

In Memoriam: Seema Sonnad

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On May 27, our good friend and colleague, Seema Sonnad, died after suffering a cardiac arrest while running an ultramarathon outside Seattle, WA. Her unexpected death is a tremendous loss for the health services research community and for her family, many friends and colleagues.

We extend our deepest sympathies to her beloved husband and partner and our colleague, Henry Glick, a longtime active ISPOR member and instructor, with whom she shared her life and their passions for art, music, wine, ballroom dancing and sports.

Seema was the personification of vitality, energy, and spunk. She embraced life with gusto and enthusiasm. An extraordinary athlete with a passion for fitness, she was an avid endurance runner and a skilled equestrian and judge, competing in combined 3-day eventing.

People were at the core of everything Seema did. She generously shared her knowledge, interests and experience. Her strong competitive 'can do' spirit focused on self-improvement and accomplishment. She supported and competed with her friends, not against them. She motivated others to excel, challenge and improve themselves.

The personification of multi-disciplinary collegiality, Seema was a highly creative, accomplished, respected health services researcher. Her more than 130 peer-reviewed publications on clinical decision making, adoption and diffusion of medical technologies, meta-analysis and clinical practice guideline implementation centered on surgical interventions and novel diagnostics.

An outstanding teacher, educator and mentor, Seema was a highly sought after, devoted, and treasured teacher and mentor. She was a tireless advocate and champion for advancing opportunities for women and others under-represented in science, medicine and health services and policy research. A longstanding, active member of ISPOR, she taught short courses at the ISPOR North American meetings and in Beijing. She also served as a trustee of the Society for Medical Decision Making.

A master teacher, Seema developed graduate and post-graduate courses on study design and analysis to enhance methodological capacity and rigor. She co-authored *Economic Evaluation in Clinical Trials*, the

definitive text in the field. She was a member of the United States Eventing Association and Professional Riders Organization committees, working to increase volunteer recognition and foster opportunities for and development of young riders, many of whom she helped sponsor, train and mentor.

Seema earned an undergraduate degree from Stanford in 1984, masters' degrees from the University of Washington and Stanford, and her PhD in Health Services Research and Policy Analysis at Stanford in 1997. Focused on developing and implementing knowledge that informed and improved clinical care and patient health, she co-founded a medical diagnostics company and worked in business development at Stanford University Hospital.

An Associate Editor at the *American Journal of Managed Care* and reviewer for ISPOR's journal *Value in Health*, Seema served on many special-emphasis review panels for the National Institutes of Health and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. At her death she was a member of the Advisory Panel on Assessment and Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment Options for the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute.

Seema began her academic career at the University of Michigan, where she founded and co-directed CHOICES, an outcomes research core lab for the medical school. In 2002, Seema moved to the University of Pennsylvania where she was first Director of Outcomes Research in the Department of Surgery and Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics.

In 2012, Seema joined the faculty at Thomas Jefferson University and helped launch the Value Institute at Christiana Care Health System in Delaware. As the Institute's Director of Health Services Research she worked with young investigators and co-led an innovative program to conduct rigorous 'real world' clinical evaluative and health services research and implement the findings into clinical care.

With her energy and enthusiasm, Seema inspired all who came in contact with her. She will be dearly missed. While we grieve our loss, we are thankful for having our lives enriched by Seema's spirit, generosity, values and personal and professional contributions.