

What SMDM Contributes to Health Policy Research

SMDM members contribute critically to ongoing international health policy debates. The SMDM membership includes...

- ...physicians, economists, psychologists, statisticians, decision scientists, epidemiologists, pharmacists, and outcomes researchers from North America, Europe and throughout the world bringing a global, multidisciplinary perspective to our discussions and debates.
- ...members of academia, government, industry, and the nonprofit sector allowing our members to increase the reach and impact of their work.
- ...editors of and contributors to the most widely-read medical journals worldwide, thereby directly influencing the practice of clinical medicine and the setting of health policies.
- ...the directors of training programs in clinical medicine, health services research, quality improvement, and research methodology and the Society promotes numerous programs to help with the development of the next generation of researchers and policy makers (including the Lee Lusted prize, mentorship, and the proposed AHRQ/MDM fellowship).

Evidence-based Medicine

- *Problem:* Given the explosion in medical knowledge, it is impossible for clinicians to stay abreast of the best available evidence for the treatment of even the most common of medical conditions.
- *SMDM's Contributions:*
 - SMDM members are leading the effort to develop robust research methodologies for best practices in evidence-based health care. These include:
 - research in patient-reported outcomes,
 - development of clinical practice guidelines,
 - evaluation of novel technologies to implement these guidelines in clinical settings, and the
 - synthesis and critical appraisal of the evidence about the comparative effectiveness of health technologies.
 - SMDM members have played key roles in the Institute of Medicine's efforts to develop policies regarding evidence-based medicine and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's comparative effectiveness programs.

Cost-effective Health Care

- *Problem:* Given the critical issues of the uninsured in the US, the skyrocketing costs of healthcare, and the shrinking reimbursements from payers, policymakers require thoughtful analysis upon which to base much-needed health care system reforms.
- *SMDM's Contributions:*
 - SMDM members' research on health economics, health resource allocation, pharmacoeconomics, and the cost-effectiveness of health technologies directly inform health policies in the US and internationally.
 - SMDM members' research has influenced Medicare and other payers coverage decisions.

Patient Decision Making

- *Problem:* Patient-directed medical decision-making relies critically upon understanding patient preferences, utilities, and judgment and decision-making.
- *SMDM's Contributions:*
 - SMDM members have developed, tested, and refined some of the key theories of patient decision-making.
 - SMDM members have developed patient decision aids for use at the bedside and models for cost-effective care based on patient preferences.

Public Health

- *Problem:* HIV/AIDS, pandemic influenza, SARS, and bioterrorism/disaster preparedness planning represent just a few of the pressing global public health concerns for which the optimum strategies for prevention and treatment have not been well established.
- *SMDM's Contribution:* In addition to developing new methods for more accurately modeling public health epidemics, SMDM members' research has
 - Provided tools for use by planners,
 - Identified gaps in public health preparedness plans, and
 - Evaluated the tradeoffs in realistic planning, prevention, and treatment strategies.