

ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK

Newsletter

MARCH 2025 | SPRING ISSUE

**ISPOR Europe
2024 Recap**

**ISPOR Annual
2025 Preview**



**A PUBLICATION OF THE
ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK**

**Helpful student
information**

**Student
Interest Survey**

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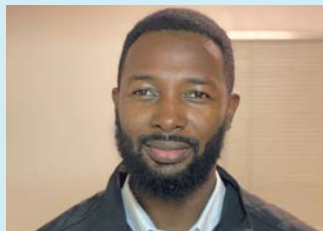
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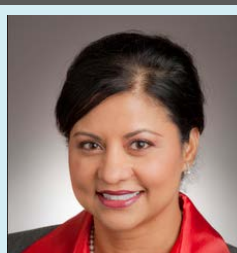


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SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO THE NEWSLETTER!

To submit an article for the next issue of our student newsletter, please contact the ISPOR Student Network at studentnetwork@ispor.org

LETTER FROM THE STUDENT NETWORK CHAIR

Hello Student Colleagues!

Hope you are all having a productive academic year! The ISPOR Student Network has been busy with educational and networking events tailored to students.

At ISPOR Europe 2024, the Students Network hosted a roundtable discussion titled "Advancing Evidence Generation through HTA for Enhanced Health Outcomes: A Global Perspective." The session focused on global differences in HTA processes and evidence generation. Also at ISPOR Europe 2024, the Student Network moderated a poster tour highlighting the research of six students. And lastly, at ISPOR Europe 2024, the Student Network got together in Barcelona for an informal hangout.

Aside from conference activities, the Student Network has also been organizing virtual networking and mentorship opportunities. In November 2024, the Student Network hosted a mentoring session titled "Career Planning: Advice for Students and Graduates" where three professionals gave advice on building a successful HEOR career. The Student Network administered a feedback survey to ISPOR student members. Thank you to everyone who responded! The results are presented in this newsletter and provide useful insights into your preferences and requests of the student network. We will work to incorporate these insights!

Looking forward, the ISPOR Student Network is hosting a webinar titled "Causal AI in HEOR: Beyond Predictions to Actionable Insights." Look for more details later in this newsletter. At the upcoming ISPOR 2025 meeting in Montreal, the Student Network is hosting a roundtable discussion, poster tour, and informal hangout. Details are included in this newsletter. Lastly, we are incredibly excited that the student research competition will be back this year, for the first time since 2019.

We have done so much, and there is so much more to do this term. Thank you to all the Student Network committee members and co-chairs for your hard work in putting these events together! I look forward to your continued engagement.

If you are going to ISPOR 2025, please let me know!! I would love to find a time for us to meet!



KANYA K. SHAH, PHARMD, MS, MBA (SHE/HER)

***ISPOR - Student Network Chair, ISPOR
University of Illinois Chicago, College of Pharmacy
United States***

ISPOR EUROPE 2024

Barcelona, Spain



ISPOR EUROPE 2024 STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

PRESENTERS



**Zhaoyan Piao, PharmD/
MS Candidate**
Yonsei University
South Korea



**Mohin Chanpura, MS, PhD
Candidate**
University of Southern California
USA



**Mengke Yu, PhD
Candidate**
The Hong Kong Polytechnic
University
China



**Katerina Hejcmanova, PhD
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National Screening Centre, Institute
of Health Information & Statistics of
the Czech Republic; Institute of
Biostatistics & Analyses, Faculty of
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**Stefania Plankó, MS
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**Kah Suan Chong, PharmD
Candidate**
Institute of Clinical Pharmacy &
Pharmaceutical Sciences,
College of Medicine, National
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Taiwan



ISPOR
Improving healthcare decisions

ISPOR Student Network
Event Planning Committee



ISPOR
Student Network



ISPOR EUROPE 2024 STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Presenters



Mengke Yu

Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Mengke Yu is a PhD student at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, with a background in public health and health economics. She holds a Bachelor of Medicine, a Bachelor of Economics, and a Master of Science from Peking University. Prior to pursuing her PhD, she contributed as a research staff at China Development Research Foundation, a prominent think tank in China, where she applied her expertise to drive positive policy change. She has been involved in a wide range of research on ageing, covering various critical issues such as chronic disease management, digital health, immunization, etc. Her PhD research focuses on vision health in the elderly population, supervised by Dr Jinxiao Lian and Prof Maurice Yap. With a strong commitment to informing evidence-based health policy, she strives to make a meaningful contribution to this field.



Kateřina Hejčmanová

Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic

Kateřina Hejčmanová is a PhD student in the Oncology and Haematology programme at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic, and a data analyst at the National Screening Centre. She mainly focuses on statistical modelling and evaluation of screening programmes. Her first major project was the development of a microsimulation model and CEA for cervical cancer screening, which she is currently completing. She is also currently working on developing models for colorectal and prostate cancer screening and, more recently, also abdominal aortic aneurysm screening. The latter programme will be launched in the Czech Republic in January 2025, and she is pleased to present the basis for this programme at the ISPOR Europe 2024.

ISPOR EUROPE 2024 STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Presenters



Mohin Chanpura

University of Southern California, USA

Mohin Chanpura is a first year Health Economics PhD student at the University of Southern California. He holds a BA in Economics from Rutgers University - New Brunswick and an MS in Health Outcomes, Policy, and Economics from the Rutgers School of Public Health. Mohin's research interests lie primarily in the economics of aging and the optimization of preventive and treatment strategies for aging-associated diseases. His interests in breast cancer treatment patterns in the elderly stem from both a prior research assistantship with Dr. William Hu of the Rutgers Asian Resource Center for Minority and Aging Research, and his own mother's previous struggles with stage II breast cancer.



