

Medicare Evidentiary Priorities

Diagnostics and Screening		
Category	Research area	Research question
Cancer	Cancer Biomarkers	What is the potential benefit of cancer prognostic markers such as OncoDX and Her-2-Neu?
Cardiovascular Disease	Imaging	How cost effective is CT angiography?
Cardiovascular Disease	Imaging	In patients with suspected stable angina, what initial imaging test has the highest health value (e.g., SPECT, ECHO, CT angiography, retinal imaging)?
Cardiovascular Disease	Peripheral Artery Disease	Does routine screening for PAD (e.g., with ABI) improve patient function status and/or quality of life?
Cardiovascular Disease	Screening for Atherosclerosis	Does screening for atherosclerotic disease improve outcomes? Is it cost-effective?
Cardiovascular Disease	CVD Biomarkers	Does routine addition of CRP for other biomarkers to standard lipid profiles reduce risk of clinical vascular disease?
Cardiovascular Disease	Imaging	Does vascular disease imaging drive practice patterns?
Diabetes	Control	Which type of glucose monitoring (i.e., continuous vs. intermittent) is more effective on different beneficial outcomes, such as prevention of hypoglycemia, HgbA1c levels, or diabetic complications?
Genomics	Genetic Risk Factors	How does knowledge of genetic risk determinants improve screening and prevention programs (cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes, other)?
Infectious Disease	MRSA/Antimicrobial Resistance	How effective (accurate) is current testing for MRSA?
Lung	Implementation	What are appropriate indications for using diagnostic spirometry?

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Musculoskeletal	Osteoporosis/ Dosimetry	What comparative effectiveness studies of bone density testing, overall and in subgroups, would answer the following question: Does bone density dosimetry improve health outcomes in subgroups of the population?
Neurologic Disease	Headache	What is the benefit of neuroimaging modalities for headache?
Sleep Disorders	Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea	What is the impact of screening/early intervention for obstructive sleep apnea on reducing other morbidity and mortality?
Interventions		
Category	Research Area	Research question
Aging	At Risk Elderly	What type of structured exercise program will maintain mobility and functional independence in at-risk elderly?
Alcohol/Substance Abuse	Alcoholism	What type of medical mgmt model is most effective for the treatment of alcohol use disorders?
Cancer	Toxic Cancer Drugs	Are some cancer treatments more toxic in older patients with co-morbidities?
Cardiovascular Disease	Cardiac Arrest	What is the effect of total body cooling in sudden death on health outcomes?
Cardiovascular Disease	Heart Failure Treatment	What is the efficacy of various drug treatments for diastolic heart failure?
Cardiovascular Disease	Heart Failure Treatment	How effective is aggressive blood pressure management in the elderly in preventing or delaying CHF?
Cardiovascular Disease	Stents	What is the effect of long-term use of antiplatelets following drug-eluting stents on health outcomes?
Cardiovascular Disease	Stents	Is there overuse of coronary artery angioplasty and stenting, as opposed to medical therapy?
Cardiovascular Disease	Stents	How effective is the use of drug eluting stents for severe vascular disease?
Diabetes	Diabetes	What are optimal hemoglobin A1c goals in elderly?

