

ISPOR STUDENT NEWS



Volume 5 (7) February 2004

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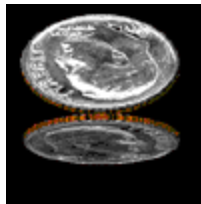
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Chapter Update



\$\$\$ *Fundraising* \$\$\$

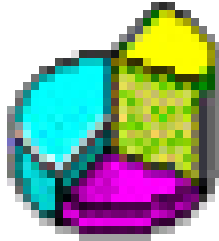


Congratulations!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

University of Texas at Austin

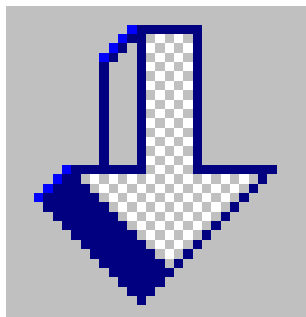
Congratulations to The University of Texas at Austin ISPOR Student Chapter for raising \$200 and 45 lbs of food and donating this to the Capital Area Food Bank of Texas. The contribution served 1,156 meals to Central Texans in need.

European Interest Survey Results



The student icebreaker at the recently concluded European Congress in Barcelona was well attended by students from both European and American Universities. There was a 40% survey response rate from the student attendees. Of those, 40% of the students were from European Universities. The European respondents without a student chapter at their respective universities had an interest in becoming a part of the student network. Most of the students were already members of ISPOR and had a poster presentation at the conference.

All respondents found the ISPOR student network to be beneficial in terms of collaboration and networking with peers and colleagues. Some respondents voiced their concerns about the high costs of accommodation for the students. A few students would have liked more social activities at the student icebreaker including meal and toasts to increase the time available for informal interaction amongst students. There was a desire expressed for mock interview sessions at the European conference.



North American Student Interest Survey Results



Kudos to the following chapters for completing the Student Interest Survey

University of Houston

University of Florida

University of Minnesota

University of Louisiana at Monroe

University of Texas at Austin

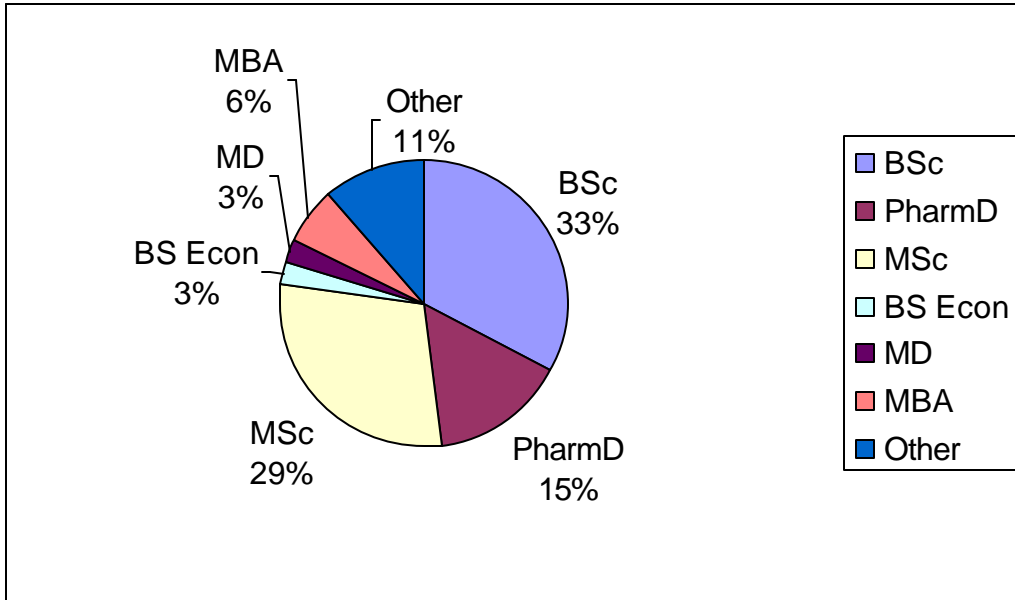
University of Toronto

University of Southern California

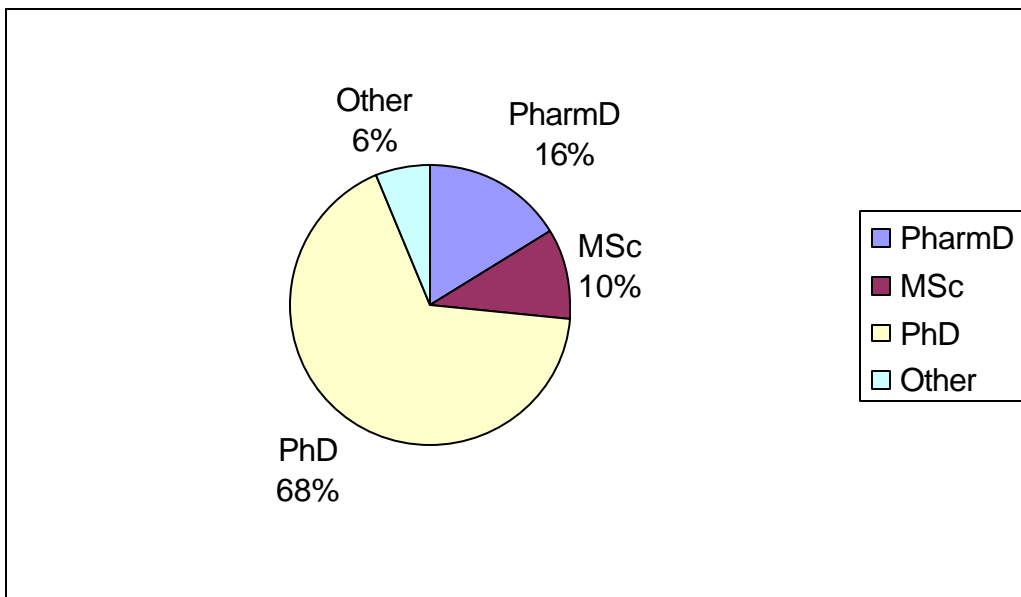
West Virginia University

About a quarter of the total number of the student members of ISPOR are in their first year and about 34% in the second year of their degree program. About 75% of students have been members of ISPOR for less than two years. Majority of the students seem to have a keen interest in topics related to outcomes research followed by epidemiology, health/drug policy and health economics. Speakers from the industry followed by consulting firms seem to be the most popular.

