



Changing the Conversation About Value:

Consumers Join with Evidence Experts to Develop Lists of Proven Best ChoicesSM in Health Care

Proven Best Choices is a partnership between the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER) and Families USA reflecting their common belief that meeting the challenge of the next frontier in assuring access to affordable, quality health care will require a transformation in the national conversation about value. This transformation can only be built upon a deeper collaboration between consumers and experts in evidence-based medicine. Together they will be able to create a new framework through which patients, families, and clinicians can understand information on effectiveness and value and integrate that information into clinical decisions. Together they can also produce trusted information that will strengthen the development of benefit designs, coverage policies, and payment mechanisms that align with patient goals to shift care toward a new standard of high value. This is the purpose of the Proven Best Choices program.

In the first phase of this program, supported by seed funding from the Kaiser Permanente National Community Benefit Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation, ICER and Families USA have been working to co-create an initial list of tests and treatments that can be considered Proven Best Choices for five common health care conditions: localized prostate cancer, breast cancer screening for women with dense breast tissue, low back pain, type 2 diabetes, and ADHD. Moving forward from the “do not do” concept embodied in other campaigns, these lists of Proven Best Choices will help patients and clinicians focus on which tests or treatments “to do” when several reasonable care options exist. For example, there are five major options for treating localized prostate cancer. No single approach is best for all men, but systematic reviews of the evidence demonstrate that three options -- active surveillance, brachytherapy, and prostatectomy -- have equivalent overall outcomes and lower costs than two other options -- external radiation therapy (IMRT) or proton beam therapy. The first three options thus can be identified as Proven Best Choices, with the others designated as offering lower value to patients and the health care system. Going forward, we plan to produce and disseminate an annual list of about a half-dozen Proven Best Choices reports.

The main goals of the Proven Best Choices program are:

1. To provide an independent, trustworthy source of information to help patients and their families evaluate health care options, to empower them in discussions with clinicians, and to support them in selecting the high value options that best meet their needs.
2. To spur the development of payment and quality measurement reforms to support high-value care, including episode-based and other global payment mechanisms;
3. To provide a trustworthy source of information with which to assign services to different tiers in value-based benefit designs that reward patients for selecting high-value care options;
4. To catalyze efforts by physician professional societies to consider cost-effectiveness as well as clinical effectiveness as the basis for recommendations in clinical guidelines and other mechanisms to improve the value of health care services;

5. To raise awareness among the media, policymakers, and the public of the significant resources spent on health care services that are not known to be more effective but are more expensive than other available alternatives.

Patients, clinicians, payers, and the public all seek independent, credible guidance on how to encourage better use of evidence to improve health care decisions. We seek to meet this need by producing scientifically rigorous, trustworthy evidence reviews that capture the public's attention, are formatted in ways that will prove actionable for patients and clinicians, and that support broader payment and benefit design initiatives to support higher value care. Ultimately, we believe this program could prove to be a powerful agent in helping patients and their families achieve their health goals while changing the nature of the national conversation about effectiveness and value in health care.