



# Effective Health Care

## Slow-Release Antidepressants

### Nomination Summary Document

#### Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- The topic, *Slow-release Antidepressants*, was found to be addressed by a 2014 systematic review comparing immediate- versus extended-release antidepressants. Given that this existing systematic review covers this nomination, no further activity will be undertaken on this topic.
  - Nussbaumer B, Morgan LC, Reichenpfader U, et al. Comparative efficacy and risk of harms of immediate- versus extended-release second-generation antidepressants: A systematic review with network meta-analysis. *CNS Drugs* Aug 2014; 28(8):699-712.

#### Topic Description

**Nominator(s):** Individual

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator would like to have research performed on antidepressant drugs that are in slow-release form. This individual asserts that slow-release antidepressants may help a patient avoid getting a serotonin and chemical rush and are easier to tolerate than antidepressants that are not slow release.

##### Staff-Generated PICO

**Population(s):** Patients taking second-generation antidepressant medication

**Intervention(s):** Extended-release / slow- / controlled-release antidepressants

**Comparator(s):** The same, but immediate-release, antidepressant

**Outcome(s):** Adverse effects (e.g., nausea, diarrhea, headache, nervousness, insomnia, suicide); efficacy, relapse/remission, adherence

**Key Questions from Nominator:** What is the comparative effectiveness of extended- / slow- / controlled-release release versus immediate-release second generation antidepressants? (NOTE: No extended- / slow- / controlled-release first generation antidepressants are available in the US)

#### Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Data suggest that more than 10% of the adult population ages 12 or older in the US take antidepressant medication. Information about the comparative effectiveness of immediate-release versus extended-release antidepressants would help inform providers as to the comparative benefits and harms of different formulations of antidepressants.

- The topic was found to be addressed by a 2014 systematic review that assessed the comparative efficacy, risk of harms, and patients' adherence of immediate-release and extended-release second generation antidepressants for the treatment of major depressive disorder. The authors concluded that there were no clear differences between the two formulations.
- In addition, an archived AHRQ CER from 2011 was found to address differences in efficacy or effectiveness between immediate-release and extended-release formulations of second-generation antidepressants as well as differences in safety, adverse events. Relevant Key Questions from this report include:
  - Key Question 1c: Are there any differences in efficacy or effectiveness between immediate-release and extended-release formulations of second-generation antidepressants?
  - Key Question 4b: Are there any differences in safety, adverse events, or adherence between immediate-release and extended-release formulations of second-generation antidepressants?

However, given that this AHRQ CER was archived, findings from this review should not be considered current.