Kah Suan Chong

National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

Kah Suan Chong is a 28-year-old Malaysian currently pursuing a PhD at the Institute of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. She earned her bachelor's degree in pharmacy from the same institution. Her research topics mainly focused on pharmacoeconomic, including cost-effectiveness analysis, recalibration of simulation models and patient-reported outcome in the chronic disease areas, such as diabetes, obesity and rheumatoid arthritis. These findings could be found in Cardiovascular Diabetology and Frontiers in Endocrinology. Alongside her research, she enjoys sharing her findings at international conferences, as she believes in the importance of collaboration and knowledge exchange in improving healthcare outcomes.

ISPOR EUROPE 2024 STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Presenters



Zhaoyan Piao

Yonsei University, South Korea

Zhaoyan Piao is currently a combined master's and doctoral student at the College of Pharmacy at Yonsei University in South Korea, majoring in pharmacy. Her primary research interests lie in health economics and public health. Committed to advancing evidence-based decision-making, Zhaoyan's work explores the intersection of economic and clinical factors in healthcare. Her recent research, titled "Evaluating the Healthcare Burden and Clinical Impact of Polypharmacy Among the Elderly in South Korea," investigates the challenges and economic impact of polypharmacy in aging populations, contributing valuable insights for more sustainable healthcare policies.



Stefánia Plankó

Corvinus University of Budapest

Stefánia Plankó is a dedicated young professional with a Bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management and a Master's degree in Health Policy, Planning, and Financing, both from Corvinus University of Budapest. Currently, She serves as the President of the Academic Committee at Rajk College for Advanced Studies, a self-governing student organization where she strive to promote academic excellence and student engagement. She also works at Syreon Research Institute, where she conducts research on EU-funded projects related to financing public health programmes. Her interests lie in macroeconomic questions, particularly concerning fiscal policy, public health policy, and health systems. At ISPOR Europe 2024, she looks forward to contributing to discussions that bridge academic insights with practical applications in health policy.

ISPOR EUROPE 2024

PANEL DISCUSSION AND ROUNDTABLE

ADVANCING EVIDENCE GENERATION THROUGH HTA FOR ENHANCED HEALTH OUTCOMES: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

PANELISTS



Sandipan Bhattacharjee, PhD
Director of Real World Evidence (RWE) leader, Oncology at Bayer



Gihan Hamdy El-sisi, PhD
Managing Director, HTA Office LLC, Middle East and North Africa, Cairo, Egypt



Michael Berntgen, PharmD, PhD
Head of Scientific Evidence Generation Department, EMA



Fang-Ju Irene Lin, PhD
School of Pharmacy, College of Medicine, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan

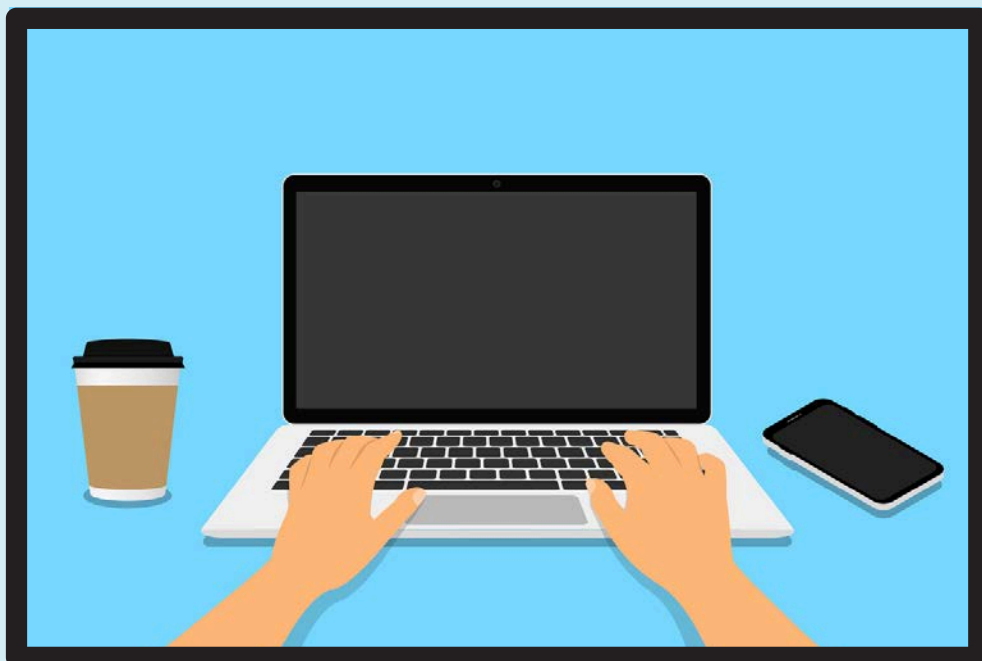


The roundtable discussion on "Advancing Evidence Generation through HTA for Enhanced Health Outcomes: A Global Perspective" featured a panel of knowledgeable speakers who shared insights on evidence generation and HTA from their diverse countries and perspectives. The session began with each speaker highlighting key points on the topic, setting the stage for a deeper conversation. The question-and-answer session that followed was well-attended by a lively and inquisitive audience. Both students and professionals asked insightful questions, engaged with the speakers, and interacted with their peers, keeping the conversation focused on this important and timely subject.

