Position Specification

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

Scientific Program Leader
PCOR Infrastructure Research

April 2012
POSITION SPECIFICATION

Position: Scientific Program Leader- PCOR Infrastructure Research
Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

Location: Greater Washington, D.C. Area

Reports to: PCORI Executive Director/Chief Scientific Officer

Website: www.pcori.org

SUMMARY

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is seeking a senior Scientist to lead PCORI’s work in building infrastructure to support patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR). Infrastructure refers to three key areas of activity: building data infrastructure to support PCOR, training researchers in the conduct of PCOR; and refinements of methods related to PCOR. The candidate will bring expertise in one or more of the following research areas: analytic methods for experimental and quasi-experimental study designs; methodological research to understand optimal approaches for identifying and prioritizing PCOR questions; discovery of better approaches to effectively engage patients and other stakeholders in research; research on building, linking, validating and using networks of clinical databases for the purposes of conducting PCOR; and/or expertise in design and implementation of training programs in methods for PCOR approaches for researchers, and/or expertise in establishing data infrastructure. The Scientific Program Leader will develop and lead a team of scientists and research associates in implementing and managing PCORI’s research agenda in this area. The candidate will also demonstrate expertise in Research Program Development and in translation of research findings into clinical practice. The ideal candidate will be committed to collaborating with subject matter experts in patient-centered outcomes research and health services and health systems research to advance the PCORI research agenda.

The Scientific Program Leader for PCOR Infrastructure Research will be primarily responsible for advancing that portion of PCORI’s research agenda devoted to developing and advancing methodologies that quickly and efficiently promote patient-centered CER.

The applicant will have demonstrated expertise in research on methods and/or data infrastructure, and/or training related to developing and implementing PCOR that should include some or all of the following specific areas:
• identifying optimal methods for engaging patients, those at risk, and other stakeholders in PCOR, particularly those who have been historically hard-to-reach
• determining methods for assuring study questions, outcomes, and interventions are meaningful to patients and other stakeholders,
• improving the validity and/or efficiency of analytic methods for comparative effectiveness research or of outcomes commonly used in PCOR
• evaluating the validity and efficiency of data sources commonly used in PCOR
• methods to enhance the reproducibility, transparency, and replication of PCOR research
• improving and possibly comparing strategies for training researchers, patients and other stakeholders in the methods of patient-centered outcomes research, and/or supporting the routine collection of key patient-reported and patient-centered outcomes in systematic ways

PCORI is recruiting Scientific Program Leaders for each of PCORI’s five research priority areas. These Program Leaders work jointly to develop and implement a patient-centered outcomes research portfolio. An important aspect of this work is the ongoing evaluation of the processes by which patients and other stakeholders are engaged in the research enterprise and of the impact of this engagement.

The Scientific Program Leader for Methods Research will be responsible for recruiting, managing and mentoring a program team comprised of individuals with a range of training and experience levels. The program team will work closely with PCORI’s Board of Governors, its Methodology Committee and the Executive Director in developing funding announcements, in supporting merit review of applications, in managing funded projects, and in synthesizing and summarizing the findings of PCORI-funded projects. It is anticipated that team members will serve as co-investigators on some funded research projects.

This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC, where PCORI is based.

PCORI’S MISSION STATEMENT
PCORI helps people make informed healthcare decisions, and improves healthcare delivery and outcomes, by producing and promoting high-integrity, evidenced-based information, that comes from research guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader health care community.

ABOUT PCORI
The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) was established under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA). The purpose of the Institute is to assist patients, clinicians, purchasers, and policy-makers in making informed health decisions by advancing the quality and relevance of evidence concerning the manner in which diseases, disorders and other health conditions
can effectively and appropriately be prevented, diagnosed, treated, monitored, and managed through research and evidence synthesis that considers variations in patient sub-populations, and the dissemination of research findings, with respect to relative health outcomes, clinical effectiveness, and appropriateness of medical treatments and services.

The Institute will spearhead efforts to prioritize and fund comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) using a largely stakeholder-driven process. This initiative builds upon the strong foundation laid in 2009 by the $1.1 billion in funding for CER in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The Institute will establish and execute a national patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) agenda by identifying research priorities and funding and facilitating new PCOR studies. These studies will consist of both systematic reviews of existing evidence and new prospective research, including clinical trials and observational studies.

