



## Congress Update



The wait is nearly over! The outcomes of the abstract review process will be released next week and registration will open shortly.

Over 1,600 individual abstracts and organized session proposals were submitted and are now in the final stages of a rigorous peer review process. Each abstract and session proposal was independently scored by three health economists with experience in the field selected by the submitter. Each field has three Program Chairs, who independently assessed the Review Panel's scoring and made recommendations on which abstracts and sessions should be accepted. Each team of Program Chairs then met to decide on a consensus recommendation, which is now being assessed by the Scientific Committee Chair and Co-Chair to ensure that there is consistency across fields.

Our thanks go to all members of the Scientific Committee who have devoted considerable time to ensuring a rigorous and balanced abstract and session review process – see the Scientific Committee's details [here](#).

## **SIG News**

### **Invitation to participate in a Teaching Health Economics (THE) Special Interest Group (SIG) Survey**

Katharina Merollini of the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia and Elizabeth Pitney Seidler of Regis College, US, would like to invite you to participate in a survey to collect data and information regarding Teaching Health Economics practices across programs and countries. This survey is completely anonymous and its main purpose is to collect and aggregate data around practices that members of IHEA who teach in various programs might find useful, such as assessment rubrics and learning outcomes. There is no agenda to set pedagogical standards.

We hope to share our findings at the IHEA Congress in July 2023.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/THEiHEA>

### **Health Workforce SIG Happy Hour**

We will have a no-host Health Workforce SIG happy hour or dinner in Cape Town during the Congress this summer! Stay tuned for details. In Basel, a group of more than 20 of us convened for beer and German-Swiss food. The dining options in Cape Town are fantastic and we look forward to dining together again.

## **Upcoming Webinars**

### **Showcasing Early Career Researchers In the Econ-Omics SIG**

**Date:** March 13, 2023 from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST

**Description:**

This webinar will focus on the research of early career researchers (ECRs) who are members of the IHEA Econ-Omics SIG. Two ECRs will present their work: Ka Keat Lim (King's College London) and Michael Abbott (University of Aberdeen). The webinar will last for one hour. Each ECR will present for 20 minutes, leaving 10 minutes for feedback and questions from the audience.

**Presentation One: Genetic-Guided Pharmacotherapy for Cardiovascular Diseases: A Systematic Review of Economic Evaluation**

**Presenter:** Ka Keat Lim (King's College London)

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) pose a significant burden to health systems and incur large economic costs. The role of genes in predisposing to CVD and in modifying response to CVD pharmacotherapy makes genetic testing a practical tool to optimize CVD pharmacotherapy. While genetic tests are not currently recommended as usual care, growing clinical evidence suggests that genetic testing may have a role in preventing adverse outcomes. In this systematic review, we aimed to examine the extent and the quality of evidence from economic evaluations of PGx in CVD.

**Bio:** Ka Keat is a health economist working as a research fellow at King's College London. He designs and performs economic evaluations, longitudinal data analyses and systematic reviews, with stronger interest in screening and chronic conditions. His current projects examine genetic testing, rehabilitation programmes, and medical devices.

**Presentation Two: A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Genome-Wide Sequencing Strategies for Developmental Delay Diagnosis in Scotland**

**Presenter:** Michael Abbott (University of Aberdeen)

**Aim:** To evaluate the cost effectiveness of genetic and genomic testing strategies for the diagnosis of rare developmental disorders in the Scottish NHS.

**Methods:** Six genetic and genomic testing strategies were evaluated for the diagnosis of developmental disorders using a decision tree model. Strategies included trio genome sequencing (GS), trio exome sequencing (ES) and standard genetic testing at various time points in the care pathway. The cost effectiveness of each strategy was expressed in terms of incremental cost per additional diagnosis. A threshold and probabilistic sensitivity analysis explored the impact of uncertainty on cost-effectiveness results.

