

# Action Guide for RESEARCH SPONSORS



Through their financial support, organizations sponsoring patient-centered outcomes research, comparative effectiveness research, health economics and outcomes research, and related research make health technology assessment (HTA) possible. Directors, program officers, and other decision-makers within these entities (e.g., government, foundations, life science companies) set priorities, establish review criteria and processes, and provide oversight. The actions below highlight opportunities for research sponsors to act as stewards for equity-centered HTA by prioritizing patient and caregiver partnership throughout HTA conduct, ensuring that these partnerships are representative and fairly recognized, and supporting efforts to diversify the HTA workforce.

## Research sponsor actions to center equity in HTA:

- Make evidence of partnership with patients and caregivers a prerequisite for funding approval. Encourage partnerships starting during proposal development and throughout HTA processes.
- Encourage co-investigator and leadership roles for patients and caregivers in HTA research.
- Require compensation for patient and caregiver partners as part of HTA budgets. Approve compensation at fair market rates.
- Require prospective HTA teams to describe dimensions of diversity within their team. Prioritize funding those teams bringing more diversity in perspectives, cultures, experiences, and expertise.
- Require reporting that include details of partnerships with patients and caregivers, including their roles and contributions and how well partners represent marginalized communities.
- Collect self-reported demographic data from researchers receiving funding for HTA work. Publicly report diversity of award recipients.
- Fund patient organizations to develop and provide training and learning communities that prepare patients and caregivers for engaging in HTA work.
- Fund fellowships, leadership training, and mentorship for early- and mid-career HTA professionals who identify as part of communities that experience persistent health inequities and/or are underrepresented in health research.



## Resource Spotlight: Guidance for Research Sponsors

- The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute's (PCORI) [merit review criteria](#) include detailed guidance for assessing patient-centeredness and patient and stakeholder engagement within funding applications. PCORI has also established [methodology standards associated with patient-centeredness](#), including engaging people representative of the population of interest. These standards provide criteria against which to assess the rigor and representativeness of patient engagement in research.
- FasterCures provides an [Action Plan to Address Diversity across Clinical Trials and Biomedical Research](#) with recommendations for ways funders can improve representativeness within research while increasing workforce diversity.
- In its [Consolidated Health Economic Evaluation Reporting Standards](#) (CHEERS) (updated 2022), the Professional Society for Health Economics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) provides guidance on reporting the process and impact of **patient and caregiver engagement** in health economic analyses and research. While this guidance does not yet address equity, by requiring researchers to follow this guidance, sponsors will create transparency around the role of patients and caregivers in HTA conduct; representativeness of those partners; and recognition of their contributions.