Hearing about the differences in HTA preparation and evidence requirements across various countries provided fascinating insights into the global approach to medication access. After the session, many attendees, both students and professionals expressed their thoughts, comments, and gratitude for the engaging and thought-provoking session.

WEBINARS

**Missed a webinar?
Catch it on demand!**



UPCOMING WEBINAR



Live Webinar

CAUSAL AI IN HEOR: BEYOND PREDICTIONS TO ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS



**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 23, 2025
10:00 AM EDT**



Uwe Siebert, MD, ScD

Chair & Professor, Department of
Public Health, Medical Decision
Making and HTA, UMIT TIROL, Austria



Lizheng Shi, PhD

Neal A. and Mary Vanselow Endowed
Chair & Professor, Department of
Health Policy and Management
Director, Health Systems Analytics
Research Center, Tulane University,
USA

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the fundamentals of causal inference in AI
- Explore practical applications of causal inference in AI
- Learn key methodologies and tools for causal inference in AI

**Scan to
register:**



**Open to all ISPOR members
and non-members**

UPCOMING ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK WEBINAR



ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK

Causal AI in HEOR: Beyond Predictions to Actionable Insights

Open to all ISPOR Members and Non-members

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 | 10:00AM EDT | 2:00PM UTC | 4:00PM CEST

In recent years, the growing investment in Artificial Intelligence (AI) has raised new challenges, including the 'black box' problem and biases in healthcare models. While approaches like Responsible AI, Fair AI, and Explainable AI have made strides in addressing ethical concerns and promoting transparency, they each have limitations in fully accounting for causal relationships in healthcare. Causal AI, however, emphasizes the identification of cause-and-effect relationships, offering a more robust framework for analyzing health outcomes, improving decision-making, and ensuring equitable healthcare solutions.

This webinar will focus on the transformative role of causal inference in AI within the context of Health Economics and Outcomes Research (HEOR). While classical machine learning (ML) has proven effective at identifying patterns in health data, it often falls short in understanding the underlying reasons behind these patterns and how one health outcome impacts another. This limitation is particularly important in HEOR, where understanding causal relationships is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness, safety, and cost-effectiveness of healthcare interventions.

Join us for an insightful discussion on how Causal AI can improve the application of health economics and outcomes research, providing more reliable, ethical, and transparent models for assessing healthcare interventions. This webinar will feature expert insights on the potential of causal inference to reduce biases, improve policy decisions, and enhance patient outcomes, while promoting fairness and transparency in AI-driven healthcare research.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the Fundamentals of Causal Inference in AI: Participants will gain a foundational understanding of causal inference, including key concepts such as causality, correlation, and confounding factors, and how these principles differ from traditional statistical methods.
- Explore Practical Applications of Causal Inference in AI: Through research-driven examples, attendees will discover how causal inference is utilized in real-world AI systems to improve decision-making, enhance predictive accuracy, and tackle challenges related to fairness and bias in machine learning models.
- Learn Key Methodologies and Tools for Causal Inference in AI: Participants will be introduced to methodologies and tools for implementing causal inference in AI, including techniques such as causal diagrams and machine learning algorithms designed for causal analysis.

UPCOMING ISPOR WEBINAR



ISPOR GLOBAL GROUPS

ISPOR HEOR Competencies: Boosting Career and Networks

Open to all ISPOR Members and Non-members

Thursday, June 12, 2025 | 10:00AM EDT | 2:00PM UTC | 4:00PM CEST

Based on its members' knowledge and insights, ISPOR in 2020 published 41 competencies for HEOR professionals. These sets of competencies were categorized into 13 topic domains, forming the ISPOR HEOR Competencies Framework. These established competencies and dimensions help HEOR professionals effectively guide their professional development. This webinar will provide a comprehensive overview of the ISPOR HEOR Competencies Framework and its primary goals. Additionally, it will define the competencies necessary for professionals to excel in the field, identify common competency gaps seen in candidates and employees, and address the training and education gaps that need to be filled.

Dr. Soham Shukla will discuss the overview and scope of the ISPOR HEOR Competencies Framework, including its limitations and barriers to adoption. He will also consider the issue of job types and the breadth of topics in which professionals must demonstrate competence. Furthermore, Dr. Annesha White will demonstrate the horizon of professional networks and the relevance of the competencies framework in ISPOR HEOR, including external stakeholders for new professionals. Dr. Eberechukwu Onukwugha will present how new professionals utilize it, with a focus on how to demonstrate their competencies by developing their relevant skills and how it works for new professionals. This session is designed for professionals at all career stages who are looking to enhance their expertise, navigate career growth, and maximize their impact in HEOR.

Learning Objectives

- Recognize ISPOR HEOR Competencies Framework in career development.
- Develop relevant skills and knowledge to demonstrate competency.
- Demonstrate the horizon of professional network as a critical competency for career advancement.

STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY



STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY 2024-25

The ISPOR Student Network has administered the annual Student Member Interest Survey since 2011 to evaluate evolving student member interests in the field of health economics and outcome research (HEOR). The 2024-2025 survey, conducted by the Survey & Evaluation Committee, is intended to assess student engagement with ISPOR and identify preferred learning opportunities to inform activity planning for student members of the network.

Survey Methods and Analysis: The Student Interest Survey was distributed to ISPOR's student members between October and November 2024 through multiple channels: email listservs, the ISPOR Student Network newsletter, social media platforms, and during in-person/virtual events. The survey covered questions on student demographics, interests, engagement patterns, and barriers to engagement. Descriptive analyses were conducted to summarize participant responses, and the Pearson Chi-Square test was used to assess statistical differences between categorical variables across two groups.



