



April 18, 2013

The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Health services research tells us that our health care system is not living up to its full potential. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is the federal agency with the sole purpose of improving health care. As the agency for health services research, AHRQ funds science to cure our health system in universities, medical centers, and research institutions across the nation. This research is used by patients, health care providers, public health professionals, hospitals, and public and private payers to enhance consumer choice, improve patient safety, and promote high quality care. To expand AHRQ's capacity to generate this important science, the undersigned members of the Friends of AHRQ urge you to provide the agency **\$434 million** in FY 2014, consistent with the President's budget request.

AHRQ is helping providers help patients. Americans want to take personal responsibility for their health, and they rely on their doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health care providers for guidance in making difficult choices. AHRQ's research generates valuable evidence to help providers help patients make the right health care decisions for themselves and their loved ones. For example, the American College of Physicians used AHRQ-funded research to inform their recommendations for treatment of type 2 diabetes. These evidence-informed recommendations give physicians a foundation for describing what the best care looks like, so patients can determine what the right care might be for them.

AHRQ is keeping patients safe. The science funded by AHRQ ensures patients receive high quality, appropriate care every time they walk through the hospital, clinic, and medical office doors. AHRQ's research provides the basis for protocols that prevent medical errors and reduce hospital-acquired infections (HAI), and improve patient experiences and outcomes. In just one example, AHRQ's evidence-based Comprehensive Unit-based Safety Program to Prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections (CUSP)—first applied on a large scale in 2003 across more than 100 ICUs across Michigan—saved more than 1,500 lives and nearly \$200 million in the

program's first 18 months. The protocols have since been expanded to hospitals in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico to continue the national implementation of this approach for reducing HAIs.

AHRQ makes the business case for high quality care. AHRQ helps health care providers – from private practice physicians to large hospital systems – understand how to deliver the best care most efficiently. For example, AHRQ maintains the National Quality Measurement Clearinghouse (NQMC) to provide health care providers, health plans, delivery systems, and others with an accessible resource for quality measures and a one-stop-shop for benchmarks on providing more safe, effective and timely care. The breadth of evidence available from AHRQ empowers health care providers to understand not just how they compare to their peers, but also how to improve their performance to be more competitive.

AHRQ plays a critical role in the health continuum, building upon and extending the work of its public and nongovernmental partners to ensure patients get the right care at the right time, every time.

We thank you for your consideration of our request and look forward to helping you preserve the agency's continued vital role in improving our nation's health. For more information please contact Lindsey Horan at 202.292.6718 or [lindsey.horan@academyhealth.org](mailto:lindsey.horan@academyhealth.org).

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
AcademyHealth  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Physician Assistants  
American Association for Clinical Chemistry  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM)  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Heart Association  
American Medical Informatics Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Psychological Association

American Society of Nephrology  
American Thoracic Society  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Health Funding  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Joint Advocacy Coalition of ACTS & CRF  
March of Dimes  
Marshfield Clinic  
National Rural Health Association  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Palo Alto Medical Foundation Research Institute  
Research!America  
RTI International  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR)  
The American College of Rheumatology  
The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative  
The Spina Bifida Association