# Contents

## 1 Summary 1

Summary of Findings and Conclusions 3

Effectiveness Research 4

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis 7

Health Technology Assessment and Clinical Practice Guidelines 9

Changing Clinical Practice 11

Options for Advancing the Federal Effort 12

Filling the Gaps in Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness Research 12

Clarifying the Federal Role in Health Technology Assessment 14

Improving Clinical Practice Guideline Development 15

Directing and Coordinating the Overall Federal Effort 16

#### 2 Behind the Search for Evidence 19

The Need for Evidence 20
A Framework for Evaluation 22
The Shaping of Effectiveness Research 26
Geographic Variation in Medical Practice 26
Outcomes of Patient Care 28
Appropriateness of Care 30
The Federal Medical Treatment Effectiveness
Program 33
Expectations in the Context of National Health
Reform 34
Conclusions 37

#### 3 Tools for Effectiveness Research 39

Techniques To Evaluate Health Effects 40

Basic Tools for Measuring Health Outcomes 40

Primary Studies To Evaluate Health Effects 43

Secondary Techniques To Synthesize Results 59

Applying the Tools: The Patient Outcomes Research

Teams 67







Contributions 68
Limitations and Frustrations 72
Future Plans 73
Conclusions 73

# 4 Issues in Improving Effectiveness Research 77

Gaps in the Existing Federal Research Effort 77
Systematic Reviews: Making Use of Existing
Knowledge 78
Filling In the Knowledge Gaps 82
The Comparative Evaluation of
New Technologies 90
Issues in Federal Funding and Support 95
The Roles of the Federal Agencies 95
Coordinating Research Activities 102
Conclusions 104

# 5 The State of Cost-Effectiveness Analysis 107

Analytic Approaches 107 Uses of Cost-Effectiveness Analysis 108 Mechanics of Cost-Effectiveness Analysis 110 Issues in the Use of Cost-Effectiveness Analyses 111 Comparability 112 Quality of Analyses 114 Prospective Analyses: Clinical-Economic Trials 116 Underlying Assumptions of Cost-Utility Analysis 118 Federal Cost-Effectiveness Activities 122 Agency for Health Care Policy and Research 122 National Institutes of Health 122 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 123 Health Care Financing Administration 124 Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion 125 Cost-Effectiveness Analysis in the Private Sector 125 Recent Trends 125 Issues 126 Conclusions 127

# 6 The Federal Role in Health Technology Assessment 131

Growth of Health Technology Assessment 132 Debating the Federal Role 132 Health Technology Assessment in the Private Sector 135 Clinical Practice Guidelines and Technology Assessment 139 Conclusions 141

# 7 The Development of Clinical Practice Guidelines 145

Federal Guideline Efforts 145 Private Efforts 146 Guideline Issues Related to Development 147 Overview 147 Choosing Guideline Topics 149 Selecting Guideline Panels 151 Defining the Scope of Guidelines 153 Identifying and Synthesizing Evidence 155 Techniques To Aid Group Interaction and Decisionmaking 157 The Basis for Guideline Recommendations 164 Organization and Administration of Guideline Activities 166 Methodological Research 168

Conclusions 168

The Link Between Methods and Recommendations 168 Developing Methods To Prioritize Guideline Topics 169 Research Needs 170

### The Impact of Clinical Guidelines on Practice 173

Anatomy of Physician Behavior 173 Modeling Clinical Decisionmaking 173 Sources of Influence on Physician Practice 175 Approaches To Changing Clinical Practice 177 Passive Dissemination 177 Active Approaches 179 Lessons from the Literature 187 Implementing Clinical Practice Guidelines 190 Impact of Guidelines on Clinical Practice 190 Factors Influencing the Impact of Guidelines 195 Conclusions 197

# **APPENDIXES**

- A How This Study Was Conducted 199
- B Acknowledgments 203
- C Guideline Development Activities 210
- D Abbreviations and Glossary 237

References 247

Index 295