



New ISPOR Program Recognizes Outstanding Contribution of Regional Chapters: An Interview With ISPOR Russia St. Petersburg, Mexico, and Colombia Chapters

The ISPOR Outstanding Chapter Award was established in 2017 to recognize the exceptional contribution and leadership of ISPOR Regional Chapters in advancing the ISPOR mission in ISPOR global regions Asia, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, and Africa. The award is offered in 3 categories based on chapter membership size: small, medium, large. ISPOR staff assesses the chapter's contributions by applying eligibility and selection criteria in their review of the information available from the Chapter Annual Reports, chapter input to ISPOR publications, and ISPOR activities throughout the year.

Value & Outcomes Spotlight had the opportunity to talk to the presidents of the ISPOR Regional Chapters that received the ISPOR Outstanding Chapter Award and ask them to reflect on the chapter's significance, possible impact, and contribution to the development of the health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) supporting better health decision making in their countries.

About ISPOR Regional Chapters

As the field of HEOR has grown in importance, ISPOR's global HEOR community has expanded to more than 20,000 individual and chapter members from 120+ countries worldwide. ISPOR Regional Chapters facilitate the global flow of information related to healthcare decision making. There are currently 86 ISPOR Regional Chapters in global regions.

For more information, go to <https://www.ispor.org/member-groups/global-groups>.

Value & Outcomes Spotlight: Congratulations on receiving the 2018 ISPOR Outstanding Chapter Award. For many ISPOR Regional Chapters' members, engagement and contribution are among the key challenges that prevent them from reaching their full potential. How do your chapters connect with members in your regions and create a collaborative environment?



Alexey Kolbin, MD, PhD, President, ISPOR Russia St. Petersburg Chapter, Professor, Department of Pharmacology, School of Medicine & Head of the Clinical Pharmacology Laboratory, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia: Scientific communication between Chapter members is based on historical ties. In fact, that early collaboration was one of the

reasons for Chapter foundation. In the early 2000s, a few doctors and pharmacists from St. Petersburg State University and State Chemical Pharmaceutical Academy—experts in pharmacoeconomics—established a collaborative network to which they later invited mathematicians and healthcare managers. Thus, the connections between the Chapter members derive from strong academic scientific teamwork that has been developing for over 15 years. ISPOR Chapter status has given us an opportunity to make all our team activities more visible. The existing collaborative environment makes HTA projects a part of our daily work and provides a faster integration of new Chapter members.



César Alberto Cruz Santiago, MD, PHD, President, ISPOR Mexico Chapter, Unit Chief of Quality and Health Technologies Evaluation, Health Services PEMEX, Mexico City, Mexico: Inside the ISPOR Chapter Mexico, our priority is to serve the members because the members are the most important part of the chapter. That is why we work to plan activities, sessions, and products that

offer value to our members. We organize academic sessions with topics of interest in HTA, pharmacoeconomics, health policies, etc. We also organize an annual 3-day event, with an excellent group of national and international speakers, and of course, distinguished members of ISPOR international, and at least one other additional intermediate event to complement our activities. In the past year, we organized an MCDA course with the participation of international ISPOR members and the first official TreeAge Training in México. These activities are planned with the chapter members in mind, and their opinions are taken into consideration when we generate these events. We give them the opportunity to engage and interact with the various decision makers both in the academic area, and public and private officials to build topics of interest and create the possibility of making decisions together.



Camilo Ernesto Castañeda Cordona, MD, President, ISPOR Colombia Chapter and Project Manager at NeuroEconomiX, Bogota, Colombia: Our chapter continuously inquires about the interests and needs of the chapter members and the stakeholders in the health system. This guarantees that our activities are aligned with the needs and keeps our members feeling connected with

the chapter. Likewise, it makes the members value and attend our events. Thanks to this, we have managed to raise awareness of health economics and outcomes research in our country and positively impact our health system. The health economy science in Colombia has had an important growth in the last 15 years, which has materialized with the creation of the health technology agency (IETS) that recently turned 5 years old. Health economics in Colombia is so important that it is a tool used not only by the health technology agency but also by the health ministry, payers, and providers as an intelligent decision-making tool.

We are proud to say that ISPOR Chapter Colombia has contributed to this evolution, promoting knowledge and generating academic spaces to spread this information. The chapter offers congresses, workshops, and symposiums to people from government, academia, and payers. The stakeholders have learned pharmacoeconomics and to use these tools through the programs we offer, specifically the cost-effectiveness studies. Today, we are a leading country

ISPOR AWARDS



in Latin America and a pioneer in the use of these economic tools for decision making and we look forward to the continuation of HEOR growth in the region.

VOS: Your chapters have been recognized for developing and successfully implementing an outstanding program of activities in the areas of education, research, and publication. Can you describe how ISPOR as an organization has contributed to this recognition?

