

Q&A with Sorrel Wolowacz

Task Force Recommendations on the Collection of Health-State Utility Data in Clinical Studies: An Interview with Sorrel E. Wolowacz, PhD, Co-Chair, on Good Practices for Outcomes Research Task Force



Value & Outcomes Spotlight had the opportunity to catch up with Sorrel E. Wolowacz, PhD, on the recent article, “Estimating Health-State Utility for Economic Models in Clinical Studies: An ISPOR Good Practices for Outcomes Research Task Force Report,” to appear in the September/October 2016 issue of *Value in Health*. Our conversation on this intriguing subject of health state utilities follows.

Wolowacz SE, Briggs A, Belozeroff V, et al. *Estimating Health-State Utility for Economic Models in Clinical Studies: An ISPOR Good Research Practices Task Force Report. Value Health* 2016;19:704-719.

Additional information:

You can access, “Estimating Health-State Utility for Economic Models in Clinical Studies: An ISPOR Good Practices for Outcomes Research Task Force Report,” and other articles in this issue of *Value in Health* at: http://www.ispor.org/valueinhealth_index.asp.

To learn more about the ISPOR Good Practices for Outcomes Research Task Force, go to: <http://www.ispor.org/taskforces/TFindex.asp>

Value & Outcomes Spotlight: Who is the audience for this report, and how will they benefit?



Wolowacz: We hope that the report will be of value for researchers actively involved in the design or implementation of health-state utility data collection or analysis, those involved in patient-reported outcomes research, economic modeling, economic evaluation or health technology assessment. Guidance is provided on optimizing the incorporation of health utility measurement in a clinical trial, anticipating common issues that may affect data quality and considering potential ways to address them, designing data analyses, and planning supplementary and/or alternative studies to provide high quality health-utility estimates for economic models.

VOS: What was it about this issue that caused it to become a priority item for the ISPOR Health Science Policy Council?

Wolowacz: Health-state utility estimates are among the most important input parameters in cost-utility models which are increasingly used in many countries to establish whether the cost of a new intervention can be justified in terms of health benefits. These decisions affect patients’ and physicians’ access to treatments, product price, and in turn, the return on investment in product development for manufacturers. No ISPOR Good Practices for Outcomes Research reports were available for health-state utility estimation and ISPOR’s Vision 2020 Research Committee identified “Estimating HRQL weights (health-state utilities) for cost-effectiveness analysis” as one of the top two priorities.

VOS: How does the Task Force define “high quality” health-state utility estimates?

Wolowacz: High quality health-state utility estimates for economic models are defined as estimates that are aligned with the definitions of the economic model health states, are free from known sources of bias, and were measured using a validated method appropriate to the condition and population of interest and the perspective of decision maker for whom the economic model is being developed.

VOS: What’s next for the Task Force?

Wolowacz: The leadership group is not currently planning any additional Task Force reports. However, ISPOR is inviting proposals for other good practices for outcomes research reports related to health utility estimation. Researchers who identify any gaps in the ISPOR guidance on health utility estimation are encouraged to submit a proposal; details of the process are available on the ISPOR website at: <http://www.ispor.org/taskforces/TFindex.asp>. ■