

Dividing up a cool billion

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 authorized the establishment of a council called the Federal Coordinating Council for Comparative Effectiveness as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The 15-member council is mandated to assist HHS and the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense, and others to coordinate comparative effectiveness and other health services research.

ARRA authorized \$1.1 billion for CER, and it is distributed in this way:

- \$300 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ);
- \$400 million for the National Institutes of Health;
- \$400 million for the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

According to HHS's announcement of the new council, the council will not recommend clinical guidelines for payment, coverage, and treatment. Its chief role will be to provide input on priorities for the \$400 million fund that HHS will allocate for CER.