



### 3. Information for consumers to make healthcare decisions

*Will consumerism save the system?* Consumerism is advancing in all sectors. Health care policy-makers are demanding greater transparency. They advocate consumer choice, the dissemination of information, and the use of personal health record (PHR). Increasingly, employers are switching to so-called consumer-directed health plans. These plans give consumers not only greater flexibility but also greater responsibility for health care choices, from selecting health plans, to providers, to treatments. Issues to be discussed at the workshop include:

- How can we best encourage transparency?
- How can we promote consumers' use of resultant information?
- Will consumers' PHR simplify or complicate health care?
- Can consumers choose wisely?
- What impacts will integration of functions have on consumers' health? Satisfaction? Cost?
- What are the implications for the transformation of the health care system?

#### Additional discussion items

- Access: How can we ensure that consumers have access to useful health information regardless of their access to healthcare services?
- Relevance: What is the best way to identify the health information that consumers want?
- Presentation: What is the best way to present health information to consumers who have disparate health literacy, including knowledge and understanding of health problems and health/care interventions?
- Timeliness: What strategies exist to ensure that consumers access the information they need at the moment in care when they need to make a healthcare decision?
- Reliability: How can we be confident that the information consumers are getting is truly accurate and comprehensive?
- Appropriateness: Can the consumer understand the information (e.g., language, health literacy, numeracy)? Has it been tailored to their individual situation (e.g., co-morbidities, readiness to change, learning style, medium, delivery preference)?
- Integration: Is information integrated into healthcare delivery? Is information delivered to the consumer proactively? Does the consumer get the information from the person he/she wants it from?
- Impact: Does information affect decision quality? Does it effect positive behavior change? Does it provide effective emotional or other support?
- Priority setting: Given the extraordinary proliferation of health information on the Internet, and the need to ensure that it is accurate, insofar as possible, how can we best prioritize the health problems for which the quality of information should be assessed?
- Disinformation: Should there be a public sector mechanism to control disinformation on the Internet, in the interest of public safety?