

## Highlights from the ISPOR 7th Asia-Pacific Conference

Nancy Chen, Associate Director and Content Strategist, Global Networks - Asia-Pacific, ISPOR, Lawrenceville, NJ, USA



Nearly 1,300 attendees travelled from 53 countries to take part in the recent ISPOR 7th Asia-Pacific Conference held 3-6 September 2016 at the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Center, Singapore.

The theme of this year's conference was, *"Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research in Asia-Pacific: Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Direction."* The conference offered one and half days of pre-conference short courses; two and half days of scientific program, featuring three plenary sessions, educational symposia and many other scientific sessions; and numerous social networking opportunities.

"ISPOR is very generous in providing all the important good research practice guidelines, pharmacoeconomics guidelines, health technology assessment world maps, conference meeting materials, etc. on their website for everyone to access and learn from," stated Yen-Huei (Tony) Tarn, MS, PhD, ISPOR 2014-2016 Board of Director and 2014-2016 Asia Consortium Executive Committee Past Chair. "ISPOR conferences are a place to learn, share, find jobs, to make friends, and to enjoy."

### Pre-Meeting Short Course Program Attracts

There were nearly 1,000 registrations for 18 pre-conference short courses. These courses covered seven key topics in the health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) field where participants

learned about economic evaluation and modelling techniques, essential statistics and research skills, and how to apply the knowledge and techniques of HEOR to health care decision making and policy development.

Three new short courses were offered at the 7th Asia-Pacific Conference, including "Health Care Data and Informatics," where participants had an opportunity to discover emerging trends in big data and its future role in Asia. Other new courses included, "Case Studies in Pharmaceutical / Biotech Pricing II – Advanced," which provided an in-depth review of the key steps of new product pricing, reimbursement, and pharmacoeconomic strategies for the new product; and "Health Care Systems in Asia," which used multi-country case studies to illustrate the major characteristics of health care systems in Asia, including health care needs and spending, health financing systems, health care governance, access to health care, and outcomes measurements .

### Conference Content Highlights

The First Plenary Session entitled, *"Health Technology Assessment and Health Policy: Recent Developments Across Asia"* provided insight into the current status of HTA and related health policy in Asia, sharing perspectives and experiences, lessons learned, and future trends. Speakers included **Visanu Thamlikitkul, MD**, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand; **Takashi Fukuda, PhD**, National Institute of Public Health, Saitama, Japan; **Tae-jin Lee, MPH, PhD**, Seoul National University Seoul, South Korea; and **Kwong Hoe Ng**, Ministry of Health, Singapore. The session was moderated by **Syed Aljunid, MD, PhD**, National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Second Plenary Session, *"Harnessing The Power of Big Data to Make Better Health Care Decisions in The Asia-Pacific Region,"* highlighted how Asia is embracing the global big data movement. The session examined key ways in which big data can deliver value to health systems through clinical and financial benefits (i.e., aiding personalized medicine and streamlining health resource planning),



First Plenary Session: Health Technology Assessment and Health Policy: Recent Developments Across Asia



and discussed current challenges and opportunities for utilizing big data to improve health care decision making in the Asia-Pacific region, while addressing multi-stakeholder perspectives and regional considerations. Panelists included **Christopher Chute, MD, DrPH**, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, USA; **Trish Williams, PhD**, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia; and **Yoke Sin Chong, PhD**, Integrated Health Information Systems Pte Ltd., Singapore. The session was moderated by **Louisa Jorm, PhD**, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

The Third Plenary Session, “*Universal Health Coverage – The Affordable Dream in ASEAN: Experiences and Lessons Learned,*” focused on the current situation, challenges, and opportunities of universal health coverage (UHC), with the aim of sharing experiences and supporting each other in the joint pursuit of UHC in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Speakers included **Netnapi Suchonwanich**, National Health Security Office, Bangkok, Thailand; **Syed Aljunid, MD, PhD**, National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; **Kun Zhao, MD, PhD**, National Health and Family Planning Commission, Beijing, China; and **Graham Harrison**, World Health Organization, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The session was moderated by **Ahmad Fuad Afdhal, PhD**, Center for Socio-Economic Studies in Pharmacy, Jakarta, Indonesia.

