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## [RTI International - News Release - 09.29.2005](#)

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# RTI International Selected for New National Health Care Research Network

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. -- RTI International was today selected by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to serve as one of 13 federally funded research centers nationwide that will conduct research to speed the flow of accurate and understandable information to the public about a wide range of medical therapies, practices and pharmaceuticals.



*Kathleen Lohr*

Collectively called the "DECIDE" network, which stands for Developing Evidence to Inform Decisions about Effectiveness, the centers will use de-identified data available through insurers, health plans and other partner organizations to answer critical questions about the use, benefits and risks of medications and other therapies.

Collectively, the centers will have access to de-identified medical data for millions of patients, including Medicare's 42 million beneficiaries.

The centers are being established to support AHRQ's new Effective Health Care program, designed to help patients, clinicians and consumers choose the best medical treatments for their needs.



*Lucy Savitz*

The new program has three components: Comparative Effectiveness Reports, which will be developed by the existing group of AHRQ's 13 evidence-based practice centers; the new DECIDE network research centers, which will conduct accelerated research to fill knowledge gaps; and a new Clinical Decisions and Communications Science Center, which will improve the communication of new medical

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findings to a variety of audiences.

"This three-part program creates a new engine for generating and customizing effectiveness information to assure that current evidence on treatment is known and used," said AHRQ Director Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D. "This is a dynamic process that will give us more effectiveness data, develop new information faster and more strategically, and deliver it in more useful forms. In the long run, it will also help us develop common standards and methodologies that can improve all effectiveness research."

"We are very pleased to join this important research network, which will use new innovative approaches to speed the flow of accurate information to the public," said [Kathleen Lohr](#), Ph.D., a distinguished fellow at RTI who will serve as the center's director. "This project will build upon and extend the expertise we have developed over the past eight years as the [RTI-University of North Carolina Evidence-based Practice Center](#). This is an excellent example of how we are turning knowledge into practice at RTI."

The DEcIDE network will assist AHRQ and other federal agencies with the implementation of Section 1013 of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, which is intended to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of Medicare, Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program.

"The strength of the RTI center lies in its partnerships with a group of extremely talented medical researchers and clinicians from across the country," said Lucy Savitz, Ph.D., co-director of the new RTI center. "We are very much looking forward to collaborating with these professionals as we work toward improving medical treatments and practices."

RTI's partners include: Baylor Health Care System, Intermountain Health Care, Providence Health System, Salt Lake City Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Utah Department of Health, HealthInsight, the National Association of Health Data Organizations, and the University of Utah's Health Services Research Center.

In addition to RTI, the network will include Acumen, Inc., Brigham and Women's Hospital, Duke University, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Inc., Johns Hopkins University, Outcomes Sciences, University of Colorado at Denver Health Sciences Center, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Maryland at Baltimore, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

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