



Effective Health Care Allergen-specific Immunotherapy Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Allergen-specific immunotherapy will go forward for inclusion in the scope of an in-process systematic review on immunotherapy for allergic disease. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

Topic Description

Nominator: Organization

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness of treating children with allergen-specific immunotherapy plus the usual standard of care versus the usual standard of care alone. The main population of interest is asthmatic children and asthma susceptible children, and subgroups could include patients stratified by environmental factors, socioeconomic status, and/or ethnicity. Outcomes of interest to the nominator include prevention of the development of asthma, rates of remission, and reduced severity.

Key Questions from Nominator: 1. For asthmatic and asthma-prone children, what is the comparative effectiveness of treating with allergen-specific immunotherapy plus standard vs. standard alone?

Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Immunotherapy is a method of reducing sensitivity to a given allergen by repeated administration of a dose of that allergen. Patients benefit by improved allergic symptoms that do not respond to standard pharmacotherapy or allergen avoidance.

- Existing synthesized work on allergen immunotherapy suggests areas in which more research is needed, including issues surrounding dose, patient selection, optimal treatment protocols, and the relative clinical benefit compared to no immunotherapy. The literature suggests that oral and bronchial administration is rarely used in clinical practice for immunotherapy in asthmatics and that nasal immunotherapy is only effective in rhinitis. Therefore, sublingual and subcutaneous administration would be the most appropriate modalities to consider for this nomination.
- This topic will go forward for inclusion in the scope of an in-process systematic review that will address the effectiveness and comparative effectiveness of immunotherapy for allergic disease, including sublingual and subcutaneous administration.