### Educational Symposia

The 7th Asia-Pacific Conference also held 9 Educational Symposia on varying themes, including treating hepatitis C infection, engaging patients in HTA and access decisions to improve quality of patient care, managing high-cost innovative medicines in Asia, real-world evidence, pricing developments in the Asia-Pacific, HTA policy surrounding biologic treatments in immunology, and the role of HTA in health care decision making.

### Developing Regional Initiatives

The ISPOR 7th HTAnetAsia Roundtable, “*HTA, Innovative Health Technologies and Patient Access in Asia-Pacific,*” featured 23 participants representing 14 countries, including 4 HTA Agencies, 7 Ministries of Health and other public health institutes from across the region. The discussions focused on the role of HTA in health technologies and its impact on patient access. The session also explored different views on innovation value from various stakeholders and how to deal with this dilemma, patient access policy issues, societal perspectives on patient access to innovative technologies, and others.

Five unique forums organized by different Asia Consortium committees were also offered at the ISPOR 7th Asia-Pacific Conference. Regional hot topics, including the use of HTA in universal health coverage, clinical investigation and cost-effectiveness studies on complementary and alternative medicine, and health care big data in Asia, were presented and discussed.

The conference also provided many opportunities for the regional members and leaders to spend valuable face-time to discuss, strategize, plan, and collaborate through group meetings, such as the ISPOR Asia Consortium & *Value in Health Regional Issues* Asia Leadership Meeting, the Chinese Chapters Joint Meeting, the HealthNetIndia/Indian Chapters Joint Meeting, the Asia Consortium New Professionals Career Development Advisory Meeting, and other individual chapter meetings. Additionally, conference attendees



Exhibitors' Reception & Research Poster Presentations Viewing



Above: Health Technology Assessments in Universal Health Coverage Forum



Left: Engaging Patients in Health Technology Assessment and Access Decisions to Improve Quality of Patient Care Symposium

had the chance to attend a Welcome Reception and an Asia Consortium Reception, which provided opportunities to catch up with old friends and make new connections. The attendees enjoyed unique cultural performance, a fine selection of wine, and delicious authentic Asian foods. To put the general meeting experience into context, Bong-Min Yang, PhD, Co-Editor-in-Chief, *Value in Health Regional Issues-Asia* summed it up nicely, “Over the years, the spirit of my professionalism as a health economist has grown continuously through ISPOR involvements.”

With the 7th Asia-Pacific Conference now behind us, we have much to look forward to in the coming year. In fact, many Asia Consortium projects are already underway for 2017, and we encourage you to participate and get involved. Join the ISPOR Asia Consortium via the ISPOR website ([www.ispor.org](http://www.ispor.org)) to stay abreast of policy and research achievements throughout the region.

Thank you for your continued support of the ISPOR Asia-Pacific Conferences and we hope to see you all in Vienna, Austria for the ISPOR 19th Annual European Congress, 29 October-2 November 2016! ■



*How Do Culture, Values, And Institutional Context Shape the Methods and Use of Economic Evaluation? Issues Panel*



*Third Plenary Session: Universal Health Coverage – The Affordable Dream in ASEAN: Experiences and Lessons Learned. Moderator Ahmad Fuad Afdhal (l), and speaker Netnapis Suchonwanich*



*Top: ISPOR President Lou Garrison (left) and 7th Asia Pacific Conference Program Co-Chair Wai Keung Chiu (center) and Tony Tarn (right) and ISPOR 7th Asia Pacific Conference Program Co-Chairs Syed Aljunid (above left) and Ahmad Fuad Afdhal (above right)*

*Additional information:*

*For information on Research Presentation Awards recipients from this conference, go to: <http://www.ispor.org/awards/VIH-regional-issues-excellent-article-award.asp>*

*To see the 7th Asia Pacific Program Committee, go to: <http://www.ispor.org/Event/ProgramCommittee/2016Singapore>.*

*To view released research presentations from this conference, go to: <http://www.ispor.org/Event/ReleasedPresentations/2016Singapore>*