AK: I would like to mention again the history of ISPOR in Russia. Since 1998, when the first chapter was opened in Moscow, Russia (president Pavel Vorobiev), the scientists have been studying the methodology of pharmacoeconomics, pharmacoepidemiology, and outcomes research. The establishing of Russia HTA Chapter (president Vitaly Omelyanovsky) in 2011 in Moscow and the St. Petersburg Chapter in 2012 made the ISPOR methodology of conducting HEOR studies the leading one in the country. Gradually, public health managers and decision makers have been involved in HTA processes. ISPOR provides access to methodological tools and guidelines, starting from scientific journals to educational webinars. They present great importance to us and serve as the foundation for organizing and presenting our educational courses and conducting scientific research, which are accepted at not only the regional, but also the national levels.

CACS: ISPOR as an organization has participated as a bridge that unites, in a clear way, the different stakeholders of the health sector. This allows, in an impartial way, the collaboration and joint work of all the key organizations involved. It also provides scientific information for good practices in health economics and in the evaluation of health technology. For instance, when ISPOR participated in the update for the national guide for the realization of HTA and the national guide for the evaluation of medical devices, these actions were carried out with the ministry of health. As an academic organization, ISPOR has the possibility of integrating collegiate organizations for the realization of common projects, the generation of research works involving 2 or more members of the health sector and allows participation in the achievement of commitments that require the conjunction of the parties by being the element that allows the joint decision making.

CC: Mainly because our chapter has made a huge effort to have in its team a combination of key stakeholders, including from academia. These members not only come from the best universities in the country but also from the most technical entities of the government. By attracting these types of affiliates, a favorable and fruitful environment for education, research, and scientific publications is generated. ISPOR, as the leading society of HEOR, has contributed because it offers high-quality academic programs and educational activities that are programmed every year worldwide through their conferences. ISPOR Colombia Chapter members take advantage of the tools that ISPOR offers to keep updated on the latest trends of HEOR and the opportunities that the society offers to share knowledge and, in this way, contribute to the growth of health economics and outcomes research in our country.

Looking at your chapters' past year's achievements in the HEOR field in your regions, what are you the proudest of and what goals do you have for the next year in fulfilling your chapters' mission?

KA: It seems to us that our main achievement is that we as a chapter have managed to bring together the most experienced specialists in the field of pharmacoeconomics and HTA in St. Petersburg, which is a city with a population of 5 million and huge scientific potential. Moreover, these are people from different academic schools and universities. All of them are now conducting research in the field of HTA using the same ISPOR methodology, which is extremely important. These are the people with whom we are presently preparing a handbook for conducting pharmacoeconomic studies using mainly ISPOR methodology and guidelines. Completion of this book by next year is our ambitious challenge. In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that we have developed and approved from the Russian Ministry of Health a one-week educational course titled "Current Topics in HTA," with attendees receiving CME credits at the end of it. Both maintenance and improvement of this course are among our main goals for the coming year.

CACS: In the past year, we have increased the number of members. In 2016, there were approximately 110 associates; we currently have more than 300 and we expect that for the annual meeting in 2020, we will welcome more than 500 members. We have been able to hold monthly educational and informational sessions at no cost to our members. Our goal is that for the next year we will continue holding these meetings and providing our members the opportunity to learn from international experts in HEOR, offering our members the possibility to stay up to date in their knowledge. The chapter is proud to say that we have promoted the collaboration between ISPOR, industry, and government to make possible the creation of the Mexican QALYs. We already have the authorization of EuroQol, and we will start in the first quarter of 2019 with a study to continue with the development of this project. We would also like to continue with academic events and increase our participation in the generation of knowledge from the development of original research and contribute to the dissemination of it. We would also like to proceed with the formalization of our student chapter. We understand the importance of new professionals and students in continuing to be a leading chapter.

CC: One of the activities that we are most proud of is the success of our ISPOR Colombian Chapter conference this year, where we exceeded attendance expectations, had world-class speakers, and brought together the main players of our health system to discuss the most important issues in the field. Additionally, we are very proud to be the venue for the next ISPOR Latin America conference. Next year, we will have the Latin American conference in Bogotá—ISPOR Latina America 2019! The conference will include magisterial sessions, workshops, webinars, and other educational activities, and the ISPOR Colombia Chapter is planning on collaborating greatly with the development of this important conference. This will be one of our main goals for next year. By having the opportunity to host the ISPOR conference in Colombia, we will strongly encourage our members to take advantage of this opportunity, and we hope to provide a fruitful experience that will satisfy the increasingly educated and demanding public. For the next year, we also want to make big contributions to the health economy, reaching a larger number of people in both the government and industry and making our chapter an increasingly larger group that seeks to contribute to the welfare of the entire Latin America region. ●