



## Effective Health Care

### Comparative Effectiveness of Treatments for Bipolar Disorder Nomination Summary Document

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

- The topic, *Comparative Effectiveness of Treatments for Bipolar Disorder*, will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. 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(s):** Health care professional association

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator is interested in understanding the comparative effectiveness of available treatments for bipolar disorder.

**Staff-Generated PICO Population(s):** Adults, defined as 18 years of age or older, diagnosed with bipolar I or bipolar II disorder; adult pregnant women diagnosed with bipolar disorder

**Intervention(s):** Available treatments, including psychotherapy, other psychosocial treatments, pharmacologic, and other somatic treatments (e.g., electroconvulsive therapy)

**Comparator(s):** Pharmacologic, psychotherapy, psychosocial interventions, somatic treatments, combinations of these, and placebo/sham

**Outcome(s):** Improvement in symptoms of manic, mixed, or depressive episodes; prevention of recurrent bipolar episodes; reduced suicide risk; improved treatment adherence, improved social and occupational functioning; improved health-related quality of life; remission of co-occurring substance use disorder; reduced impact of side effects of mood-stabilizing medications; remission of bipolar episode

**Key Questions from Nominator:** For adult patients with bipolar disorder (including bipolar I and bipolar II disorder, and adult pregnant women diagnosed with bipolar disorder), what is the comparative effectiveness of available treatments including psychotherapy, other psychosocial treatments, medications, and other somatic treatments (e.g., electroconvulsive therapy) in specific types of bipolar episodes (e.g., mania, depression) and phases of treatment (e.g., acute, maintenance)?

## 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/>.)
- Bipolar disorder is characterized by recurrent episodes of mania and depression, which generally occur over a patient's entire adult life and is associated with significant morbidity. Approximately 5.7 million Americans suffer from bipolar disorder.
- Bipolar disorder is a difficult illness to treat as available treatments have differential efficacy depending on polarity of episode (manic or depressive) and stage of illness (acute or chronic). Standard pharmacological therapies for bipolar disorder can include mood stabilizing medications such as lithium, anticonvulsants, antidepressants, or antipsychotics.
- There are a number of recently published relevant clinical trials evaluating interventions for the treatment of bipolar disorder. Therefore a systematic review that considers this new evidence is warranted.