125

Students participated

These voices echoed from diverse corners of the globe: **46.3%** were from Asia Pacific, **31.7%** from North America, **13.8%** from Europe. The remaining respondents were from the Middle East (7.3%), with only one respondent from Latin America (0.8%).

>45.2%

PURSUING DOCTORAL DEGREES

A substantial majority (**84.8%**) of the respondents reported being a member of their local ISPOR student chapter, with **62.3%** holding a chapter leadership position. Despite the natural turnover of student membership, a quarter of the respondents had more than 2 years of membership (13% for 2-3 years and 12% for over 3 years), while 39% respondents were in their second year of membership.

Most Beneficial SPOR Student Network Engagement Activities

80% Online learning opportunities

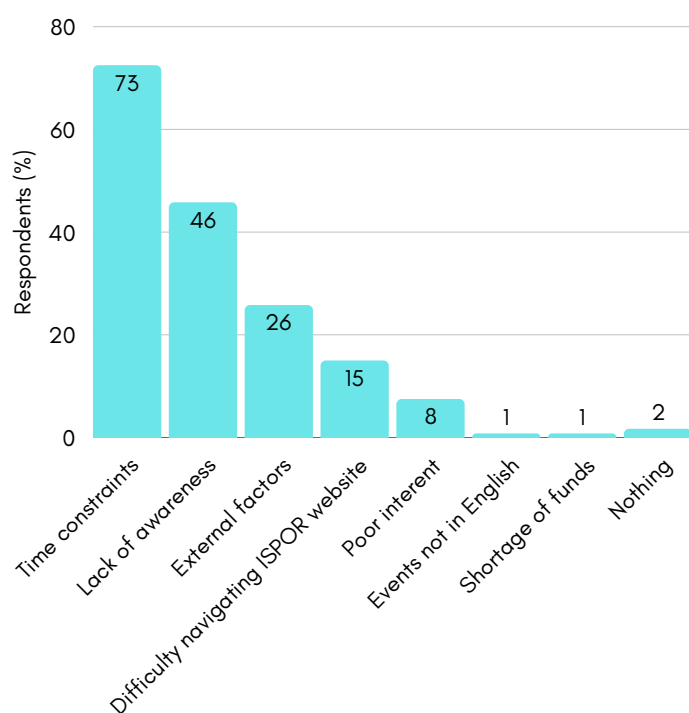
74% Formal education events

56% Informal networking events

42% Journal clubs

STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY 2024-25

Lower engagement primary perceived barriers: Most respondents reported attending at least one activity with their local ISPOR Student Chapter, however, students frequently cited time constraints (72.5%) and lack of awareness (45.8%) as barriers to engagement.



Students preferred ISPOR communications through social media (80.8%, LinkedIn), electronic newsletters (72%) and leadership email communications (32%).

Comparing students by region (Asia Pacific, North America, and other regions), no difference was found in the proportions of students reporting engagement with the ISPOR Student Network (any social media interaction) versus those not reporting engagement ($p=0.192$). Additionally, there was no difference in engagement with the ISPOR Student Network between students aware of the ISPOR resource/career center and those who were not ($p=0.304$).

ISPOR Conferences

Nearly half of the respondents (45.5%) reported having previously attended an in-person or virtual ISPOR conference or summit. The majority (92%) reported plans to attend future ISPOR conferences, summits, or in-person short courses. When asked about their top five preferred topics for student events at ISPOR conferences or webinars, respondents prioritized machine learning, artificial intelligence, and big data (59.2%), drug spending, pricing, transparency, and reimbursement (56.8%), economic evaluation (56%), health policy (52%), and public health (49.6%).

Future Direction

Participants have voiced a clear desire for efforts to expanding online learning opportunities and improving interactions with students via their preferred social media platforms.

HELPFUL STUDENT INFORMATION



ISPOR COMMUNITIES

JOIN TODAY!



CONNECT WITH:

- Special Interest Groups
- Committees
- Student Network Leadership:
email studentnetwork@ispor.org if
you're not a student leader but
would like to be involved!

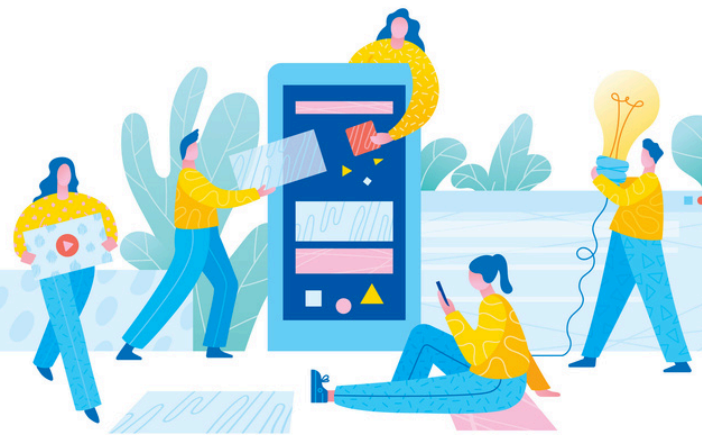


REASONS TO JOIN

- Network and collaborate with
HEOR colleagues globally
- Stay up-to-date on events and
announcements
- Share ideas on discussion boards
- Volunteer opportunities

HEOR Careers

ISPOR Career Center—*The Job Site for HEOR Professionals*



CREATE YOUR PROFILE!