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Diabetes	Diabetes	What is the optimal program for behavioral therapy for managing diabetes?
Diabetes	Diabetes	What devices or combination of devices provides optimal outcomes?
Diabetes	Injuries	What assistive devices for patients with diabetic neuropathy will improve mobility and decrease falls?
Eye	Vision Correction	Would it be cost effective to pay for glasses and what would the cost offset be?
Hematology	Anemia	What is the optimal strategy of transfusion in seriously ill patients, including ESAs vs. amount to transfuse?
Lung	COPD	Are there benefits of pulmonary rehab in individuals with COPD that justify coverage?
Mental Health	Alzheimer's Disease	What is the optimal management program for psychiatric/behavioral disorders in Alzheimer's dementia?
Mental Health	Depression	What is the benefit of determining CYP450 in initiation of anti-depressants in the elderly?
Mental Health	Psychiatric Care	What is the effect on outcomes of paying for psychiatric care manager time?
Musculoskeletal	Cartilage Disease	What is the comparative effectiveness for surgical vs. medical management for osteoarthritis?
Musculoskeletal	Osteoporosis	How effective is Vitamin D supplementation on musculoskeletal health and symptoms?
Musculoskeletal	Pain	How do CHF and hypertension affect renal toxicity of NSAIDs?
Musculoskeletal	Rheumatoid Arthritis	What is the value of non-biologic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs) vs. biologics in the treatment of RA?
Musculoskeletal	Spine	What is the effectiveness of spinal cord stimulation for chronic pain on health outcomes?
Musculoskeletal	Spine	What is the value of vertebralplasty, including cost effectiveness, on health outcomes?
Musculoskeletal	Spine	What is the effectiveness of spinal cord stimulation on health outcomes?

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Neurology	Cerebrovascular Disease	What is the comparative effectiveness of treatments for carotid artery disease (stenting vs. endarterectomy; best medical vs. interventional management for asymptomatic disease)?
Neurology	Head Trauma	Is intensive therapy (30-40hrs/wk) cost effective in improving outcomes after severe head injury and stroke as compared to standard coverage?
Neurology	Hearing/Speech/Balance/Swallow	What is the benefit of provision of hearing aids on cognitive function in the hearing impaired?
Neurology	Hearing/Speech/Balance/Swallow	Do laryngeal devices (stimulators) reduce aspiration pneumonia in patients with dysphagia?
Neurology	Neurodegenerative Disease	Does occupational, physical, and speech therapy slow functional deterioration in neurodegenerative diseases?
Neurology	Neurodegenerative Disease	Does occupational, physical, and speech therapy slow functional deterioration in neurodegenerative diseases?
Neurology	Stroke and Stroke Related Conditions	What is the efficacy of post-acute stroke care in improving functional outcome of stroke in older persons?
Neurology	Stroke and Stroke Related Conditions	What is the comparative effectiveness of different treatments for acute stroke: intra-arterial clot retrieval vs. intravenous reperfusion drugs?
Neurology	Stroke and Stroke Related Conditions	What is the effectiveness of TPA to other interventions on health outcomes?
Neurology	Stroke and Stroke Related Conditions	What is the optimal treatment of patent foramen ovale post stroke?
Prevention	Chronic Illness	Do interventions to increase aerobic fitness have broad health benefits or benefits for people with specific chronic illnesses (e.g., COPD, ischemic heart disease, depression, obesity, CHF)?
Prevention	Influenza	What is the optimal use of antivirals (not including vaccines) to prevent influenza sequelae?
Prevention	Cost Saving Treatments	Does increasing utilization of treatments proven low cost and effective such as aspirin and flu shots affect health care utilization?
Skin	Wound Care	What is the comparative effectiveness of treatment for pressure ulcers: off-loading, debridement (physical vs. enzymatic)?

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Skin	Wound Care	How can the use of vacuum assisted closures and both static and fluidized air mattresses be optimized?
Transplant	Rejection	What interventions are effective in increasing adherence to antirejection meds?
Urology	BPH	What are the outcomes associated with new minimally invasive surgical techniques on LUTS outcomes? – transurethral needle ablation, transurethral microwave thermotherapy, etc. vs. medical treatment
Urology	Incontinence	Are there interventions that could prevent institutionalization of incontinent patients?
Urology	Incontinence	What is the comparative effectiveness of urological therapy in spinal cord patients: intermittent vs. indwelling catheters?
Policy Issues		
Category Research Area Research question		
Barriers	Access and Adherence to Treatment	To what extent do co-payments and socioeconomic factors affect access to and adherence with pharmacotherapy?
Barriers	RCT Enrollment	What are ways to improve enrollment in clinical trials of Medicare elderly and disabled (reduce barriers such as Medicare payment policies, and trial enrollment, and eligibility)?
Data Bank	Genomics/Genetics	What is the feasibility of developing a voluntary DNA databank for genome-wide association studies?
Disease Management	Diabetes	How effective are care management programs for diabetes? What is the best way to finance them?
Disease Management	Optimization	What is the optimum method to apply disease specific guidelines to individuals with multi-system diseases? How do we use this information to optimize multi-specialty physician communication? How do we use this information to optimize treatment and prevention strategies?

