A Look Ahead: ISPOR’s Role in Shaping the Future of HEOR

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The start of a new year provides opportunity to communicate with members about how your Society is leading to improve healthcare decision making worldwide. Healthcare reform is underway in nearly every corner of the globe. Unprecedented advancements are taking place in drug development and medical interventions, populations are aging, and costs are on the rise. Add to that debates over the definition of value continue to rage and advances in methods and evaluation techniques that are at our fingertips. In the blink of an eye, technology is driving change; market access, health technology assessment, and decision making are under closer scrutiny than ever before…and I could go on. These realities and trends—although some seem insurmountable—clearly place health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) and ISPOR at the epicenter of critical conversations and decisions—and at the cutting edge of a critically important sector of the healthcare field. This is an exciting time for ISPOR. So, how are we responding?

As the leading professional Society in the field, ISPOR is uniquely positioned to leverage the thought leadership of its members to provide direction on where the HEOR field is heading.

Leveraging the expertise and long-term experience of our members, ISPOR will continue to address important issues in healthcare and drive new initiatives to advance the understanding and application of HEOR methodologies in healthcare decisions. Some of the major themes that ISPOR will address in 2018 and feature at our Baltimore meeting (May 19-23, 2018) include further discussion on patient-centered research and measuring patient-reported outcomes, continued examination of the role and appropriate use of real-world evidence, and an ongoing assessment of ever-evolving advances in new technologies (eg, digital and mHealth). These themes, among many others, are highlighted to help members and decision makers remain on the cutting edge.

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• For example, ISPOR will continue to solidify its role as a resource for health policy through the newly restructured Health Science Policy Council. We understand that a major part of our role as a Society is information dissemination not just to members, but also to payers, governments, and other decision makers who benefit from the understanding and use of HEOR tools and methodologies.

• Our leadership commitment also includes an ongoing effort to respond to public calls for comment to ensure the voice of ISPOR members is conveyed to governments and regulators who seek input from various stakeholders as they advance and reform their systems.

• Similarly, the ISPOR 2018 Top HEOR Trends inaugural report was released in January to provide an overview of the topics that will be driving healthcare discussions in the coming months and years.

As part of our Strategic Plan, ISPOR developed a comprehensive approach for engaging with other professional, trade, and government organizations. More than 40 societies, associations, and groups are identified in our plan, along with Ministries of Health, HTA agencies, regulators, payers, and other decision makers. We believe open dialog is critical to advancement of ISPOR’s mission, and we value input of other groups in our programs and plans. A key 2018 collaboration strategy is to increase communication with clinicians, and we have begun meeting with clinical groups in oncology, cardiology, and neurology to better understand how ISPOR can support these organizations and their members. This outreach often results in collaboration such as the recent participation of ECCO’s (European Cancer Organisation) president in a plenary session at our European Congress in Glasgow and the joint papers on real-world evidence produced with ISPE (International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology) last year.

In 2018, the formation of the new ISPOR Patient Council will build on important conversations among patient representatives and researchers. ISPOR Patient Roundtables operating in Europe, Latin America, and North America (and later this year, in Asia-Pacific) will contribute to ISPOR strategies and gain access to the research community to learn, share, and advance their objectives.

Looking at 2018 and beyond, it is clear that through our collective efforts we are building a better ISPOR. ISPOR is leading at a time when solid approaches to decision making are more important than ever. I encourage each of you to get involved in your Society—be present at a “must-attend” ISPOR conference, volunteer to be a peer reviewer for our MEDLINE-indexed journals, join a group, and encourage your colleagues to become members. Together we will continue to make important contributions that move the field forward.