

# Ensuring integrity in clinical effectiveness research: Accentuate the negative

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In an editorial published this week, the *PLoS Medicine* editors discuss how to maintain the integrity of the medical literature when publishing comparative effectiveness research (CER).

The U.S. government has allocated US\$ 1.1 billion to fund CER, which will compare the benefits and harms of different approaches to medical care. As defined in a recent Institute of Medicine report, "the purpose of CER is to assist consumers, clinicians, purchasers, and policy makers to make informed decisions that will improve [health care](#) at both the individual and population levels."

The editorial points out that in order to serve this purpose reliably, reports of CER must be transparent in their methods and objectives, and researchers must refrain from "practices that distort the scientific evidence base—such as 'cherry picking' for publication only those studies describing a desired outcome, or 'fishing' from an ocean of possible analyses only those that might support favorable (but statistically invalid) conclusions

More information: The [PLoS Medicine](#) Editors (2009) Ensuring Integrity in Comparative Effectiveness Research: Accentuate the Negative. *PLoS Med* 6(9): e1000152.  
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