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Disease Management	Optimization of Pain Treatment	Is there a model for pain treatment that might be effective for multi-modal treatment that might work in a large system?
Disease Management	Self Management	What supportive environment needs to be present for self-management? Who should deliver these services?
Electronic Health Records	Disease Management	How will EHR address the issue of conflicting management of chronic disease patients between different physicians seen by patients?
Electronic Health Records	Optimization	How do we optimize the use of electronic databases and EHR to advance medical research, patient safety, and outcome measure research?
Electronic Health Records	Optimization	What types of incentives will encourage the adoption of EHR - to facilitate point of care research to collect data and possibly evidence to support future CMS decisions on coverage?
Electronic Health Records	Optimization	What are innovative strategies to use electronic databases and other administrative data for surveillance of influenza and other infectious diseases? How do we collaborate with international organizations to accomplish this goal in the US?
Electronic Health Records	Value	How can the use of EHR improve the quality of care, care coordination, and cost of care?
Formulary	Policy	Do formulary rules provide incentives to inhibit appropriate clinical care? Do the current formulary rules create risk to adverse patient outcomes (i.e. antipsychotics and anti-rejection drugs)?
Genomics/Genetics	Chronic Disease Management	How does knowledge of structured family history information improve chronic disease care in the CMS population, including younger individuals with disabilities? What is the appropriate framework to determine the added value of genetic tests to patient care management?
Guidelines	Adherence	How do we improve adherence to guidelines for prescribing aspirin and beta-blockers post-MI?

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Guidelines	Dissemination	How do we create a process for disseminating new guidelines and evidence to healthcare facilities and providers in a concise, systematic way, to facilitate implementation?
Healthcare Policy	Optimization	How can we do huge screening trials at affordable costs (e.g., use of Web)?
Medical Decision Making	Computerized Support	What is the value of computerized decision support, for clinicians and patients?
Medicare Advantage	Value	How effective and cost-effective are care management programs?
Patient Access To Medical Records	Access And Adherence To Treatment	What is the impact on adherence and outcomes if patients have access to their own medical records?
Payment Policy	Approach To Coverage	Issues: Reimbursement and appropriateness of transitions of care. How will Medicare reimbursement be an incentive for appropriate transitions/sequencing of care between hospitals, nursing homes, post-acute care, and home health care? Are coverage rules for Medicare and Medicaid encouraging clinically inappropriate transitions between acute care rehab, LT care, and home care?
Payment Policy	Hearing Aid Coverage	Will coverage of hearing aids for the elderly population impact quality of life and health status in terms of communication skills?
Payment Policy	Prevention	How could payment policy be used to improve implementation of primary and secondary prevention?
Payment Policy	Transplant	Is loss of CMS benefits related to subsequent graft loss in renal transplant patients?
Payment Policy	Vaccine Coverage	Why not cover vaccines under Part B rather than part D?
Payment Policy	Welcome To Medicare IPPE Benefit	Which components are included and why? How is the exam being used? Should this benefit be re-oriented from chronic disease detection and treatment to prevention?
Public Policy	Patient Safety	What is the optimal combination of federal, local state, and private regulations to improve patient safety and diminish adverse events?

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Risk Reduction	Fall Risk	What is the effectiveness of enhanced coverage and implementation of targeted fall risk evaluation and management programs in preventing falls, fractures, and disability in a real world setting?
Telemedicine	Barriers to Care and Access	How can telemedicine be optimized to meet the need of patients by region/locality?