**Results:** 2nd-line ES was a cost-saving option, increasing diagnostic yield by 14% and decreasing cost by £1,115 compared to standard genetic testing. Strategies involving GS increased costs significantly, with only a moderate or zero improvement in diagnostic yield compared to ES. A threshold analysis indicated that the cost of trio GS would need to fall to £2,154 before 1st-line GS becomes cost effective.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** 2nd-line ES (after chromosomal microarray; replacing gene panel testing) for the diagnosis of developmental disorders is a cost-saving option for the Scottish NHS. Ongoing economic evaluation is required to monitor the evolving cost and diagnostic yield of GS and ES over time.

**Bio:** Michael is a Research Fellow and PhD student at the Health Economics Research Unit, University of Aberdeen. His current research involves conducting an economic evaluation of genome-wide sequencing for rare disease diagnosis. In his PhD, he is exploring patient preferences for genome sequencing using a discrete choice experiment.

Register [here](#).

## Challenges And Limitations In Distributional Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

**Date:** March 27, 2023 from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM EDT

This webinar will start with a presentation by Prof. Milena Pavlova of her recently published systematic literature review of Distributional Cost-Effectiveness Analysis. Prof. Pavlova will provide an overview of the literature highlighting the challenges and limitations related to the different steps needed to conduct the analysis. This work will then be discussed by Prof. Richard Cookson and Dr Mieraf Tadesse Tolla. We will ensure opportunities for general questions and discussion.

### Milena Pavlova – Speaker Bio

Milena Pavlova is Professor of Health Economics and Equity at the Department of Health Services Research, CAPHRI school, Maastricht University. Her research interest is focused on healthcare financing, health insurance, formal and informal patient payments. She also studies inequalities, access and affordability problems in the health systems of high-, middle- and low-income countries. Next to research, she is also closely involved in teaching subjects such as health economics, financial management and health technological innovations.

Milena Pavlova is the chair of the working group on Economic Evaluation in Healthcare in Europe (EEHE) at the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER). In September 2013, she joined the Editorial Board of the journal BMC Health Services Research, where she is acting as a Senior Editorial Board Member. In 2016, she received the AXA Award for successful mid-career researcher.

### **Richard Cookson – Discussant Bio**

Richard Cookson is a professor at the Centre for Health Economics, University of York. He has helped pioneer “equity-informative” methods of policy analysis, including distributional cost-effectiveness analysis; health equity indicators for healthcare quality assurance; and methods for investigating public concern for reducing health inequality; and is currently developing microsimulation methods for long-term childhood policy analysis. He has co-chaired international working groups on equity, worked in the UK Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit and served on various NHS advisory committees including the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and the NHS Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation.

### **Dr. Mieraf Tadesse Tolla – Discussant Bio**

Mieraf Tadesse Tolla is a medical doctor by training and holds a Master degree in Public Health (2009) from the Braun Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel and a PhD (2018) from the University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway. Her PhD dissertation focuses on financial risk protection, cost-effectiveness analysis, and extended cost-effectiveness analysis of prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases in Ethiopia. Mieraf did her postdoctoral fellowship (2018 – 2020) at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Prior to joining the PhD program, Mieraf served as a public health specialist at the World Bank country office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (2010 – 2014) and worked as a general practitioner in various health facilities (2006 – 2008) both in urban and rural settings in Ethiopia. She is currently working as a senior researcher at the Addis Center for Ethics and Priority Setting based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Her research interest covers priority setting in health care, financial risk protection and economics of undernutrition in children in low-income settings.

Register [here](#).

## **Did You Know**

IHEA is a not-for-profit membership association and funds its activities on a cost-recovery basis. Congress registration fees cover much of the core congress expenses such as abstract submission and review system, venues, AV, catering, social events and staffing. However, we raise sponsorship to cover some of these costs to keep registration fees affordable and to provide financial support to delegates in need, particularly those from low- and middle-income countries. Membership fees are kept at a level that is as affordable as possible; membership fee revenue does not cover the costs of running the association and activities to benefit members between congresses. We try to raise grants to support some of these activities.

**View all upcoming events online [here](#).**

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