

# The Center for the Evaluation of Value and Risk in Health

Institute for Clinical Research and Health Policy Studies, Tufts Medical Center

## CEVR Spring Newsletter

May 2011

### Welcome to our Spring newsletter

As health reform implementation continues, it is useful to consider how the system may adapt to handle new medical technology. In a recent *NEJM* perspective, my CEVR colleague, James Chambers, and I analyze Medicare's ongoing national coverage analysis for "Provenge" (Sipuleucel-T) a new treatment option for certain patients with prostate cancer. With estimated survival gains of 4.1 months compared to placebo, and costing \$93,000 per course of treatment, Provenge raises many policy questions. Ultimately, its lasting legacy may be its role in accelerating overdue payment reforms, which could take the form of bundled payments or accountable care organizations.

- **Peter J. Neumann, ScD**  
Director, CEVR

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Cangelosi MJ, Auerbach HR, Cohen JT. A clinical and economic evaluation of enteral nutrition. *Curr Med Res Opin.* 2011 Feb;27(2):413-442. [Read More](#)

Chambers J, Neumann PJ. Listening to Provenge - What a costly cancer treatment says about Medicare policy on new technology. *NEJM* 2011. Published online Apr. 6, 2011. [Read More](#)

Cohen JT. Walking speed and economic outcomes for walking-impaired patients with multiple sclerosis. *Expert Rev Pharmacoecon Outcomes Res.* 2010; 10(5):595-603. [Read More](#)

Greenberg D, Neumann PJ. Does adjusting for health-related quality of life matter in economic evaluations of cancer-related interventions? *Expert Rev of Pharmacoecon & Outcomes Res.* 2011 Feb;11(1):113-119. [Read More](#)

Kamae MS, Kamae I, Cohen JT, Neumann PJ. Regression analysis on the variation in efficiency frontiers for prevention stage of HIV/AIDS. *J Med Econ.* 2011;14(2):187-193. [Read More](#)

Neumann PJ, Cohen JT, Hammitt JK, Concannon TW, Auerbach HR, Fang CH, Kent DM. Willingness-to-pay for predictive tests with no immediate treatment implications: a survey of US residents. *Health Econ* 2011. Published online Dec. 28, 2010. [Read More](#)

Neumann PJ. What's next for QALYs. *JAMA.* 2011 May; 305(17):1806-1807. [Read More](#)

### COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS (CEA) REGISTRY

CEVR is the home of the CEA Registry ([www.cearegistry.org](http://www.cearegistry.org)).

We have now updated the CEA Registry through July 2010. The full 2010 data will be posted soon.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Willingness to pay for predictive tests

We surveyed a representative sample of nearly 1,500 people to find out how much they would pay for predictive healthcare tests, and what they would do with the resulting information. The survey asked about hypothetical tests for predicting Alzheimer's disease, breast and prostate cancer, and arthritis. Most people were willing to pay for these tests themselves, even if the tests were not perfectly accurate and even if there were no direct treatment consequences. [READ MORE](#)

#### Cost-savings and improved outcomes for critically ill patients

The type of nutritional support provided to critically ill patients can affect costs and clinical outcomes. A meta-analysis conducted by CEVR researchers found that moving an eligible patient from intravenous to tube (enteral) feeding can save \$4,000 and substantially reduce the risk of major, life-threatening events. [READ MORE](#)

#### Listening to Provenge

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services's (CMS) national coverage policy for sipuleucel-T (Provenge) may prove to be a landmark case. In this perspective we highlight the challenges faced by CMS when making the coverage decision and what it means for payment. [READ MORE](#)

### CEA REGISTRY BLOG

[Visit the CEA Registry Blog](#)

The CEA Registry blog is a frequently updated resource targeted at the health policy community. Blogs range from brief updates on evolving policies to more in-depth comment pieces.

## What's next for QALY's?

The quality-adjusted life year (QALY) has come under criticism lately. In the United States, health reform legislation prohibited use of cost-per-QALY thresholds. In this commentary, I argue that much of the opposition is unreasonable. For all of its shortcomings, the QALY provides a helpful benchmark in considerations of comparative value. [READ MORE](#)

## WELCOME NEW CEVR STAFF

**Natalia Olchanski, M.S.**, is a Project Director and works on projects involving modeling of health outcomes and costs, evaluation of the impact of resource reallocation on optimizing life expectancy, quality of life, productivity and costs. Her additional interests include understanding and quantifying the value of information technology in health care.

**Katie May, B.A.**, is a Research Assistant and helps provide administrative support for CEVR.

## BECOME A SPONSOR

Sponsors receive complete access to the CEVR Value Databases, an invitation-only meeting and many other unique benefits. If you would like to learn more about how to become a sponsor, please contact our Research Manager, [Dr. Amy Stern](#).

## UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

### ISPOR, May, 2011

#### Issues Panels:

- ♦ Is FDA/CMS parallel review worthwhile? Is it feasible?
- ♦ How do we stop paying for low value care?

#### Podium:

- ♦ Using cost-effectiveness information to allocate Medicare resources- How much more health for the money?

#### Poster Presentations:

- ♦ Current uses of and perceptions about FDAMA Section 114.

#### Symposium

- ♦ Is health economics an un-American activity?

### ASCO Annual Meeting, Chicago June 2011

#### Poster Presentations:

- ♦ Framing the benefits of cancer treatment: How survival is described influences preferences for care.

### AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, June 2011

#### Poster Presentations:

- ♦ Recent trends in the performance of Medicare special needs plans.

## Recent blog posts:

- ♦ [What next for QALYs?](#)
- ♦ [FDA considers economics? The curious case of Makena](#)
- ♦ [Is ipilimumab a candidate for CMS national coverage analysis?](#)

## SUMMER COURSE

**June 21-22, 2011: 3rd Annual Short Course on Comparative Effectiveness and Cost Effectiveness: Methods and Measurement**

**Museum of Science, Boston, MA**

Tufts Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) presents this acclaimed 2-day course that aims to provide participants with knowledge and hands-on experience with the nuts and bolts of the methods employed in the practices of evidence-based and value-based approaches.

A printable course brochure and registration form is available here: [http://tuftsctsi.org/About-Us/Announcements/~/\\_me-dia/2BCDCA2835C1451B89F2828EB2533091.ashx](http://tuftsctsi.org/About-Us/Announcements/~/_me-dia/2BCDCA2835C1451B89F2828EB2533091.ashx)

For additional details including complete course information, a full faculty list, and the agenda for each day and please visit: <http://tuftsctsi.org/About-Us/Announcements/3rd-Annual-Short-Course-on-Comparative-Effectiveness-and-Cost-Effectiveness.aspx>

For questions, please contact Nina Bonnoyer at [NBonnoyer@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:NBonnoyer@tuftsmedicalcenter.org) or 617-636-4927.

**Tufts Medical Center**

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Questions about the CEA Registry? E-mail the Registry team at [cea@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:cea@tuftsmedicalcenter.org).