



March 14, 2012

Joe Selby, MD, MPH
Executive Director
Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute
1701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 300,
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Dr. Selby:

The American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC) appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) regarding its “Draft National Priorities for Research and Research Agenda.” We applaud PCORI’s efforts to engage the health care community and public in this deliberative process. We believe this dialogue is important to ensuring that the future research needs of patients, caregivers, and relevant best practices organizations are met.

AACC strongly supports this public-private initiative, which will expand the use of comparative effectiveness research (CER). We believe that generating additional data on the utility of medical treatments and services, particularly as they effect differing subpopulations, will result in more timely, accurate medical decisions. PCORI can play a key role in generating this much needed information.

As PCORI further defines its research agenda, AACC suggests that the Institute focus its initial attention on high prevalence, high cost conditions, such as Acute Coronary Syndrome, Heart Failure, Diabetes Mellitus and Cancer. Focusing attention on these types of conditions will provide assistance to more patients and families, while also reducing the overall costs to the health care delivery system.

AACC further suggests that PCORI fully utilize the expertise and resources of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) within this area. These two agencies already have the infrastructure and existing relationships necessary to assist PCORI in selecting studies and managing contracts. This would eliminate the need for the Institute to develop duplicative structures. We also support both agencies playing a key role in the dissemination of study findings.

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By way of background, AACC is the principal association of professional laboratory scientists--including MDs, PhDs and medical technologists. AACC's members develop and use chemical concepts, procedures, techniques and instrumentation in health-related investigations and work in hospitals, independent laboratories and the diagnostics industry worldwide. The AACC provides international leadership in advancing the practice and profession of clinical laboratory science and its application to health care. If you have any questions, please call me at (804) 828-0375, or Vince Stine, PhD, Director, Government Affairs, at (202) 835-8721.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G Miller", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Greg Miller, PhD
President, AACC