

To Whom It May Concern,

We, the members of the Boston Medical Center PCORI Autism Advisory Board, are pleased to share our Research Agenda for Autistic Adolescents and Young Adults and accompanying video executive summary. Advisory Board members included autistic teenagers and young adults, parents of autistic youth, and autism service providers from the Boston area. The research agenda and video are the culmination of our 18-month collaborative project that prioritized health promotion topics for autistic adolescents and young adults.

As a key stakeholder in autism research, service provision, or policy decision-making, you play an important role in supporting the health of autistic youth. As such, we hope that you will find our agenda, and the accompanying video, useful. Our overarching hope is that these materials are used to improve the health and well-being of autistic adolescents and young adults, as this is a group with significant needs but few programs/interventions. We would like to see these recommendations inform policies, practice and research. Notably, addressing the dual burden of racism and autism was put forward as an overarching priority that should be addressed at every level of health care, education and service provision. The needs of autistic youth of color, and parents of autistic youth of color, need to be centered in all research going forward.

The ten priorities topics for autism research for adolescents and young adults include the following:

- (1) Sex and sexual health (inclusive of gender identity)
- (2) Body awareness, body image, and making healthy nutritional choices
- (3) Reducing loneliness and social isolation, increasing social connections
- (4) Reducing vulnerability to violence, bullying, and exploitation
- (5) Workforce training for college and university faculty
- (6) Reducing suicide and self-harm
- (7) Supporting autistic youth and families during transition after high school
- (8) Improving secondary school inclusion and educational options
- (9) Understanding learning styles and teaching approaches to improve autistic youths' academic achievement
- (10) Educating adolescents on the spectrum about autism and promoting self-advocacy

We welcome your feedback and look forward to opportunities to present our findings to your agency, or to engage in a conversation about how we can move forward to achieve our agenda. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

The Advisory Board Members participating in the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award (15154-BMC)