The Value of Transparency: Patients’ Perspectives
Insights from Consumer Reports

Tara Montgomery
Senior Director, Health Impact
Consumer Reports
September 28, 2016
1936: 1st issue of Consumer Reports
Alka-Seltzer’s claims “vanished like the gas bubbles in the air”
Consumer Reports’ founding charter in 1936 emphasized quality of life and a goal to “maintain decent living standards for ultimate consumers.”
Health has been an integral part of how the organization has served consumers ever since.
We are an independent nonprofit and take no ads or free samples.
We have 7 million subscribers and reach around 20 million consumers a month.

February 2015: Hospital safety
August 2015: Antibiotics crisis
February 2016: Insomnia
May 2016: Doctors on Probation
June 2016: Pain and the Opioids epidemic
August 2016: High Drug Prices
CR Health goals

• More Americans than ever have health insurance.
• Yet the U.S. healthcare system fails to deliver safe, high-quality, appropriate, and affordable care.
• This causes preventable patient harm, both medical and financial.
• We envision a society in which all consumers have the opportunity to achieve the best possible health outcomes.
• As consumers, we want a healthcare system that is safe, affordable, and equitable.
• We work with consumers to strengthen their choice and voice, safety, value, transparency, privacy, and sustainability.
• Our health programs aim to help achieve this by improving patient safety and reducing healthcare costs.
CR Health programs

- Improving patient safety (e.g. hospital infections, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, drugs)
- Lowering healthcare costs (e.g. drugs, provider, insurance costs);
- Strengthening the voice of the consumer and role of the patient;
- Increasing/driving transparency and accountability for health care providers;
- Evaluating personal health and fitness products;
- Comparing evidence for tests, drugs, and treatment options;
- Supporting informed decisions from childbirth to end of life;
- Advocating for consumer-friendly health IT; and
- Advocating for device safety.
Within the next five years, patients will be safer, healthier, and more financially secure in four ways:

1) Hospital acquired infections and antibiotic resistance will be reduced;
2) antibiotic prescribing will be reduced;
3) consumers will have better access to affordable, safe, and effective drugs and their out-of-pocket costs will be reduced; and
4) wasteful and excessive spending on healthcare and health insurance will be reduced without compromising quality or safety.

None of this can be achieved without transparency for patients and consumers.
Role of health data transparency at CR

- Translating evidence to make it actionable by consumers
- Supporting practitioner, health system, industry, and government accountability
- Providing relevant answers to consumer questions
- Finding the stories in the data (rather than just trying to make the data understandable)
- Telling stories to humanize the data (data is more rational, stories are more emotional)
- Presenting and disseminating it in multiple ways (and explaining the methodology)
- Illustrating variation in quality, cost, safety, outcomes, experience
- Mapping together multiple related datasets
- Developing scoring systems and ratings
- Supporting system improvement (measurement and management)
- Powering decision support tools and consumer guidance
- Fighting for release of missing/hidden data (FOIAs, open data, voluntary, legislation)
Examples of data to support transparency

- Note: CR does not do its own medical studies (external data is essential unlike other CR areas)
- Data that helps answer meaningful questions to inform decisions (this can be imperfect)
- Randomized controlled trials (with transparent release of complete clinical trials data)
- Well designed studies based on the right research questions (including consumer input)
- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Systematic reviews (DERP, Cochrane, AHRQ, USPSTF, BMJ, others)
- Outcomes registries (STS)
- Comparative effectiveness research (PCORI)
- Publicly reported data (states, CMS, HEDIS, etc.) (especially mandated public reporting)
- Audited databases (e.g. all-payer claims)
- Survey data (national samples, statistically significant)
- Lab data (rigorous testing protocols)
- Data without conflicts of interest or appropriate disclosures
- Data that fills research/knowledge gaps
- Clean, current, and consistent data, checked by CR statisticians (no omissions/cheating)
- Careful use of expert/anecdotal/observational findings (to inform further research)
Transparency in action at CR

- Best Buy Drugs
- Choosing Wisely
- Preventive services recommendations
- Healthcare-acquired infections reporting
- Hospital quality and safety ratings
- Healthcare transparency tools
- Informing policy e.g. ACA
- Supporting campaigns e.g. Stop Hospital Infections, Surprise Medical Bills
- Holding hospitals and care providers accountable
  - e.g. antibiotic use, infection reporting
- Service journalism
- Investigative journalism
- Product ratings (e.g. insect repellents, sunscreens, food)
Ratings: Best Buy Drugs & Hospital Safety

### Best Drugs to Treat Seasonal Allergies

**Antihistamine Drugs**

Here are the prices, consumer-grade, of the leading drugs approved by the FDA for the treatment of seasonal allergies. These drugs are usually found in combination with other medications such as decongestants, antihistamines, or antacids. The list below shows the active ingredient in each drug as well as the generic name if available. Consumer Reports does not recommend any one drug over another, but the chart below can help you find the drug that is right for you. The FDA has also published a list of medications for the treatment of seasonal allergies, which can be found on their website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Name</th>
<th>Generic Name</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Rated</th>
<th>Rated</th>
<th>Rated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarinex</td>
<td>Desloratadine</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec</td>
<td>Levocetirizine</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra</td>
<td>Diphenhydramine</td>
<td>12.5 mg</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl</td>
<td>Diphenhydramine</td>
<td>25 mg</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin</td>
<td>Loratadine</td>
<td>10 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinex</td>
<td>Desloratadine</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec</td>
<td>Levocetirizine</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra</td>
<td>Diphenhydramine</td>
<td>12.5 mg</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl</td>
<td>Diphenhydramine</td>
<td>25 mg</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin</td>
<td>Loratadine</td>
<td>10 mg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hospitals

**Hospital Ratings**

We review the ratings of the hospitals in the USA. Below are some of the hospitals that are considered the best in the USA. The ratings are based on several factors such as patient satisfaction, technical skills, and safety. The ratings are based on data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The CMS has published a list of the top-performing hospitals in the USA, which can be found on their website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Overall Rating</th>
<th>Patient Experience</th>
<th>Safety Performance</th>
<th>Efficiency Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johns Hopkins</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo Clinic</td>
<td>Rochester, MN</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Medical</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Sloan-Kettering</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC Davis Medical Center</td>
<td>Sacramento, CA</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, please visit the Consumer Reports website.
Quality & cost transparency tools
Physician performance

- Rating primary-care groups (Aligning Forces)
- Shining light on good, bad, and improving actors in the system
- Possible measures: Quality, safety, outcomes, diagnosis, prevention, treatment, appropriate use, patient experience, cultural relevance, communication, use of technology, value, affordability, convenience, customer service
- Care settings, teamwork, health plan networks, care coordination, PCMHs, ACOs
- Knowledge, skills, mastery, currency, competency
- Education, specialization, licensing, certification
- Policies/practices for disclosure and public reporting (e.g. safety issues, probation)
- Educating consumers on how to choose (or change) physicians and networks
- Demystifying sources of data and information for consumers
- Using formal versus informal performance data and reviews
- Responding to consumer assumptions, needs, and risks
- Encouraging collaboration, professionalism, courage, quality improvement
- Transparency allows ethical, patient-centered healthcare
Stay in touch

Tara Montgomery
Senior Director, Health Impact
Consumer Reports

tmontgomery@consumer.org

@TaraCRHealth

ConsumerReports.org
ConsumerHealthChoices.org

SMARTER CHOICES FOR A BETTER WORLD