

# TITLE IX—AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY<sup>1</sup>

## PART A—ESTABLISHMENT AND GENERAL DUTIES

### SEC. 901. [299] MISSION AND DUTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the Public Health Service an agency to be known as the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which shall be headed by a director appointed by the Secretary. The Secretary shall carry out this title acting through the Director.

(b) MISSION.—The purpose of the Agency is to enhance the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of health services, and access to such services, through the establishment of a broad base of scientific research and through the promotion of improvements in clinical and health system practices, including the prevention of diseases and other health conditions. The Agency shall promote health care quality improvement by conducting and supporting—

(1) research that develops and presents scientific evidence regarding all aspects of health care, including—

(A) the development and assessment of methods for enhancing patient participation in their own care and for facilitating shared patient-physician decision-making;

(B) the outcomes, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of health care practices, including preventive measures and long-term care;

(C) existing and innovative technologies;

(D) the costs and utilization of, and access to health care;

(E) the ways in which health care services are organized, delivered, and financed and the interaction and impact of these factors on the quality of patient care;

(F) methods for measuring quality and strategies for improving quality; and

(G) ways in which patients, consumers, purchasers, and practitioners acquire new information about best practices and health benefits, the determinants and impact of their use of this information;

(2) the synthesis and dissemination of available scientific evidence for use by patients, consumers, practitioners, providers, purchasers, policy makers, and educators; and

<sup>1</sup>Section 2 of Public Law 106-129 (113 Stat. 1653) designated the Agency as the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Formerly it was designated as the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. See section 6103 of Public Law 101-239 (103 Stat. 2189).

(3) initiatives to advance private and public efforts to improve health care quality.

(c) REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO RURAL AND INNER-CITY AREAS AND PRIORITY POPULATIONS.—

(1) RESEARCH, EVALUATIONS AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—In carrying out this title, the Director shall conduct and support research and evaluations, and support demonstration projects, with respect to—

(A) the delivery of health care in inner-city areas, and in rural areas (including frontier areas); and

(B) health care for priority populations, which shall include—

(i) low-income groups;

(ii) minority groups;

(iii) women;

(iv) children;

(v) the elderly; and

(vi) individuals with special health care needs, including individuals with disabilities and individuals who need chronic care or end-of-life health care.

(2) PROCESS TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE RESEARCH.—The Director shall establish a process to ensure that the requirements of paragraph (1) are reflected in the overall portfolio of research conducted and supported by the Agency.

(3) OFFICE OF PRIORITY POPULATIONS.—The Director shall establish an Office of Priority Populations to assist in carrying out the requirements of paragraph (1).