the effectiveness of innovative interventions and/or telemedicine to improve access to mental health services among populations in vulnerable settings, including but not limited to rural communities.
Integration of mental and behavioral health services into primary care settings	Compare the effectiveness of interventions to integrate mental and behavioral health, including substance abuse treatments, into community health centers and other primary care settings.
Improving the continuum of care for patients with disabilities	Compare the effectiveness of interventions to improve continuum of care for children with disabilities transitioning to adulthood, including access to care, care coordination, and quality of care.
Effective communication for people with disabilities	Compare the effectiveness of strategies to improve communication between clinicians and patient with disabilities, including strategies to effectively tailor communication according to both cognitive and sensory abilities.
Multi-level interventions to enhance cancer survivorship	Compare the effectiveness of innovative multi-level interventions in health care and community settings to enhance adult cancer survivorship among populations likely to experience disparities, including linguistically isolated populations and racially and ethnically diverse populations.
Care coordination for special needs patients	Compare the effectiveness of care coordination and clinical decision supports in producing better health outcomes for children with disabilities and special healthcare needs.
Care coordination in primary care	Compare the effectiveness of enhanced care coordination, including multicultural approaches, on improving the healthcare process and outcomes in primary care settings.
Telemedicine for rural cardiovascular care	Compare the effectiveness of telemedicine and/or expanding practice to non-physician practitioners (i.e., nurse practitioners, physician assistants) on improving cardiovascular disease outcomes in rural populations.
Telemedicine for rural mental health care	Compare the effectiveness of telemedicine and/or expanding practice to non-physician practitioners (i.e., nurse practitioners, physician assistants) on improving mental health disease outcomes in rural populations.

² See the [PCORI website](https://www.pcori.org/) for topic briefs prepared to support the research prioritization process.

Breast cancer screening for high-risk women	Compare the effectiveness of film-screen or digital mammography alone and mammography plus magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in community practice-based screening for breast cancer in high-risk women of different ages, risk factors, and race or ethnicity.
Rural trauma care	Compare the effectiveness of care delivery (e.g., local hospital care, trauma center care) on improving outcomes in patients living in rural communities who experience trauma.
Complementary medicine for juvenile cancer patients	Compare the effectiveness of complementary and alternative interventions on reducing symptoms related to treatment of childhood cancers in racial and ethnic minorities.