The primary duties of the Institute are to:

- Identify national priorities for research;
- Establish and update a research project agenda;
- Adopt research methodological standards developed by its Methodology Committee;
- Contract with eligible entities for the management of funding and conduct of research;
- Disseminate the results to clinicians, patients and to the general public;
- Measure the impact of research on clinical decision-making and health status; and
- Obtain public and stakeholder input at all stages of the research process.

A standing methodology committee has been established to lead efforts to identify and refine methodological standards for different types of CER study designs, such as pragmatic clinical trials, randomized controlled trials, and patient registries. The 17-member committee is composed of experts in comparative effectiveness methods, biostatisticians, epidemiologists, health services researchers, and other experts. The committee must release methodological standards for conducting CER by May, 2012. These standards must then be adopted by the Board of the Institute and will be used to select proposed studies for funding and to guide researchers as they design studies. In addition, the committee will develop tools to help researchers determine which methods are most appropriate for a particular research question.

The Institute may form a number of advisory panels to assist in identifying research priorities, establishing the research project agenda and for other purposes. These panels will include practicing and research clinicians, patients, and experts in scientific and health services research, health services delivery, and evidence-based medicine, and as appropriate, experts in integrative health and primary prevention strategies. Notably, the health reform bill requires the Institute to provide patients and consumers with the extra support, tools, and resources necessary to be effective members of these
advisory panels. In addition, there will be public comment periods to allow the general public to provide feedback to the Institute on proposed priorities and other key decisions prior to adoption by the Institute, in an effort to make the work of the Institute and advisory panels as transparent as possible.

Research findings must be released by the Institute to the general public no later than 90 days after they are available. The Office of Communications and Knowledge Transfer at AHRQ is also tasked with broadly disseminating the research findings, with assistance from NIH. This will include consultation with medical and clinical associations to ensure that findings are translated into clinical decision support tools.

The Institute’s staff is led by an Executive Director, Dr. Joe Selby, who reports to PCORI’s Board of Governors, which includes the directors of NIH and AHRQ, and representatives of patients, consumers, physicians, nurses, hospitals, private payers, drug and device industries, quality improvement organizations, and other federal and state health agencies. The Comptroller General of the United States has appointed members to the Board for initial terms of two to six years and has designated a chair and vice chair. Thereafter, all subsequent appointments are for six-year terms.

The Institute is funded through the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund (PCORTF), which will consist of the following funding streams: for 2010-2012, PCORI funding will amount to $210 million from general revenues; for 2013, PCORI funding will be general revenues of $150 million plus an annual $1 fee per Medicare beneficiary transferred from the Medicare Trust Fund plus a $1 fee per individual assessed on private health plans; for 2014-2019, PCORI funding will be general revenues of $150 million plus a $2 fee per Medicare beneficiary plus a $2 fee per privately insured individual. By 2015, total annual funding for the Institute will reach nearly $500 million. Each year, 20% of PCORI funding shall be transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services to support AHRQ’s responsibilities under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, specifically referencing the Office of Communications and Knowledge Transfer.

PATIENT-CENTERED RESEARCH
What will make PCORI unique among research organizations is expressed in the last phrase of its mission statement; “……guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader healthcare community.” PCORI’s Board of Governors believes that engagement of patients and other stakeholders is essential to realize the Institute’s full potential to be a credible, trusted source of information for patients, caregivers, providers and others. From PCORI’s perspective, engagement extends well beyond the simple notion of securing input from a variety of stakeholders. PCORI involves patients, caregivers, and other stakeholders in a true partnership of shared accountability and ownership of PCORI’s priorities, research agenda, and research questions, design, and processes. Consensus development will accelerate dissemination, increase acceptance, and drive demand for PCORI’s work products. Stakeholder engagement, when coupled with a commitment to apply the highest standards of scientific rigor and integrity to its research, positions the Institute to be effective in identifying and filling important knowledge gaps confronting patients, clinicians, and policy makers. PCORI is committed to evaluating and documenting the results and effectiveness of its engagement efforts.
PCORI seeks to attract and retain scientists who are eager to work in such an environment in planning, overseeing, and participating in patient-centered outcomes research as defined above, in partnership with patients and other stakeholders. These scientists will bring their specific research training and expertise to these partnerships and ensure that PCORI-funded research is of the highest scientific integrity. PCORI is committed to providing adequate time for scientists to participate in preparation and publication of scientific papers on patient-centered outcomes research in the peer-reviewed literature.