- Upload your resume to be searchable by recruiters
- Set up job alerts

[Click to set up now!](#)

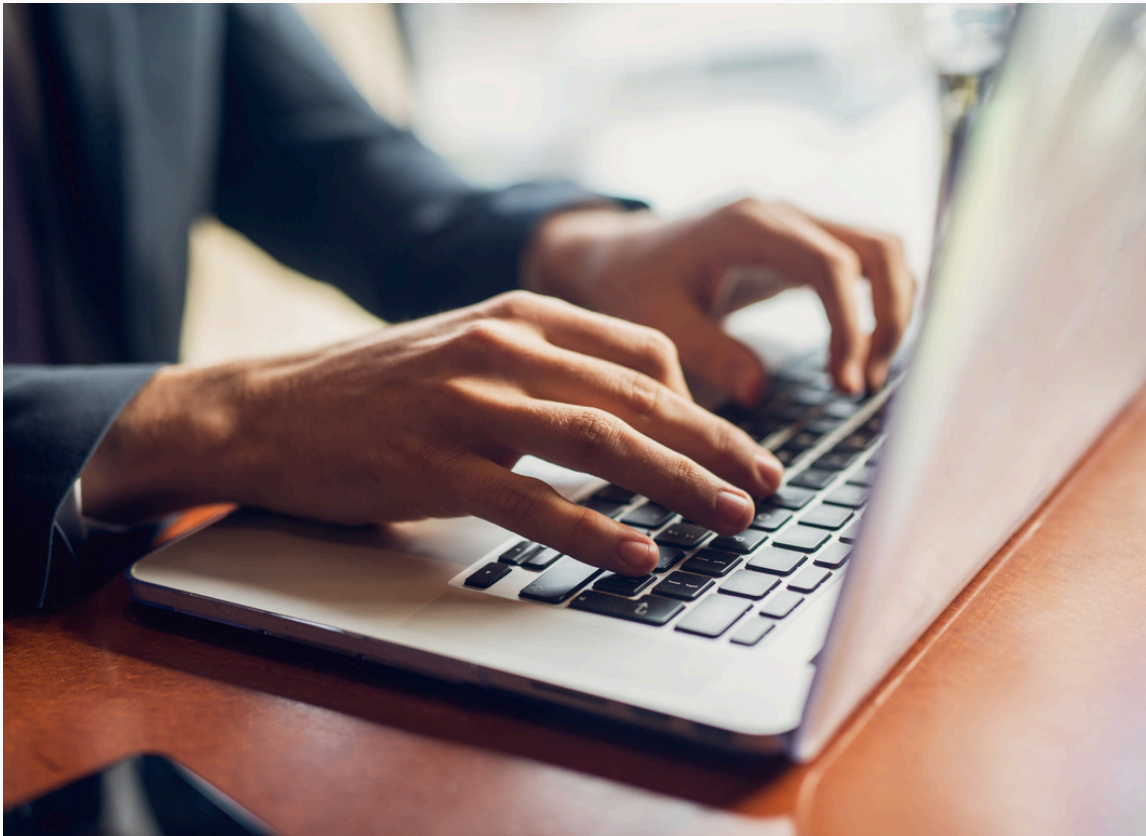
FELLOWSHIPS & INTERNSHIPS

Learn about HEOR organizations that provide employment opportunities for students!

[Access directory here!](#)



FEATURED ARTICLES



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Generative Artificial Intelligence for Health Technology Assessment: Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Considerations

FLEURENCE ET. AL.,

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is emerging as a transformative tool in Health Technology Assessment (HTA), streamlining data synthesis, predictive modeling, and decision-making. By leveraging vast datasets, GenAI enhances evidence synthesis, accelerates systematic reviews, and supports personalized medicine by identifying patient subgroups that would benefit most from specific interventions. Additionally, AI-driven simulations aid in forecasting disease progression and cost-effectiveness, helping policymakers and healthcare providers make more informed decisions. Despite these advantages, concerns surrounding data bias, model transparency, and regulatory compliance highlight the need for robust governance frameworks to ensure reliability and ethical AI deployment.

The integration of GenAI into HTA is not without challenges. Issues such as data quality, algorithmic bias, and explainability pose significant hurdles to widespread adoption. Many AI models function as black boxes, making their decision-making processes difficult to interpret and validate. Additionally, existing HTA methodologies may require adaptation to accommodate AI-generated insights, necessitating interdisciplinary collaboration and regulatory adjustments. Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) may face infrastructure constraints, limiting their ability to harness AI's full potential. Policymakers must therefore focus on creating AI-specific HTA guidelines, ensuring transparency, and investing in capacity building to equip HTA professionals with the necessary AI literacy.

To maximize AI's impact in HTA, a coordinated effort is needed across regulatory bodies, healthcare institutions, and technology developers. Ethical AI use must be prioritized through stringent data governance policies, ensuring equity and accountability in decision-making. Global collaboration can facilitate standardization, enabling more effective benchmarking of AI-driven HTA practices. If implemented responsibly, GenAI has the potential to enhance the efficiency, accuracy, and fairness of health technology assessments, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes and more sustainable healthcare systems.

