

# VALUE & OUTCOMES SPOTLIGHT

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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With the year 2015 coming to a close, this marks the sixth and final issue of the first Volume of *Value & Outcomes Spotlight*, ISPOR's newest publication and a key vehicle for the dissemination of news and information to our Society. We have worked diligently to improve the reader experience compared with its predecessor, *ISPOR Connections*, and we will continue to make improvements in each successive issue. We count on your feedback to guide us along the way and toward that end we recently fielded a survey to formalize the process. At this time the results are still being compiled but the early returns suggest we are on the right track, with a few pointed suggestions on ways to improve that we will surely take to heart.

This iterative process of collecting data and course-correcting in response is a hallmark of entities that improve over time. It's also a process that forms the basis for the "learning health care system," a concept first introduced by the U.S. Institute of Medicine (IOM) nearly a decade ago as a means to achieve the so-called "triple aim" of improved patient outcomes of care, enhanced population health, and controlled per-capita health care spending. As outlined by the IOM, the learning health care system is characterized by a variety of features, including engaged and empowered patients; fully leveraged IT capacities for real-time data capture, access and analytics; transparency in health care costs and financial incentives that align with value; and a culture of learning in which complex care processes are refined based on a continuous feedback mechanism. In short, it's a health care system in which "research influences practice and practice influences research."

That quote can be found in the first of three articles we feature in this issue on the learning healthcare system, which was a plenary session topic at ISPOR's 20th Annual International Meeting earlier this year. The article describes the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute's PCORnet, a coordinated network of health care delivery systems and patient communities across the United States dedicated to the conduct of real-world research in alignment with the principles of the learning health care system. The second piece cites discrepancies between the vision of the learning health care system (good) versus recent implementations (not so good), suggesting that the focus to date has been on improving care processes to eliminate wasteful spending, with inadequate attention to instilling true learning principles into the models. The third article draws a distinction between the "change layer" in health care, where innovation resides, and the "reality layer," where care is actually provided and research is conducted. It suggests that, to date, these layers have yet to blend appropriately and ends with a call to action on the part of all stakeholders to put patient care before the profit motive so as to establish a fully functioning learning health care system.

ISPOR recently convened its 18th Annual European Congress and from this impartial observer's standpoint our Society has advanced to a whole new level of prominence and scale. The exhibitor's hall was bigger than ever, as was the main hall for the plenary sessions—and this was necessary, as more than 5,200 traveled to Milan, Italy for the event, the first ISPOR meeting ever to surpass 5,000 attendees! This issue of *Spotlight* contains a meeting summary, photo gallery, accounts of student activities, listings of award recipients, and other material from what was an outstanding meeting.

With best wishes for a happy and peaceful holiday season!

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

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