

The Honorable Harry Reid  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

December 3, 2009

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

The current debate on health care reform presents an unprecedented opportunity to improve the health of the nation. The over 40 organizations that have signed this letter, representing patients, survivors, advocacy organizations, professional societies and associations, caregivers, and academic research centers, believe that the expansion of comparative effectiveness research (CER) has the capacity to enhance medical decision-making, and ultimately improve the quality of the American health care system.

**The undersigned groups respectfully ask that the CER provisions in the “Senate Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” be retained as a part of the final Senate health reform bill.**

This diverse group believes comparative effectiveness research is imperative to generate additional evidence, and objective information, allowing health care providers and their patients to make the best individualized decisions possible.

A strong federal commitment to CER will help improve and expand much-needed data on the outcomes associated with the use of different medical interventions and examine factors that contribute to variations in outcomes.

Not only do we believe CER will generate data about what works best for certain subpopulations, we feel it will also spare patients from treatments that may not work for a specific subset of Americans. Ultimately, scientifically rigorous CER presents an enormous opportunity to accelerate progress toward more tailored or personalized medicine.

We acknowledge that evaluating the effectiveness of medical treatment alternatives is complex, and will require the flexibility to use various methods like randomized clinical trials, observational studies, the development of new and innovative research and study methods, as well as systematic reviews of existing data.

Therefore, in order to establish a robust CER program, we ask that the multiple health-related Federal agencies, which have strong scientific foundations, have a prominent role in study prioritization, methodology, dissemination and, in particular, the conduct and funding of trials which generate new clinical evidence.

On behalf of hundreds-of-thousands of patients, advocates, health care providers, researchers, and all Americans who seek enhanced information regarding their own health care options, we ask that the United States Senate retain Comparative Effectiveness Research as a vital part of the monumental Senate health care reform legislation (H.R. 3950) to give hope to patients and make much-needed improvement to the health of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Aging Research  
Alzheimer's Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering  
American Heart Association  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Society of Nephrology  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
The Autism Society  
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition  
Californians for Cures  
CancerCare  
CANN - Community Access National Network  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Friends of Cancer Research  
Kids With Heart National Assn for Children's Heart Disorders, Inc  
Komen Advocacy Alliance  
Lance Armstrong Foundation  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Men's Health Network  
MLD Foundation  
Men's Health Network  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)  
National Foundation for Ectodermal Dysplasias  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Spinal Cord Injury Association  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
PanCAN  
Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Pull-thru Network, Inc.  
Research!America  
Research for Cure  
Society for Women's Health Research  
United Cerebral Palsy  
United Spinal Association