

MTPPI Receives Award from Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute to Develop a Causal Inference Toolkit

Bethesda, Maryland (Sept. 12, 2013) – The Medical Technology and Practice Patterns Institute (MTPPI) has been awarded a research contract from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to develop a Causal Inference Toolkit using large observational data. The study is part of a portfolio of projects that will advance the field of patient-centered comparative effectiveness research and provide patients with information that will help them make better-informed decisions about their care.

Yi Zhang, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate will lead the research project at MTPPI and will work with her co-Principal Investigator, Miguel Hernan, MD, Dr.P.H. professor from Harvard School of Public Health. The project will focus on the development of a specialized Toolkit to provide a comprehensive, practical, and accessible guide to implementing cutting-edge statistical techniques to conduct causal modeling such as inverse-probability weighting and the parametric g-formula approach. These advanced analytical methods answer questions about cause and effect of various treatments and help patients to understand causation, not just association, when making complicated health-related decisions. The clinical usability, feasibility, and effectiveness of the Toolkit will be evaluated among multiple stakeholders so that it can be easily shared by researchers who want to use the abundance of collected data to answer research questions that patients care about.

“This project was selected for PCORI funding on the basis of its potential to advance the relatively new field of patient-centered comparative effectiveness research, which focuses on measuring outcomes that matter most to patients and those who care for them,” said PCORI Executive Director Joe Selby, MD, MPH. “By enhancing the methods for conducting this new approach to health research, this study will provide information that will ultimately help people make more fully informed health and healthcare decisions. We look forward to following the study’s progress and working with MTPPI to share the results.”

The MTPPI study is one of 71 projects totaling more than \$114 million approved for funding by PCORI’s Board of Governors on Tuesday, Sept. 10. The awards were a mix of projects that included the first made to studies specifically targeting improvement of research methods. All were selected through a highly competitive review process in which scientists, patients, caregivers, and other stakeholders helped to evaluate more than 570 proposals that responded fully to five PCORI funding announcements.

Proposals were evaluated on the basis of scientific merit, how well they engage patients and other stakeholders, their methodological rigor, and how well they fit within PCORI’s national research priorities. All awards were approved pending completion of a business and programmatic review by PCORI staff and issuance of a formal award contract.

The awards are part of PCORI’s latest round of primary research funding. Through previous funding cycles, including a round of pilot projects, and other initiatives, PCORI has committed a total of \$304 million since 2012 to support patient-centered comparative effectiveness research.

For more information about MTPPI’s Toolkit: contact Dennis Cotter at 301-652-4005 or dcott@mtpi.org

For more information about PCORI funding, visit <http://pcori.org/funding-opportunities>.

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About PCORI

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is an independent, non-profit organization authorized by Congress in 2010. Its mission is to fund research that will provide patients, their caregivers and clinicians with the evidence-based information needed to make better-informed health care decisions. PCORI is committed to continuously seeking input from a broad range of stakeholders to guide its work. More information is available at www.pcori.org.