The pie chart below describes the qualifications of the current student members:



Below is a pie depicting the distribution of degree programs in which students are currently enrolled.



Careers in Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research

Dennis W. Raisch, PhD, RPh

Associate Center Director, Scientific Affairs, Veterans Affairs (VA) Cooperative Studies
Program Clinical Research Pharmacy, Albuquerque, NM.

Describe your Position.

My current position is Associate Center Director, Scientific Affairs, of the Veterans Affairs (VA) Cooperative Studies Program Clinical Research Pharmacy. I am also a Research Associate Professor at the College of Pharmacy, University of New Mexico. My primary responsibilities involve managing pharmaceutical support for over 30 large, multi-center clinical trials. These trials often include sites in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. I also teach and direct research projects in pharmacoeconomics. I coordinate a pharmacoeconomics fellowship.

Give a brief background of your education and training?

I received my B.S. in Pharmacy in 1975 from the University of Arizona. I then completed a hospital pharmacy residency and worked as a hospital pharmacist for 9 years. I returned to the University of Arizona in 1984 and earned my Master's degree in 1986 and my PhD in 1988. At the University of Arizona, my mentors were J. Lyle Bootman, PhD, William F. McGhan Pharm D, PhD, and Lon N. Larson, PhD.

How did you plan your career in terms of training and goals?

After practicing pharmacy for a number of years, I decided that I would like to be more involved in developing the future of pharmacy. I reviewed various pharmacy graduate programs and chose the University of Arizona because of the strength of the faculty and the design of the graduate program. After receiving my PhD, I focused on positions in Colleges of Pharmacy, where I could perform independent research and train pharmacists and graduate students. Through keeping an inquiring mind and capitalizing on opportunities, I have established successful collaborations with many people who have common interests.

What is the demand for health outcomes researchers in government/VA?

In a recent trip to England, I had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Cam Donaldson and other health economic researchers at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne. In our discussions, it became clear that the United States government and the VA are in their infancy in regards to conduct and application of health outcomes research. I believe that this weakness will continue to be exposed and will result in an explosion of demand for researchers in governmental agencies.

How do you feel outcomes research has changed in the past decade and where do you see it going in the future?

The quality of health outcomes research has greatly improved, which has coincided with improvements in education and increases in research funding. The extended role of government in health care payment and the growth of managed care in health care provision, as well as the pressures to curb health care utilization and costs, will continue to spur the growth and increased quality of outcomes research.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your career?

I get the most satisfaction from achieving successful collaborations with colleagues, including graduate students and fellows. This involves development of research proposals, completion of high quality research, and publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts.

What advice would you give a student who is pursuing a career similar to yours?

The most valuable trait you can cultivate is an intense inquisitiveness in health outcomes research and its implications. To maintain a balanced approach, you should treat the results of your research with skepticism. The most valuable skill is the ability to communicate. It is important to learn to speak and write clearly and succinctly.

Student Article of the Month



TRENDS IN MEDICAL USE AND ABUSE OF SUSTAINED-RELEASE OPIOID

ANALGESICS: A REVISIT

Suzanne Novak, MD,* William C. Nemeth, MD, † and Kenneth A. Lawson, PhD*

To be published in: Pain Medicine 5(1); 2004:62-67.

Objective: Previous literature suggests that increases in the medical use of opioids over the early 1990s did not contribute to increased morbidity secondary to opioid abuse. Our objective was to evaluate the period 1997–2001 to analyze trends in medical use and medical abuse of three classes of opioid analgesics that are commonly used in sustained-release formulations: fentanyl, morphine, and oxycodone.

Design and Setting: A retrospective analysis of the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) database and the Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System (ARCOS) database for the years 1997–2001 was used for this study.

Results: The analysis of the DAWN database showed that there was an 83.5% increase in all opioid analgesic mentions from 1997 to 2001. Mentions involving any fentanyl compound increased 249.8%, any morphine compound increased 161.8%, and any oxycodone-containing compound increased 267.3%. Mentions of each of these three classes of opioids remained less than 2% of all total drug mentions per year for each year studied. Medical use of the selected opioid classes, as reported in the ARCOS database and measured by grams distributed, all increased substantially (fentanyl 151.2%, morphine 48.8%, oxycodone 347.9%).

Conclusion: Using this method of analysis, the rates of drug abuse, and resultant morbidity secondary to the use of opioid analgesics, remains low in spite of the increase in medical use of these substances.

† Texas Worker's Compensation Commission, Austin, Texas

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Acknowledgements



We would like to thank Concetta Crivera, PharmD, Rutgers University, Nikhil Khandelwal, BS Pharm, MS, Auburn University, and Rupali Naik, BS Pharm, MBA, University of New Mexico for their hard work on the February 2004 issue of the ISPOR Student Newsletter.

We also thank Ritesh Kumar, Student Network Chair and Dr. Zeba Khan, Student Network Advisor for their continued support.