



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: DAVID DI MARTINO 202-661-6368

ddimartino@improvepatientcare.org

COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS RESEARCH MUST PUT PATIENTS FIRST

House Proposal May Limit Patient And Provider Input and Deny Access To Treatment Options

January 16, 2009-Washington, DC – the Partnership to Improve Patient Care (PIPC) today issued the following statement in response to the economic stimulus proposal released by the U.S. House of Representatives:

“PIPC supports Comparative Effectiveness Research as a useful tool for provider and patient decision-making. We appreciate Congress' recognition of the importance of the research. However, this current proposal may allow CER to be conducted and utilized in an inappropriate manner that may limit treatment options for patients.

“Congress should take the time to ensure that any legislation on comparative effectiveness research includes provisions that are in line with PIPC principles to ensure the program remains focused on improved health care quality and patient and provider needs. These provisions include a clear focus on comparative clinical effectiveness research, ensuring the research entity does not make centralized decisions about patient access, and requirements for patient and provider participation through an open and transparent process.

“Among our concerns about the House language is the lack of a provision for patient or other stakeholder participation in the process and to recognize diversity in research or differences in individual patient needs and preferences. There is also no assurance that the research won't be used for cost effectiveness research which would be used to deny patient access to best treatment options and there are no assurances that the government won't use the data to make national coverage determinations.

“As this stimulus package is developed in the Senate it is our hope that patients and other stakeholders have a stronger voice in the CER process.”

The Partnership to Improve Patient Care was formed in November 2008 to support proposals to expand the government's role in comparative effectiveness research that are centered on patient and provider needs; raise awareness about the value of well-designed CER; and promote the important role of continued medical innovation as part of the solution to cost and quality challenges in health care. Partnership members include a wide range of health care organizations representing patient, provider and industry advocacy groups.

To learn more about PIPC, visit <http://www.improvepatientcare.org>.