

## BIOS



### **LEONOR VARELA LEMA**

Scientific-Technical Advice Unit (avalia-t)

Galician Knowledge Assessment Agency (ACIS)

Leonor Varela is a senior officer in the Health Technology Assessment Department (avalia-t) of the Galician Knowledge Assessment Agency, based in Spain. She has a 16 years background in Health Technology Assessment and recognized experience at the national and international level. During her career she has led many collaborative projects at the regional, national and international and has published and lectured extensively on topics related to HTA and health care decision making, with important contributions in the field.

Currently, she holds the position of International Project Manager in avalia-t, and manages two activity centre departments in the ongoing European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) JA3 EU-funded project, which focus on HTA Joint Production and generation of cross border post-launch evidence for medical devices. She also coordinates the Spanish participation in the early dialogues that are carried out between health technology assessors and medical device developers at the EUnetHTA level. She is an active member of the International Network of agencies for HTA (INAHTA) and the Health Technology International (HTAi), being the coordinator of the Adaptation of the Spanish INAHTA-HTAi glossary.

She completed her secondary education in the UK and acquired her degree in Pharmacy in the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain). Afterwards, she carried out a PhD in Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health (PH) and a Master in PH in the same university, where she gained experience in epidemiology and molecular biology.

## **Leonor Varela**

I am running for the Board of Directors because I strongly believe that HTAi is the most important HTA umbrella organization. HTAi has been a reference for me for many years and I would be proud to be part of this great organization. I share the same goals and values and believe that I could really learn from its members but also support that it grows further, contributing meaningfully to its future.

I think I can bring to the HTAi Board the vast expertise which I have gained during all these past 15 years in HTA and also a new perspective. I am a very enthusiastic person that believes that HTA should go beyond traditional approaches and that it is essential to put forward initiatives to help members deal with the assessment of upcoming advances in challenging areas like digital health, genetic tests or personalized medicine. The value of real world data for supporting medical device evaluation has also been acknowledged in many countries and I feel that it is important too that HTAi should keep at the forefront of these initiatives. I am sure that I can contribute to steer these movements and help HTAi move forward.

The fact that I have worked closely with multiple stakeholders (health care managers, clinicians, professional societies, patients or representatives, and industry) and have coordinated multiple HTA activities at the local, regional, national and international level has given me a global vision of the requirements for HTA. It has also given me a lot of experience in engagement and management, which could certainly help me in the future role if I were to be elected.

My desire is to really contribute to enhancing HTAi, reactivating the working environments and promoting the creation of new ones where members from different countries, with different levels of knowledge and expertise, can work together and learn from each other. I understand that achieving these goals might be very difficult but I can promise that I will try to work hard to achieve it. I really believe that the only way to go forward is to join efforts and create synergies with other organizations, building capacities and promoting new initiatives in strategic areas. In my opinion, organizations and individuals can only progress when they are kept updated regarding the advances in daily activities, but also regarding upcoming needs and requirements. These appear at different times and organisations can benefit very much from sharing experiences and methodology. In my opinion, this is a key area of development for HTAi.

The most important reason for running for the Board of Directors is that I really believe that HTAi can really make a difference worldwide. I understand that there are still many things that could be done to help this organization go further and I would like to have the opportunity to contribute with my grain of sand to this effort.