

ABHC

Alliance for Better Health Care

June 16, 2008

The Honorable Donna M. Christensen
Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust
1510 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Christensen,

The undersigned members of the Alliance for Better Health Care (ABHC) Coalition thank the Congressional Black Caucus for its interest and support of comparative effectiveness research. We too believe that an expanded initiative in comparative effectiveness can provide an opportunity to improve care for all patients and help eliminate health care disparities. The ABHC is a coalition of organizations representing consumers, employers, health care providers, health plans, pharmacists, researchers, unions, pharmaceutical benefit managers, and other interested stakeholders that believe—as you do— that high quality health care requires sound evidence to improve medical decision-making.

Comparative effectiveness research, at its core, is aligned with the priorities of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust. Hastening the speed of evidence development will not only help improve overall health care quality, it will help to inform our understanding of how to eliminate the disparities found among ethnic and racial minority groups as well as those based on socioeconomic characteristics. A stronger, broader evidence base is an essential prerequisite to making recommendations for clinical practice and health policy.

We believe that the promise of comparative effectiveness research is to identify what works best for whom. We must work to expand the nation's investment in research that will tell us which interventions, devices, and drugs work best for which populations. Of necessity, studies that help us ensure the safety and efficacy/effectiveness of medications, drugs, devices, and procedures must ensure that all population groups are adequately represented in the research.

The Honorable Donna M. Christensen
June 16, 2008
Page 2

Comparative effectiveness research holds the promise of improving health care quality and outcomes for all patients. ABHC believes that greater investments in comparative effectiveness research now will help us to move toward a high quality, efficient, and equitable health care system. We look forward to working with you on this issue. If you should need further information, please contact Anna Schwamlein Howard of AARP at 202-434-3793 or by e-mail at ashoward@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

AARP
Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy
Aetna Inc.
American Osteopathic Association
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
BlueCross BlueShield Association
Blue Shield of California
Coalition for Health Services Research
CVS Caremark, Inc.
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SEIU
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Joined by: Consumers Union