



News Release

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CER, Patient Quality and Safety the Focus of Two President's Events

Comparative effectiveness research is a hot-button issue in the medical and political realms, with Congress, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) focusing both money and time on determining if it truly helps clinicians decide which treatments work best for patients in a given set of circumstances.

“Leaders of the AHRQ and NIH will discuss how these agencies will fund comparative effectiveness research studies over the next several years,” said ATS president J. Randall Curtis, M.D., M.P.H., professor of medicine at the University of Washington and head of the section of pulmonary and critical care at Harborview Medical Center, Seattle. “Attendees will learn from the people in charge how this funding can and should be used to improve the health of the public.”

One of those speakers, Carolyn Clancy, M.D., who is director of AHRQ, said that CER is important because it fills the gaps in evidence that prevent clinicians and patients from making solid, informed decisions.

“Ultimately, physicians want to take everything they have learned in science and tailor it to the individual circumstances of each patient, which is often hard because you don't have this comparative information,” Dr. Clancy said. “It is very exciting to think about getting this information into doctors' hands, helping them

to know exactly which treatment is right for each individual patient. I am happy, proud and excited to be a part of this effort.”

Dr. Clancy will talk about the CER initiatives being undertaken at the AHRQ, and anticipated opportunities and challenges, as well as those already encountered.

Other keynote speakers include Michael Lauer, M.D., director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s CER program, and Sean Tunis, M.D., of the Center for Medical Technology Policy, who will discuss opportunities and obstacles associated with CER at their respective institutions.

A report from the Institute for Medicine (IOM), Dr. Curtis added, has found that research is not as focused on CER as it needs to be. “In my opinion, the IOM report undervalues the importance of pulmonary, critical care and sleep research in CER, and I am hoping that this symposium can help us rectify that problem,” Dr. Curtis said.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 invested \$1.1 billion in federal initiatives to begin work on CER, which is considered by many a key building block of healthcare reform.

In addition to the President’s Symposium on CER, this year’s President’s Lecture focuses on patient safety. The lecture will be delivered by renowned patient safety expert, Peter Pronovost, M.D., Ph.D., a professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine’s Bloomberg School of Public Health and School of Nursing.

Dr. Pronovost is the author of a recent book, *“Safe Patients, Smart Hospitals: How One Doctor’s Checklist Can Help Us Change Health Care from the Inside Out”* and serves as medical director for the Center for Innovation in Quality Patient Care, which supports quality and safety efforts at the Johns Hopkins University Hospitals. In 2003, he established the Quality and Safety Research Group to advance the science of safety. His current research interests include: patient safety, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, critical care, ICU incident reporting systems, ICU physician staffing standard, and system measures of performance. He is also a frequent speaker on the topics of quality, and safety leadership and implementation of large scale change.

“Dr. Pronovost is a recipient of the MacArthur ‘Genius Award’ and was named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people in 2008,” Dr. Curtis said. “He is a pioneer in patient safety and quality. In his address, he will focus on the challenges he faced convincing traditional scientists and quality and safety experts to adapt their viewpoints to include patient quality and safety as an area of science. In his work, he has since successfully integrated the two.”

The President's lecture provides ATS Conference attendees with a unique perspective on medicine and science from the vantage point of distinguished scientists, physicians, academicians and businessmen.

"It is a great honor to give the president's lecture and I am humbled to be among the prior luminaries to receive this award," said Dr. Pronovost. "It is also visionary of the ATS leadership to focus on the important yet often neglected topic of patient safety and quality of care."

Dr. Pronovost has received many honors for his work, including the MacArthur Fellowship, known popularly as the "genius grant", in 2008. In that same year he was also named on *Time* magazine's "Time 100" list of the world's most influential people. The magazine's annual list recognizes people "whose power, talent or moral example is transforming our world." Dr. Pronovost's ICU infection prevention program is being endorsed by U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, chaired by Henry A. Waxman (D-CA). He is currently leading several large national and international safety projects, including leading World Health Organizations' efforts to improve patient safety measurement, evaluation, and leadership capacity globally.

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The President's Symposium will be held on Monday May 17, 1:30-4 p.m., Room 260-262 Morial Convention Center (second level)

The President's Lecture will be given by Dr. Pronovost on May 18, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. in the Morial Convention Center. La Nouvelle Orleans B-C (Second Level)