

## 2010 TMJ Report Language

### **AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY ([United States Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education & Related Agencies](#))**

*Temporomandibular Joint and Muscle Disorders-* The Committee is aware that temporomandibular joint and muscle disorders [TMJDs] affect over 35 million people in the United States. Symptoms of this disorder range from mild discomfort to severe pain that causes limitations in speaking, chewing and swallowing. Health care practitioners have amassed over 50 treatments for TMJDs with virtually no evidence of safety or efficacy based on randomized controlled clinical trials. The Committee urges AHRQ to conduct a study of the per-patient cost and efficacy/effectiveness of treatments for TMJDs, focusing on developments after a similar study was prepared in 2001.

### **NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DENTAL AND CRANIOFACIAL RESEARCH ([United States Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education & Related Agencies](#))**

*Temporomandibular Joint Disorder [TMJD]-* The Committee appreciates that progress has been made in understanding some genetic and gender differences in sensitivity to pain, the role of hormones in modulating pain responses, and the unique anatomical and musculoskeletal characteristics of the temporomandibular joint. Similarly, the Committee looks forward to the results of the current prospective study exploring risk factors for the onset of TMJD. However, minimal progress has been made in understanding the causes of TMJD and mechanisms that might explain the presence of many co-morbid conditions with TMJD that are also associated with pain, such as chronic headache, vulvodynia, irritable bowel syndrome, interstitial cystitis, chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome, fibromyalgia and generalized pain syndromes. Resolution of TMJD problems is further hampered by inadequate diagnostics, ineffective and even harmful treatments, and the failure to develop effective medications to treat this and other chronic pain conditions. Therefore, the Committee requests the NIDCR to take the lead in developing a comprehensive 5-year TMJD research plan that articulates the strategies and goals necessary to resolve the issues that have plagued TMJD studies over the decades. The plan should include research to develop definitive diagnostic criteria; support an updated epidemiology, including a count of co-morbid conditions; examine genetic and other factors that increase risk for TMJD; and support endocrine, immune and nervous system research on pain mechanisms and treatments. The plan's research goals should incorporate the appropriate mix of basic, clinical and translational science, recruitment of scientists from the pertinent disciplines, and meaningful training programs to enlarge the pool of investigators and indicate what funding mechanisms should be employed.

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR** ([United States Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education & Related Agencies](#))

*Overlapping Chronic Disorders-* The Committee notes that millions of Americans suffer with one or more of the following chronic disorders: chronic fatigue syndrome, endometriosis, fibromyalgia, headache, interstitial cystitis, irritable bowel syndrome, temporomandibular joint and muscle disorders and vulvodynia. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that these conditions frequently co-exist or overlap, yet all are poorly understood. Progress in treating these prevalent, life-altering disorders has been hindered by their complex genetics and heterogeneous etiologies; however, studying related or clinically overlapping chronic conditions can yield unique biological insight into the mechanisms underlying common disease. The Committee calls upon the Director to coordinate, with all relevant institutes and centers, a trans-NIH research initiative in fiscal year 2010 that will support studies aimed at identifying common etiological pathways, with the goal of identifying potential therapeutic targets. The Committee also requests that the Director hold a conference in fiscal year 2010 that will bring together a wide range of basic and clinical researchers from multiple specialties, as well as professional and patient advocacy organizations, to present and discuss the latest scientific discoveries and develop future research recommendations. The Committee requests an update on progress made in this area in the fiscal year 2011 congressional budget justification.

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR** ([United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education & Related Agencies](#))

*Temporomandibular Joint and Muscle Disorders (TMJDs).*--A range of comorbid conditions are associated with TMJDs. Many are captured in ongoing longitudinal studies funded by institutes and centers other than NIDCR. In order to advance the knowledge of the degree of overlap between TMJDs and the associated comorbidities, the Committee requests that NIH-funded population-based research projects, where appropriate and in consultation with the NIH Pain Consortium co-chairs, add measures to characterize the TMJD phenotype to permit the development of a sound basis for research into the underlying mechanisms driving the TMJD phenomenology and its comorbid conditions.