

September 14, 2012

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute
Public Comments
1701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006

Re: Comments on Draft Methodology Report: “Our Questions, Our Decisions: Standards for Patient-centered Outcomes Research”

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) is pleased to offer comments on the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute’s (PCORI) first Draft Methodology Report. AACOM commends the PCORI Methodology Committee for its vision of advancing scientific research on much needed patient-centered care in health care delivery and its dedication to seeking public input on its draft report.

AACOM represents the administrations, faculty, and students of the nation’s osteopathic colleges, which offer the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree. There are 29 colleges of osteopathic medicine at 37 locations in 28 states. Currently more than 20,000 medical students – 1 in 5 students at a U.S. medical school – are studying at an osteopathic medical school.

AACOM encourages PCORI to continue to involve clinicians, non-professional caregivers, non-profit associations, and other relevant stakeholders to foster diverse contributions. We would also encourage PCORI to consider developing an online community portal to enhance collaboration and communication among patients, physicians, researchers, and other stakeholders. This portal could serve as a hub for sharing best practices, disseminating key findings, and cultivating discussions. In addition, AACOM recommends that PCORI consider establishing a comprehensive public data warehouse to promote further collaboration and increased transparency among stakeholders to bolster patient-centered care research.

In drafting standards for formulating research questions, AACOM supports the consideration of community health centers and their role in delivering care to underserved and at-risk populations as a “subgroup of interest.” In addition, AACOM supports PCORI’s goal of selecting outcomes based on input directly elicited from patient informants, persons representative of the populations of interest, either in previous studies or in the proposed research.

AACOM encourages the development and utilization of qualitative research skills by clinicians to help achieve a patient-centered approach to health care. As noted in the draft report, PCORI’s research is intended to give patients a better understanding of the prevention, treatment, and care options available and the science that supports those options. As such, AACOM urges PCORI to

communicate with stakeholders a more in-depth analysis of ways in which qualitative methodology can compel a more patient-centered model of care. Specifically, AACOM believes it would be beneficial to detail ways in which qualitative methods are valuable for improving the conduct of patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR), supporting the infrastructure of PCOR, and furthering the implementation of this research to help patients receive optimal outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on PCORI's Draft Methodology Report. AACOM looks forward to continuing to work with PCORI on building the capacity for patient-centered outcomes research to empower patients and physicians to make better-informed health care decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SC Shannon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Stephen C. Shannon, D.O., M.P.H.
President and CEO
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine