

March 30, 2007, Issue #224

AHRQ News and Numbers

Spending on prescription drugs to treat depression, anxiety, pain, schizophrenia and other conditions climbed from \$7.9 billion in 1997 to \$20 billion in 2004 - more than a 150 percent increase. [Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, MEPS, Statistical Brief #163: *Trends in the Use and Expenditures for the Therapeutic Class Prescribed Psychotherapeutic Agents and All Subclasses, 1997 and 2004*, [statistical brief](#).]

Today's Headlines:

1. [New checklists help men and women know which medical tests are needed to stay healthy at any age](#)
2. [Latest issue of AHRQ WebM&M available online](#)
3. [New podcast features research about reducing catheter-related bloodstream infections](#)
4. [AHRQ's HCUP adds new interactive overview course](#)
5. [AHRQ set for MEPS Data Users' workshop on May 3-4](#)
6. [Register now for HCUP hands-on workshop at the 2007 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting](#)
7. [Highlights from our most recent monthly newsletter](#)
8. [AHRQ in the professional literature](#)

1. New Checklists Help Men and Women Know Which Medical Tests Are Needed To Stay Healthy at Any Age

AHRQ announced two new evidence-based checklists designed to help men and women understand which medical checkup tests they need to stay healthy at any age. The men's and women's versions of *Your Checklist for Health* show at a glance what the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends regarding screening tests, preventive medicine, and other healthy lifestyle behaviors. *Your Checklist for Health*, available in English and Spanish, is a pocket-size brochure designed to be taken with patients when they visit their health care providers to make it easier to talk about which screening tests they might need. Both checklists provide tips about other things to do to stay healthy, such as eating a healthy diet and exercising. Select to access [Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age, Your Checklist for Health](#) and [Women: Stay Healthy at Any Age, Your Checklist for Health](#). A print copy is available by sending an e-mail to ahrqpubs@ahrq.hhs.gov.

[Back to Headlines](#)

2. Latest Issue of AHRQ WebM&M Available Online

The March issue of [AHRQ WebM&M](#) is now available online. This month, the Perspectives on Safety section examines the patient's role in improving safety. Rosemary Gibson, M.Sc., program officer of the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, discusses how patients can help ensure their own safety. There is an interview with Sorrel King, whose daughter Josie King died due to a medical error at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and who has become an advocate for safety and patient-centered care. In the first Spotlight Case, an infant received an overdose of the wrong antibiotic, but the error was not reported. Patient safety consultant Patrice Spath discusses common barriers to reporting adverse events and near misses, along with strategies to increase reporting. In the second case, a woman with insulin-dependent diabetes was placed on an insulin sliding scale. Her blood glucose levels became very difficult to control, and she developed diabetic ketoacidosis. In the third case, a patient's preliminary post-surgical wound cultures grew *Staphylococcus aureus*. Although the final sensitivity profile showed resistance to the antibiotic that the patient was receiving, the care team was not notified and the patient died of sepsis. Commentary authors are Richard Hellman, M.D., of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and B. Joseph Guglielmo, Pharm.D., of the University of California, San Francisco. A Spotlight slide presentation is available for download. As always, you can receive CME, CEU, or trainee certification by taking the Spotlight Quiz. All previously published commentaries are available under "Case Archive." Please submit cases to AHRQ WebM&M via the "Submit Case" button.

[Back to Headlines](#)

3. New Podcast Features Research About Reducing Catheter-Related Bloodstream Infections

This week's Healthcare 411 audio program features an interview with Peter Pronovost, M.D., Ph.D., of The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, discussing his research about interventions to reduce bloodstream infections in hospital ICUs caused by central venous catheters. The study showed that the vast majority of the infections are preventable with simple and inexpensive measures. The 9-minute podcast also includes stories about surgeries performed at outpatient centers and about AHRQ's new "Questions are the Answer" public service campaign. Select to listen to the [audio podcast](#). You can listen to the audio program directly through your computer if it has a sound card and speakers and can play MP3 audio files, or you can download it to a portable audio device. In any case, you will be able to listen at your convenience. To access any of AHRQ's podcasts and special reports or to sign up for a free subscription to the series and receive notice of all future AHRQ podcasts, visit our [Healthcare 411](#) series main page.

[Back to Headlines](#)

4. AHRQ's HCUP Adds New Interactive Overview Course

AHRQ's Healthcare Cost & Utilization Project (HCUP) has developed a free interactive self-administered online course on its HCUP User Support Web site. The course provides an overview of HCUP data, software tools, and products. The curriculum covers the features, capabilities, and potential uses of HCUP resources. Included is information on where and how to access the data, tools, and technical support. The online course is modular, making it possible to either move through the entire course or access exactly those data resources, tools, or products most valuable for your research. Visit the [HCUP-US Web site](#) and check under *What's New* to find the link to this new overview course.

[Back to Headlines](#)

5. AHRQ Set for MEPS Data Users' Workshop on May 3-4

AHRQ is conducting a 2-day workshop to facilitate the use of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component (MEPS-HC) by the health services research community. The workshop, designed for those with an interest in using national health surveys, will be held at AHRQ, located at 540 Gaither Road in Rockville, MD, 20850. At this workshop participants will have the opportunity to bring up specific research questions of interest to them. This workshop combines lecture (first day) and hands-on activities

(second day). The focus of the workshop will be health care utilization, expenditures, and medical conditions. Select to [register](#) and for more information.

[Back to Headlines](#)

6. Register Now for HCUP Hands-on Workshop at the 2007 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting

AHRQ's HCUP staff will conduct a full-day interactive seminar on June 2 for researchers interested in learning how to utilize HCUP tools and databases through hands-on access and manipulation of HCUP data. This session, entitled *Powerful Data, Meaningful Answers: Hands-on Training with HCUP Data* is part of a series of AcademyHealth seminars on health services research methods. Select for more [information](#). Registration is required and space is limited, so please sign up soon. Select for other upcoming HCUP events on the [HCUP calendar](#).

[Back to Headlines](#)

7. Highlights From Our Most Recent Monthly Newsletter

Among the key articles in the online issue of Research Activities:

- Japanese and Filipino women are much less likely than White women to undergo breast-conserving therapy for breast cancer.

A new AHRQ-funded study shows that disparities in the management of early-stage breast cancer among Asian American and Pacific Islander women, particularly among Japanese and Filipino women. Researchers found that in Hawaii, Japanese and Filipino women were less likely than White women to undergo recommended breast-conserving surgery for early-stage breast cancer. Japanese women were diagnosed with earlier stage cancer, whereas Filipino and Hawaiian women were more likely to be diagnosed at more advanced stages. Select to read this [article](#).

Other articles are:

- Children's deaths after cardiac surgery seem mostly determined by age and the type of cardiac surgery.
- Primary care patients with pain and psychosocial problems benefit from nurse telephone calls.
- Growth in local jobs that offer health insurance can move the working poor off the Medicaid program.

Select to read these [articles](#) and more.

[Back to Headlines](#)

8. AHRQ in the Professional Literature

We are providing the following hyperlinks to journal abstracts through PubMed® for your convenience. Unfortunately, some of you may not be able to access the abstracts because of firewalls or specific settings on your individual computer systems. If you are having problems, you should ask your technical support staff for possible remedies.

Persell SD, Wright JM, Thompson JA, et al. Assessing the validity of national quality measures for coronary artery disease using an electronic health record. *Arch Intern Med* 2006 Nov 13; 166(20):2272-2277. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Gross R, Yip B, Re VL 3rd, et al. A simple, dynamic measure of antiretroviral therapy adherence predicts failure to maintain HIV-I suppression. *J Infect Dis* 2006 Oct 15; 194(8):1108-1114. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Hicks LS, O'Malley AJ, Lieu TA, et al. The quality of chronic disease care in U.S. community health centers. *Health Aff* 2006 Nov-Dec; 25(6):1712-1723. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Stroupe KT, Manheim LM, Luo P, et al. Tension-free repair versus watchful waiting for men with asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic inguinal hernias: a cost-effective analysis. *J Am Coll Cardiol* 2006 Oct; 203(4):458-468. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Haidet P, Kroll TL, Sharf BF. The complexity of patient participation: lessons learned from patients' illness narratives. *Patient Educ Couns* 2006 Sep; 62(3):323-329. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

[Back to Headlines](#)

Encourage Your Colleagues to Sign Up for This Electronic Newsletter

Please forward this to others who might be interested in receiving this publication. To subscribe:

1. Send an E-mail message to: listserv@list.ahrq.gov.
2. In the subject line type: Subscribe.
3. In the body of the message type: sub public_list-L and your full name.
4. You will receive an E-mail confirmation.

If you would like to receive the e-newsletter in text-only format:

1. Send an E-mail message to: listserv@list.ahrq.gov.
2. In the subject line type: Subscribe.
3. In the body of the message type: sub public_list-text and your full name.
4. You will receive an E-mail confirmation.

If you are a new subscriber or would like to reference information in a previous issue, an archive of this newsletter can be found on AHRQ's Web site at <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/enewsix.htm>.

To unsubscribe:

1. Send an E-mail message to: listserv@list.ahrq.gov.
2. In the subject line type: Signoff.
3. In the body of the message type: signoff public_list-L
4. You will receive an E-mail confirmation.

Contact Information:

Please address comments and questions to Nancy Comfort at Nancy.Comfort@ahrq.hhs.gov or (301) 427-1866.