**Enhancing Cost-of-Care Conversations for Low-Back Pain Treatment in Clinical Practice Using Publicly Reported Cost Information in Maine**

This project will develop and test strategies for integrating cost-of-care conversations in 12 primary care practice sites to help patients better understand health care costs and the cost/value equation, and to support their ability to make cost-informed choices, with an initial focus on the diagnosis and treatment of low-back pain (LBP). Specifically, project staff will develop tools and train clinicians and practice teams on the value of cost-of-care conversations and how they can be incorporated into the practice workflow using a team-based approach, leveraging experience with project partners and Maine practices that have extensive experience promoting the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation’s “Choosing Wisely®” messaging. We will enhance these tools to develop cost-of-care tools based on existing research with input from clinicians and patients and train practice teams to talk with patients about their financial health using empathic communication. The study will also explore best practices to help providers discuss the relative value of different treatment options, using price information for related treatments available on the recently updated state price transparency website, CompareMaine 2.0, which is one of the first state-based public reporting websites in the country that provides standardized costs for selected treatment services using data from Maine’s All-Payer Claims Database. We will study how these tools are implemented in practices, how discussions affect patient engagement in decision-making, and implications for publicly reporting cost information.