

March 2025



## Re-Thinking the Evidence: Unbiased Science



On February 13, 2025, America's new Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) was confirmed. Less than a week later the department announced the position on using unbiased science to combat the cause and prevalence of chronic disease. Unbiased science is free from any preconceived ideas, prejudices, or systematic research errors that could skew the outcome or interpretation of data, ensuring a fair and objective assessment of the findings or endpoints being studied.

Although the concept of unbiased science is not new – this announcement should generate consideration on how science is implemented into the clinical care and management of the nation's largest patient population. Multiple chronic conditions (MCC) account for 1 out of 3 adults, 4 out of 5 Medicare beneficiaries, 84% of clinician visits, 70% of hospitalizations, 83% of prescription medications, 71% of healthcare spending and 93% of Medicare spending.

Unbiased science is considered the highest level of evidence and the result of randomized controlled trials (RCT). RCTs are designed to be unbiased and have less risk of systematic errors. Yet much of the schematic hierarchical evidence-based pyramids suggest the meta-analysis (MA) or systematic review (SR) as the highest level of evidence. These types of evidence come largely from a collection of RCTs with similar endpoints. Researchers who evaluate, synthesize and analyze the data from individual RCTs and report through a MA or SR may hold bias.

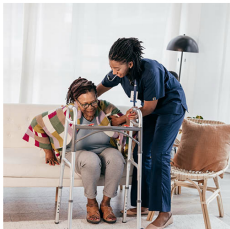
Evidence-based practice guidelines are a combination of RCTs, MA, SR and expert opinion. Guidelines are identified as standard of care and used to ensure optimal patient centered outcomes in the management of disease. Guidelines therefore could also be considered biased.

As HHS moves to embrace unbiased science and collaborates with the many agencies that fall under its purview – the Multiple Chronic Conditions Resource Center will continue to offer FREE access to multiple resources to support an escalating patient population. Science is dynamic and best patient outcomes rely on the informed healthcare professional. [More Information](#)

The Multiple Chronic Conditions Resource Center offers FREE access to current clinical guidelines and resources to support the comprehensive care for the nation's largest patient population – those living with two or more chronic conditions.

[Resource Center](#)

## PODCASTS:



### PODCAST: *Person-Centered Care Planning for People Living with or at Risk for Multiple Chronic Conditions*

Ariene Bierman MD, MS, Brittany Watson MD, MPH and Jane Pederson MD, MS discuss the recent JAMA online publication *Person-Centered Care Planning for People Living with or at Risk for Multiple Chronic Conditions*. This paper describes a qualitative study using theme analysis from responses following a Request for Information (RFI) published in the Federal Register soliciting input on PCCP, posted by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) in 2022. Responses were analyzed between January 2023 and February 2024.

The researchers identified 9 themes: (1) suboptimal quality of care; (2) person-centered, goal-concordant care; (3) multidisciplinary team-based care and care coordination; (4) prevention across the life course; (5) digital health solutions; (6) workflow; (7) education and self-management support; (8) payment; and (9) achieving community, health system, and payer goals.

The information collected from this study are used to gain momentum in the AHRQ's initiative on *Person-Centered Care Planning for People with MCC*. This data was used to solicit input from multidisciplinary experts, patients and policy stakeholders at the recent AHRQ Summit to determine next steps in promoting comprehensive care for the nation's largest patient population – those living with MCC.

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Ariene Bierman  
MD, MS

Brittany Watson  
MD, MPH,

Jane Pederson  
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### PODCAST: *Medication Safety: Knowledge is Power*

Dr. Kim Kuebler DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, FAAN Editor in Chief, Multiple Chronic Conditions Resource Center | Chief Executive Officer Advanced Disease Concepts LLC | Advanced Practice Provider | *Chronic Conditions, Pain and Symptom Management, Palliative Care, Spine and*



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**PODCAST: A Paradigm Shift: Integrating Palliative Symptom Management in Multiple Chronic Conditions**

Dr. Eduardo Bruera MD Chair, Department of Palliative, Rehabilitation, & Integrative Medicine | University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center  
*Cancer, Pain and Symptom Management, Research, Palliative Care*

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**PODCAST: Dr. Paul Ciechanowski discusses the benefits of integrated behavioral health models in primary care**

In the fifth edition of the MCCRC Podcast, Dr. Kim Kuebler sits down with Dr. Paul Ciechanowski talks about the benefits of integrated behavioral health models in primary care, why integrated care is a preferable model to hiring psychiatrists or social workers as part of a co-located model, and much more.

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**PODCAST: Dr. Irina Koyfman discusses Chronic Care Management - Do's, Don'ts, and Everything in Between**

In the fourth edition of the MCCRC Podcast, Dr. Kim Kuebler sits down with Dr. Irina Koyfman to talk about Chronic Care Management (CCM), getting in depth on what CCM really is, why specialists should consider doing CCM, and the future of CCM.

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**PODCAST: How the human immune system relates to Multiple Chronic Conditions**

In the third edition of The MCCRC Podcast, Dr. Kim Kuebler sits down with Dr. Matthew Sorenson to talk about how the human body is impacted by chronic conditions, the different types of cells in the immune system, and the factors impacting immune health.

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**PODCAST: Helping overloaded people remaining in the workforce**

Dr. Kim Kuebler sits down with Dr. Glenna Crooks to talk about her most recent research on helping overloaded people remaining in the workforce, along with her most recent book "The NetworkSage: Realize Your Network Superpower."

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**PODCAST: Understanding the Link between diabetes and low testosterone in men**

Dr. Julian L Gallegos PhD, FNP-BC, Clinical Associate Professor, Director, Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Purdue University

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**What's Your Opinion?**

Please take a few minutes to provide your feedback about *Multiple Chronic Conditions*. We want to know what you like and what you'd like to see us do differently.

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