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FROM THE EDITOR

With this issue, *Value & Outcomes Spotlight* ushers in its fifth year of existence with a bang! Our theme is the opioid crisis—its increasingly global spread, its dramatic health and economic consequences, its recalcitrance in the face of increasingly widespread efforts to bring the epidemic to a halt.

The US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has made combating the opioid crisis its top priority since the appointment in mid-2017 of Scott Gottlieb, MD as FDA Commissioner. In his nomination approval hearings before congress, Dr. Gottlieb went so far as to equate the public health consequences of opioid addiction to those of the Ebola and Zika viruses, and he went on to say that FDA was “complicit, even if unwittingly” in fueling the opioid epidemic.

Value & Outcomes Spotlight reached out to FDA and they agreed to an interview on this subject. So in addition to our feature article on the opioid crisis, a related infographic with notable statistics courtesy of the ISPOR Student Network, and a member profile on one researcher’s analyses of the cost-effectiveness of efforts to treat opioid addiction, we have a Q&A with a representative of the one institution that has the most leverage to potentially bring this public health crisis under control.

This is what we mean by starting off the year with a bang.

But that’s not all. Our ISPOR Central section contains an article by ISPOR CEO Nancy Berg, in which she reflects on our Society’s progress to date and looks forward to the accomplishments to come. ISPOR is in the midst of an update to its strategic plan and making sure this dovetails with the annual business plan is where the rubber hits the road for sustained success. That section also contains a considerable amount of information on ISPOR’s conference and education programs, including some facts & figures on membership and short course attendance as well as a map of all five planned 2019 ISPOR meetings. A “Come to New Orleans” article is included to highlight the host city of ISPOR 2019.

Finally, this issue includes three interesting HEOR articles covering an array of topics. The first provides a thoughtful background on opportunities and challenges associated with expansion of network meta-analysis from randomized controlled trials alone to other study designs, specifically those commonly used to generate real-world evidence—as you can imagine, it’s not straightforward but techniques are being developed to make this happen. The second piece outlines the fundamentals of real-world evidence generation and use for medical devices, beginning with the most basic concepts and ending with implications for devices joining in on “the internet of things.” The third article contains survey data eliciting opinions from patient advocacy groups and HEOR researchers on how best to incorporate the voice of the patient in our studies.

So our Society is off to a strong start and *Value & Outcomes Spotlight* is doing its best to keep up.

Happy reading!



David Thompson, PhD
Editor-in-Chief,
Value & Outcomes Spotlight

