



**The Honorable Rosa DeLauro**

*Chair*

House Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education and Related Agencies  
2358 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

**The Honorable Tom Cole**

*Ranking Member*

House Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education and Related Agencies  
1001 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

**The Honorable Roy Blunt**

*Chair*

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education and Related Agencies  
136 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**The Honorable Patty Murray**

*Ranking Member*

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education and Related Agencies  
160 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs DeLauro and Blunt and Ranking Members Cole and Murray:

We are writing to respectfully request that you include **\$71 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to support evaluations and research related to the health care system's response to the COVID-19 virus** in the next FY20 emergency supplemental appropriations bill.

Our nation's healthcare system is facing an unprecedented challenge as it confronts the COVID-19 virus and seeks to care for tens of thousands of sick and vulnerable Americans. Congress, the states and Native American tribes have responded in real time with sweeping changes to statute, regulations and the provision of care on the ground.

COVID-19 is a watershed moment for our country, and the United States health care system must quickly learn from and adjust to what's happening now so that we can respond better and more quickly in the event of a recurrence or in response to the next pandemic. In particular, we must quickly and carefully conduct assessments of the health care system's response to COVID-19 with a particular focus on identifying successful and scalable measures taken to address this crisis.

We believe the following issues require in-depth research and analysis:

- the rapid expansion of telehealth;
- the deficiencies in the health care system's supply chain; and
- the shortfalls in health care delivery planning, coordination and capacity

AHRQ's research will uniquely focus on how health care systems and professionals responded to this crisis, how they successfully reorganized care delivery and care across a variety of settings, and what unmet delivery needs must be addressed. The results of these investments will guide health care policy making and delivery system operations, helping the nation learn from its experiences meeting the COVID-19 challenge and better preparing us to meet a future crisis.

AHRQ has the mandate and proven track record to deliver timely results that identify what works – and what doesn't – in health care delivery. AHRQ is the federal agency charged with securing the science needed to address

challenges and weaknesses in U.S. health care delivery, while also maximizing the benefits to the American people. No other HHS agency is currently engaged in evaluating the health care sector's response to this pandemic.

AcademyHealth and the health research, policy and advocacy organizations listed below recognize the importance of investing federal funds strategically. We strongly believe that AHRQ more than earns a place among your priorities, and urge you to provide the agency \$71 million in the next FY20 COVID-19 emergency supplemental appropriations bill. Doing so would signal your continued commitment not just to produce discoveries, but to produce science that translates into better care for patients today.

Thank you for considering our recommendation. For more information, please contact Kristin Rosengren at 202.292.6700 or [kristin.rosengren@academyhealth.org](mailto:kristin.rosengren@academyhealth.org).

Sincerely,

AcademyHealth  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Heart Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Columbia University Irving Medical Center  
Lakeshore Foundation  
March of Dimes  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Research!America  
RTI International  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
The American Health Quality Association  
Weill Cornell Medicine