ISPOR

Value in Health

Value

A journal of the professional society
for health economics and outcomes research

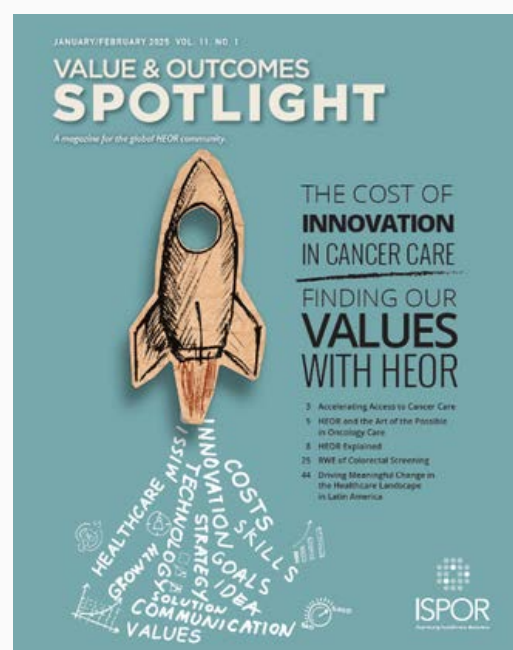
THE COST OF INNOVATION IN CANCER CARE: FINDING OUR VALUES WITH HEOR

BETH FAND INCOLLINGO

Over the past six years, global oncology spending has more than doubled, reaching \$193 billion in 2022, driven by the growing and aging population and disparities in cancer care access. While most oncology expenditures go toward medical services, prescription and over-the-counter medications also represent a major cost, burdening both national economies and individual patients. In the U.S., financial toxicity is a significant issue, with nearly half of cancer patients depleting their life savings within two years of diagnosis. This financial strain is associated with worse health outcomes, including an 80% higher mortality rate for those declaring bankruptcy due to cancer costs. Health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) plays a crucial role in addressing these challenges by identifying cost-effective interventions across all stages of cancer care, but its impact depends on collaboration among governments, healthcare providers, pharmaceutical companies, and policymakers.

In high-income countries, cost-effectiveness evaluations guide oncology drug coverage decisions. The UK's NICE, for instance, integrates clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and social equity in its assessments, but decisions can be controversial, as seen with the rejection of Enhertu for metastatic breast cancer. The U.S., in contrast, does not factor cost into FDA drug approvals, leading to higher cancer care spending with suboptimal health outcomes compared to other high-income nations. Organizations like ICER attempt to rein in drug costs by assessing value-based pricing, but their influence is limited. Furthermore, the reliance on accelerated approvals based on limited clinical data complicates cost-effectiveness assessments, often leaving insurers to cover treatments that may not improve survival.

In lower-income countries, early cancer detection and cost-effective interventions can significantly improve outcomes. Organizations like Partners for Patients are working to strengthen healthcare infrastructure in Africa by integrating HEOR principles, expanding diagnostic services, and training healthcare professionals. Future HEOR innovations include interactive economic models for cancer treatment decision-making, joint scientific advice for trial design, and alternative payment strategies for expensive treatments like CAR-T therapy. Experts advocate for a shift toward proactively defining healthcare needs and encouraging industry-driven solutions. Ultimately, ensuring universal healthcare access and leveraging HEOR to optimize cancer care spending are critical to improving patient outcomes worldwide.



SKILL UP: LEADERSHIP THROUGH CURIOSITY



LEADERSHIP THROUGH CURIOSITY: SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

When we picture a leader, we may tend to think of someone with all the answers, or a person who commands attention for their knowledge and expertise. While those qualities are valuable, there is another, often underestimated, hallmark of great leadership: Curiosity. For new HEOR professionals, cultivating curiosity and mastering the art of asking thoughtful questions can be a game-changer for accelerating personal and professional growth.

It's easy to fall into the trap of believing that success equates to having all the answers, especially for HEOR professionals who non-experts look towards for objective answers. You might feel the pressure of needing to prove your competence, however, even seasoned leaders understand that no one knows everything. Instead, they surround themselves with diverse perspectives, listen intently, and ask powerful questions to guide their teams toward the best solutions. For new HEOR professionals, taking on this mindset now can be liberating, allowing you to move beyond the anxiety of having to know it all and instead, focus on supporting the team's overarching goals and your own personal growth.

Why Questions Matter

- 1. They Can Foster Collaboration:** Questions invite others to share their perspectives which promotes transparency and collaboration. People feel more engaged when their input is sought, and teams thrive when everyone's ideas are on the table.
- 2. They Can Strengthen Relationships:** Asking questions shows that you value the other person's perspective, which builds rapport and trust. These are important aspects of relationships to keep in mind as you begin to build your professional network.
- 3. They Can Lead to Better Solutions:** Asking questions—especially those that challenge assumptions—can reduce confirmation bias, uncover new insights and drive innovative solutions for a group. Open-ended questions like, "What if we tried this differently?" or "What do we hope to ultimately achieve?" can open up possibilities that might otherwise go unnoticed.
- 4. They Can Signal a Growth Mindset:** Individuals who ask questions show that they are eager to learn and adapt. This growth mindset demonstrates that you are committed to improving yourself and your work, which inspires others to do the same. An ideal characteristic to demonstrate as a budding leader!

Practical Tips for Leading With Curiosity

If you're ready to embrace curiosity as a leadership tool, here are some strategies to get you started:

- **Listen Actively:** Great questions stem from genuinely listening to what others are saying. Resist the urge to formulate your next response while someone is speaking. Instead, focus fully on the whole person and what they are saying not just through their words, but also how they are saying it through their tone and body language.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH CURIOSITY: SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple “yes/no”. Instead, ask questions that encourage deeper thought, such as “What challenges do you see with this approach?”
- **Stay Curious, Without Judgment:** For the most part, assume good intent from others. Frame your questions in a way that seeks to understand, not to criticize. For example, instead of asking, “Why didn’t you do it this way?” try, “What factors influenced your decision to take this approach?”

In HEOR roles that often reward knowing, it can take courage to admit that you don’t have all the answers. Your early career is your chance to stay curious, listen more, and ask better questions to demonstrate a key leadership trait: the willingness to learn. As a new professional you can use this superpower to your advantage! The next time you’re tempted to have the perfect response, pause and consider: what question could you ask instead?



