



March 19, 2012

The Honorable Dennis R. Rehberg
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 Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is transforming people's health in communities in every state around the nation. AHRQ funds the research and programs of your constituents at local universities, hospitals, and health departments that improve health care quality, enhance consumer choice, advance patient safety, improve efficiency, reduce medical errors, and broaden access to essential services. To expand AHRQ's capacity to generate this important science, the Friends of AHRQ urges you to provide the agency a **base, discretionary budget of \$400 million** in FY 2013.

Finding new ways to get the most out of every health care dollar is critical to our nation's fiscal health. We spend more than \$4 trillion annually on health care, with the federal government purchasing the largest share through Medicare, Medicaid, Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan, TRICARE, and veterans' health care. Health services research tells us that as much as 30 percent of this \$4 trillion—\$1.2 trillion—is wasteful or ineffective. Too many Americans receive care that is not of as high quality as it could be. We can do better, and AHRQ-funded research can show us how.

AHRQ's mission is to generate the evidence necessary to build a high-quality, high-value health care system. This science provides consumers and their health care professionals with valuable information to make the right health care decisions for themselves and their families. AHRQ's research also provides the basis for protocols that prevent medical errors and reduce hospital-acquired infections, and improve patient confidence, experiences, and outcomes in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and physician offices.

The Friends of AHRQ is a coalition of health professional, research, consumer, and employer organizations dedicated to ensuring the agency's continued vital role in improving our nation's health. We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to helping you further strengthen the agency. For more information on the Friends of AHRQ, contact Emily Holubowich at 202.484.1100 or eholubowich@dc-crd.com.

Sincerely,

AcademyHealth
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association for Clinical Chemistry
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Dental Research
American College of Cardiology
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Heart Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Nephrology
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
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 Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Coalition for Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Sciences Research
Coalition for Health Funding
Coalition to Promote Research
Consortium of Social Science Associations
North American Primary Care Research Group
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Society for General Internal Medicine
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
The Joint Commission