The Challenge of Universal Health
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When I stood for election, I set out my view of the challenges ISPOR must address:

1. Continuing to globalise, by which I mean respond to the reality that most of the growth of interest in outcomes research and economic analysis is taking place outside of North America and Europe.

2. Working together with payers demanding greater evidence of value; to establish what is feasible, given data, costs and the science, and to improve methods, the evidence base, and decision making, over time.

3. Continuing to raise Health Economics and Outcomes Research (HEOR) scientific standards.

4. Supporting the next generation of researchers, by providing forums and opportunities both for learning and for exchanging important new ideas and approaches.

We had a record-sized meeting for North America with attendees from a record number of different countries, a record number of student chapters, regional chapters, and the Asia Consortium celebrating its first decade, the Latin America Consortium celebrating 9 years next year with a 20% increase in growth since 2013, and the Arabic and African Networks looking to achieve Consortium status. This means that ISPOR is addressing these challenges, but I want to say a little more about the first challenge of globalisation. ISPOR’s globalisation has to be linked to understanding decision making in middle and low income country (MLIC) health systems. There is a growing desire in MLICs to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for their populations. Using health technology assessment, economic analysis and outcomes research to support priority setting as part of UHC will be important. A key question in HTA in these, and indeed all regional settings, will be understanding the potential transferability of evidence. There is a focus on not reinventing the wheel. In Europe we are finally trying to achieve this through the European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA); let us try to avoid building in duplication from the onset elsewhere in the world. Successful implementation of UHC will also require creating incentives in health care systems to achieve better outcomes, and creating the tools and systems to measure performance. In other words, diverse health systems have diverse needs for information, economic analysis, and outcomes research. ISPOR has to lead the scientific developments needed to respond to these needs.

So, I repeat, diverse health systems have diverse needs for information, economic analysis and outcomes research. ISPOR can lead the scientific developments needed to respond to these needs. At stake is the ability of citizens around the world to gain access to universal health coverage for the first time.

Of course, ISPOR is already global in its reach. An important part of ISPOR’s growing global footprint are the biennial conferences in Asia and in Latin America. I want to invite you to join me in Beijing for the next ISPOR meeting, my first as ISPOR President, and I want also to remind you of the third ISPOR meeting of 2014, which is in Amsterdam.

ISPOR’s publications are global, with our flagship journal Value in Health (ViH) and Value in Health Regional Issues (ViHRI), with three issues each year covering Asia, CEEWAA (Central and Eastern Europe, Western Asia, and Africa), and Latin America. ViHRI has now moved to article-based electronic publishing, and the rising quality of these publications is reflected by a projected 30% increase in the Impact Factor of ViH, and plans to get ViHRI listed on Medline/ PubMed.

Raising the global impact of ISPOR’s drive for good science is also reflected in the expanding webinar series and the current activities of the ISPOR Task Forces.

I look forward to working with the new President-elect Dan Malone, and his newly elected Board colleagues, who join the continuing Board members. Together, we will work to ensure ISPOR continues to develop with a new Executive Director. Last, but not least, I want to return to the global challenge.

Providing efficient and effective health care is a global challenge.

ISPOR is a global organisation that exists to help meet this challenge. Diverse health systems have different challenges. ISPOR has to anticipate and respond to these needs. We can do this.

Thank you.