Irwin Tran

I’m a Leadership and Career Coach with over 18 years of firsthand experience in the biopharma industry—being part of, building, and leading teams, across different companies around the globe. I believe that some people are born leaders, but leaders can also be made with a little bit of coaching, and I’m here to help.

If you have questions, comments, ideas for future articles, or would like to know more about coaching, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me:

irwin@nextleadercoaching.com;

www.nextleadercoaching.com

ISPOR STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



RAVI UPADHYAY



Ravi Y. Upadhyay, is an Epidemiologist and Health Economics and Outcomes Research (HEOR) specialist currently enrolled in the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. His background includes advanced degrees in pharmacy practice (Health Outcomes) and pharmacy administration, and has a deep passion for outcomes research, data analysis, systematic reviews, and public health research. His work is focused on prescription opioid use and disparities in opioid use disorder (OUD) medication distribution, using tools like SAS, R, and SPSS for complex data analysis. He has contributed to peer-reviewed publications and presented at major conferences and journals. In addition to research, he enjoys teaching and mentoring undergraduate students, having served as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in pharmacy, anatomy, and epidemiology.

Research Interests

My research interests lie in epidemiology, health economics, and outcomes research, with a particular focus on public health challenges such as opioid use, disparities in medication distribution, and the health outcomes of marginalized populations. I am currently working on a PhD in Epidemiology, where I continue to explore these areas, along with childbirth defects and prevention, including the social and structural factors that influence opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment. One of my key projects involved analyzing Medicare Part-D data to examine prescription opioid use across the U.S., and identifying disparities by state and prescriber type. Additionally, I've worked on projects evaluating non-injection drug use and its correlation with sexual risk behaviors in people who inject drugs, as part of the HIV Prevention Trials Network. I have also studied the usage patterns and attitudes toward mobile health applications among university students, focusing on the intersection of technology and health behaviors.

My research is inspired by a desire to address health disparities and inform healthcare policies that lead to better patient outcomes. One key contribution has been identifying significant geographic and demographic disparities in opioid medication distribution, which could lead to more targeted interventions. I believe that research can play a transformative role in shaping public health policies, and I strive to contribute evidence that can make healthcare systems more equitable.

Challenges

During my research, one of the key challenges was accessing and managing large, complex datasets like Medicare Part-D and Optum databases. Ensuring data accuracy and handling missing values required meticulous attention. I overcame this by leveraging my expertise in SAS, R, and SQL to clean and analyze the data efficiently, and I consulted with senior researchers, peers and faculty members when needed. Another challenge was balancing multiple projects simultaneously. Effective time management and setting clear priorities helped me stay focused and meet deadlines, allowing me to deliver quality results across various research initiatives.

Personal and Professional Growth

My research experience has been instrumental in shaping both my personal and professional growth. Through my work, I've gained a deeper understanding of the complexities of public health issues and the impact of health disparities on vulnerable populations. This has increased my passion for advocating for more equitable healthcare policies and solutions. Professionally, I've acquired critical skills in data analysis, project management, and collaboration, which have significantly enhanced my ability to lead research initiatives and contribute to high-impact projects. Working on large datasets like Medicare Part-D and conducting systematic reviews has sharpened my analytical thinking and attention to detail. It has also taught me the importance of perseverance, especially when facing challenges like data limitations or technical hurdles. These experiences have reinforced my belief in the power of evidence-based research to drive change.

On a personal level, my research has deepened my sense of responsibility toward improving public health outcomes. I've learnt to approach problems with both a scientific mindset and an empathetic understanding of the real-world implications of my work. Engaging with interdisciplinary teams has also broadened my perspective, allowing me to appreciate diverse viewpoints and approaches to solving complex health problems. Overall, my research journey has made me more resilient, adaptable, and driven to make meaningful contributions to the field of epidemiology and healthcare policy.

Journey with the ISPOR Student Network

The best part of my journey with the ISPOR Student Network has been the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers and experts in health economics and outcomes research. It has provided a platform to exchange ideas, collaborate on projects, and gain insights into the latest advancements in the field. Personally, being part of this community has enhanced my leadership skills, as I've had the chance to serve in various roles, including VP, secretary, and treasurer of the ISPOR Chapters across the USA. Academically, ISPOR has exposed me to valuable learning resources, webinars, and conferences that have deepened my understanding of health outcomes research, directly benefiting my ongoing PhD research.

IVY NGA-WENG LEONG



Ivy Nga-Weng Leong is a pharmacist with several years of experience working in community pharmacies and hospital pharmacies. She recognises the importance and power of health services research to drive decision-making by considering stakeholders' viewpoints. Her current work is mostly around women's health and opioid use. In addition, she would like to evaluate how policies can impact access to care and patient health outcomes.

Research Interests

I am interested in examining how health policies can achieve their intended goals and, simultaneously, create a rippling effect on health outcomes. My current projects surround women's health and opioid use. Given the opioid epidemic, our team aims to examine how opioid tapering may impact the functional status among older populations. In addition, postpartum depression is increasingly prevalent, despite various pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments. We aim to summarize current evidence on these treatments and their effect on improving depression. Among my current projects, I am most excited about the investigation of pharmacist-seeking behavior regarding over-the-counter birth control pills among younger populations. The over-the-counter access was granted by the FDA in July 2023, with an intention of reducing unintended pregnancy and resolving barriers to access. As more birth control pills are expected to enter the same access pathway, it would be interesting to understand why younger populations are hesitant to reach out to pharmacists for information, as appropriate and consistent use is compulsory to prevent unintended pregnancy and practice safe sex.

