

What Constitutes Comparative Effectiveness Research? NIH and Inferential Perspectives

Charles L. Bowden, M.D.

Nancy U. Karren Endowed Chair of Psychiatry

Clinical Professor of Psychiatry

and Pharmacology

University of Texas Health Science Center

at San Antonio

NIH Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

- ...research comparing the benefits & harms of different interventions and strategies to prevent, diagnose, treat and monitor health conditions in 'real world' settings
- Knowledge to help public, patients, clinicians, or policy makers make better decisions
- Spectrum of outcomes, both benefits and harms
- Outcomes relevant to the patient, e.g. morbidity, functional status

<http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/>

AHRQ Evaluation of Proposals

- May include methodological inquiries as part of the secondary study aims, but the locus of the research projects must focus tightly on the study of comparative effectiveness. Examples:
 - **novel data collection methods,**
 - **innovative analytic techniques**
- Potential impact for informing and **improving** patient and/or professional **decision-making,** health outcomes, and **reducing costs**

Methodologies to Improve Treatment and Psychopathology Studies

- **Scales covering spectrum of bipolar symptoms, yielding domain scores** to profile behavioral targets of drugs, cross-system studies, e.g., fear response & imaging of DLPFC & mid-brain.
- **Collaborative studies over single investigator, site studies** improve ecological validity, sample size, control of confounds, alternative designs, e.g. intervention difference for pts with anxiety, adaptive designs.
- **Improved signal detection by statistical methods, MERM>LOCF**