

SMDM/AHRQ Health Policy Fellowship in Comparative Effectiveness

Call for Applications due January 29, 2010

The Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) are seeking applications for their 2010-2011 Health Policy Fellowship. The aim of the fellowship is to foster collaboration between SMDM members and AHRQ staff by fostering expertise and career development in clinical and comparative effectiveness research and translation. The fellowship will allow an SMDM member to conduct primary research and to participate in developmental and health care research activities related to the design and content of future AHRQ research and offers access to the data and other resources provided by AHRQ.

The Fellowship - Each year, one individual will be selected for the fellowship. Fellows will conduct their research and work collaboratively with AHRQ senior staff on joint projects of mutual interest while in residence at AHRQ in Rockville, Maryland. Positions are filled either through the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), whereby the fellows remain employees of their home institutions, or through expert appointment with appropriate work authorization. U.S. citizenship or permanent residence is not required. Applicants will be responsible for identifying an institution in the U.S. willing to "hire" the applicant during the fellowship for the purposes of the IPA agreement. If needed, the applicant will also be responsible for obtaining the relevant work visa with the assistance of the U.S. home institution. All applicants will receive equal consideration without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, age, disability, status as a parent, or any other nonmerit factor.

Eligibility - Applicants must be a current member of SMDM and demonstrate research experience and education in medical decision making, health policy, or in health services research in disciplines such as public health, public administration, health care administration, sociology, health economics, health statistics, decision sciences, behavioral sciences, or clinical care, including medicine, nursing, dentistry, and pharmacology. Most importantly will be the ability to work independently.

Stipend and Length of Fellowship - Salaries are commensurate with qualifications and experience and will include salary and benefits. The duration of the full-time fellowship is 12 months. Travel and transportation allowances will be provided, subject to Federal regulations and the availability of funds.

Fellowship Expectations - The objectives of the program are to:

- Provide the Fellow with hands on comparative effectiveness program development and research experience working on intramural and extramural projects within the Effective Healthcare Program at AHRQ. The scope of these projects would include work with the Evidence Based Practice Centers, the DEClIDE network, the CERTs program, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, and the Eisenberg Clinical Decisions and Communications Science Center (see www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov).
- Provide the Fellow with experience in addressing current issues related to AHRQ programs.
- Provide SMDM with leadership and management training experience of one of its members to help foster current and future proposals spearheaded by SMDM's Development or Education Committees and/or the Health Policy Working Groups.
- Participate in evidence forums, journal clubs, seminars, methodological meetings and CMS interactions and linkages to AHRQ leadership and policy discussions.

To meet these objectives, the Fellow will be expected to:

- Pursue research leading to the publication of at least one journal article or AHRQ publication.
- Work with senior AHRQ staff on projects of mutual interest. Collaborations might include participation in analytic or methodological development projects leading to publications.
- As assigned, assume program development and research coordination and oversight responsibilities for AHRQ's comparative effectiveness research projects.
- Present his or her work at an AHRQ annual meeting.
- Present his or her research work and findings at the annual meeting of the SMDM following completion of the fellowship.

- Serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the SMDM Board and adjunct member of the annual meeting program committee and other committees of SMDM, as relevant, during the fellowship and for one year following.
- Develop a strategic research plan that links AHRQ and SMDM around comparative effectiveness. This may include developing a short course for the SMDM annual meeting on this topic.
- Integrate the decision analytic principles of SMDM with policy discussions and decisions at AHRQ

Mentors - Integral to the program is a commitment by AHRQ that Fellows will work closely with a senior AHRQ staff member who can provide technical expertise related to the Fellow's research, assist in accessing AHRQ data systems and other resources, and help identify other collaborative opportunities within the agency. Additionally, mentoring relationships with the Fellow's home institutions are expected to continue, as well as mentoring by appropriate senior SMDM members with methodological expertise and Society leadership experience.

Application Timetable - A new solicitation of applications for the SMDM/AHRQ Health Policy Fellowship will be made each year during the life of the program. The schedule for 2010-2011 is:

January 29, 2010	Deadline for application submission
February 5, 2010	Letters of recommendation due
April 9, 2010	Candidate selected
July 1, 2010	Fellowship begins

Application, Review and Selection Criteria - Applicants should submit an electronic application package, including a personal statement, a CV and 2 letters of reference that demonstrate their knowledge of the general area of medical decision making with particular reference to its application to comparative effectiveness (e.g. decision modeling, cost effectiveness, evidence based medicine, biostatistics, epidemiology, patient-related outcomes, patient or joint decision making, health information technology, etc.) The personal statement should be sufficiently specific to show understanding of the kinds of research undertaken by AHRQ and SMDM members. **Submit the electronic application package to jill.metcalf@smdm.org no later than 5:00 pm ET on January 29, 2010.** Letters of reference should be sent electronically directly from the person providing the reference. The letter should indicate the reference's medical, academic and/or professional affiliations and contact information. **Letters of recommendation may be submitted as late as 5:00 pm ET on February 5, 2010.** SMDM is not prepared to accept hard copy applications.

Applications will be reviewed with respect to the following criteria:

- Relevance and potential contribution of the proposed Fellow to important health-policy or health-services-research-related questions undertaken by SMDM and AHRQ;
- Strength of the letters of reference;
- Applicant's qualification for and commitment to health services research and health policy and statement on how the fellowship will help develop applicants career;
- Quality of applicant's past research and demonstration of skills through relevant projects and publications; and
- Applicant's written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, and ability to collaborate.

Contact Us - For questions regarding the SMDM/AHRQ Health Policy Fellowship you may contact:

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