Challenges

Transforming my current knowledge and integrating current evidence into a story for a specific research question has been challenging for me. These research questions are interesting to me, and setting the stage for the importance of such investigation is highly critical. I have learnt to take it slow and allow adequate time for myself to let the story sink in. It is easy to pull all that I have read into a patchwork, but time is needed for arranging this patchwork into a meaningful story.

Personal and Professional Growth

Critical thinking is undeniably the most important skill from my research experience. Previous master's program education and pharmacy school have taught me how to deliver the best service as a pharmacist and as a healthcare professional. Being a researcher has provided me with the opportunity to examine current events from different viewpoints. Reading literature has been fun in a way that researchers often utilize discrete study design and operationalization to explain the same phenomenon. The ability of seeing things through different lenses has guided me to be patient and not to deny any possibilities, avoiding being blinded by first impressions or stereotyping. These are the soft skills that I highly value and find helpful in shaping my personal and professional growth.

Journey with the ISPOR Student Network

I joined the ISPOR Student Chapter at the University of Mississippi. I had several chances to interact with prestigious speakers. This year, it is my pleasure to join the ISPOR Student Global Network as the Co-chair of the Event-Planning Committee. I have learnt a lot from collaborating with my committee members. Serving the committee has also provided me with opportunities to proactively delve into how HEOR performs across the world. I hope to incorporate these insights into my future health policy research.

ISPOR ANNUAL 2025

May 13-16, 2025

Montreal, Canada



ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK EVENTS @ISPORAnnual

PANEL DISCUSSION AND ROUNDTABLE

Wednesday, 14 May | 1:30-2:30 PM

The ISPOR Roundtable returns bringing the opportunity to discuss with worldwide experts on 'Bridging Evidence & Action: Multistakeholder Collaborations for Value-Based Healthcare Decision-Making.'

Panelist:

- Dr. Kate Williams, PhD—Director of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research at Acaster Lloyd Consulting Ltd
- Dr. Shawn Du, PhD—Director, Real World Value & Evidence, Johnson & Johnson
- Dr. Robert B McQueen, PhD—Director of the Center for Pharmaceutical Value (pValue) at the University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CU-SSPSS)

This event is a unique opportunity to ask all your questions, engage with experts and peers, and meet some of the most sought-after experts in Value-Based Healthcare Decision-Making! The speakers will engage in a discussion both with each other and with the audience through a question-and-answer format.

STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION

Tuesday, 13 May | 5 to 7 PM

ISPOR Student Research Competition will be returning during the ISPOR 2025 Conference in Montreal Canada! The 2-hour Research Competition aims to provide students with an opportunity to test their research skills, represent their ISPOR student chapters, and network with other HEOR experts.

ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK EVENTS @ISPORAnnual

STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Thursday, 15 May | 11:30 AM to 12:15 PM



The student Research Spotlight features some of the best student submissions as selected by the ISPOR organization committee. Come, meet and listen to our presenters summarizing their research! Don't miss the chance to learn more about some of the most exciting research at the conference!

STUDENT NETWORK RECEPTION

Thursday, 15 May | 6:00 PM

Stop by the ISPOR booth event to chat, and network with leaders and members of the ISPOR, ISPOR Student Network and New Professional Network, including several past student network chairs.

ISPOR SHORT COURSES

IN-PERSON | MAY 13, 2025



ISPOR ANNUAL 2025

- Using Nontraditional Digital Health Platforms: A Novel Source of Real-World Evidence
 - Introduction to Applied Generative AI for HEOR
 - Health Economic Modeling in R: A Hands-On Introduction
 - A Health Economics Approach to US Value Assessment Frameworks
 - Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Alongside Clinical Trials
 - Advanced Patient-Reported Outcomes
- Causal Inference and Causal Diagrams in Big, Real-World Observational Data and Pragmatic Trials
 - Using RWE to Inform the Value and Affordability Assessment of Cell and Gene Therapies
 - Valuation of Innovative Drugs
 - Applied Cost-Effectiveness Modeling with R
 - Valuing Health: The Generalized Risk Adjusted Cost-Effectiveness (GRACE) Model
 - Using LLMs to Simplify Real-World Evidence Research

ISPOR SHORT COURSES

VIRTUAL COURSES

STUDENT MEMBER REGISTRATION FEES

\$100 FOR 4-HOUR & \$195 FOR 8-HOUR COURSES

- **June 11-12:** Introduction to Health Technology Assessment
- **July 16-17:** Practical Applications of Large Language Models for Real-World Evidence Generation and HEOR
- **September 10-11:** Communicating HEOR for Maximum Impact, Influence, and Understanding
- **October 13-16:** Introduction to Health Economics and Outcomes Research
- **October 29-30:** Applying RWD and Novel Data Sources to Advance Patient-Centric Health Equity, Outcomes, and Economic Evaluations

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



ISPOR

Are you an ISPOR member yet? Stay up to date on conferences, short courses, communities, and research by becoming a member! Here is the [link](#) on ISPOR memberships. It's never too late to get involved!

ISPOR STUDENT NETWORK

Reach out to studentnetwork@ispor.org to be added to the ISPOR Community for student leaders. The ISPOR Student Network also has 7 committees that student members can serve on!



LOCAL ISPOR STUDENT CHAPTER

Contact your local chapter to learn about upcoming activities and chapter elections. Consider running for an officer position!

CONTACT
US



Questions?

studentnetwork@ispor.org