**PCORI SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM LEADER’S KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Work with PCORI Executive Director and with Committees of PCORI’s Board of Governors in developing and updating PCORI’s National Priorities for Research and PCORI’s Research Agenda.

- Conduct background research and develop PCORI Funding Announcements (PFAs) that solicit applications for PCORI-funded studies as part of PCORI’s Research Agenda, with specific emphasis on methods research and data infrastructure for PCOR.

- Oversee the progress of PCORI-funded grants and contracts including reviewing progress reports, enabling or providing assistance where needed, maintaining communication among funded researchers as appropriate, and working in collaboration with grants managers who are responsible for the financial and compliance aspects of grants.

- Convene and participate in PCORI-sponsored meetings of scientists, clinicians, and other stakeholders to focus attention on and advance understanding of the methods and findings of patient-centered, comparative clinical effectiveness research.

- Collaborate closely with other PCORI Scientific Program Leaders to bring a patient-centered, public health perspective to developing and implementing PCORI’s Research Agenda.

- Collaborate with PCORI Directors of Communication, Patient Engagement, and Stakeholder Engagement as appropriate in evaluating and improving the processes used by PCORI to engage stakeholder communities and disseminate study findings.

- Participate as co-investigator in selected PCORI-funded research.

- The Scientific Program Leader also works with other Scientific Program Leaders and other staff to assess and report on the effectiveness and impact of PCORI’s priority program areas.

- Contribute to the peer-reviewed scientific literature in areas related to patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research.
FIRST TWO YEARS' MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Candidate will lead a Program team responsible for PCORI’s portfolio of research funded under its priority of Accelerating PCOR and Methodological Research.
- Candidate will have established research expertise in the area of patient-centered research that is recognized within PCOR methodology research community.
- Candidate will have published peer-reviewed scientific publications (average of one per year) that contribute to the science of PCOR-relevant methods. Papers may include research results from PCORI-funded contracts, as well as reports of internal evaluations of PCORI engagement and dissemination activities, or thought pieces.

REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS & EDUCATION

- Content expertise in analytic research methods derived from a combination of academic preparation, research and experience managing research programs or significant projects including analysis, risk assessment, and development of recommendations; experience measuring and reporting on program outcomes and grant application process is preferred.
- Senior level researchers with a doctoral degree in a research discipline relevant to patient-centered outcomes research (e.g., clinical epidemiology, health services research, sociology, psychology, biostatistics, economics, education or health education); or a Master’s degree in one of these disciplines along with a professional clinical degree (e.g., medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, clinical psychology) are welcome to apply.
- Specific training and/or research experience in conducting studies that address:
  1) involvement of patients and/or other stakeholders in aspects of the research process, including identification, refinement or prioritization of research questions; selection of study design; patient recruitment and participation; or analysis and interpretation of research findings; and/or
  2) methodological or empirical aspects of observational or experimental comparative clinical effectiveness research; and/or
  3) the synthesis of findings from multiple experimental or observational studies to address questions of comparative clinical effectiveness; and/or
  4) The translation or dissemination of research findings for patients and/or clinicians, including the use of novel approaches to dissemination such as web-based or social media-based interventions.
- Excellent writing skills, including previous success in publishing first-authored scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals.
- An interest in working with patients and/or other stakeholders in the planning and conduct of patient-centered research.
• A track record of program leadership with strong interpersonal skills, experience in recruiting and mentoring research staff, and an ability to move from ideas to action.

• An ability to communicate effectively and professionally with a diverse range of people from different scientific and non-scientific backgrounds and education.

• Intellectual curiosity, flexibility, and initiative with the ability to listen and learn from others remaining open to input and feedback.

COMPENSATION
A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract outstanding candidates.

TO APPLY
Qualified candidates are invited to apply by sending a cover letter, resume and salary expectations to kevin.hicar@rhies.com. Please be sure to put the job title in the subject line of the email and indicate how you learned of this opening.

PCORI is an equal opportunity employer committed to cultural diversity in the workplace.