



Monthly Digest

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As I write this, I'm basking in the glow of our Virtual Annual Meeting 2021 – an event that, in the face of real logistical and technical challenges, to say nothing of the continuing fallout from COVID-19, came off largely without incident and, more importantly, ignited new thinking about innovation in HTA. Before I say more about that, I want to express my deep gratitude to our local host organizations – All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence – our International Scientific Program Committee, and its Co-Chairs, Carole Longson and Robyn Ward and our local organizing committee. Collectively they did so much to make AM21 a success. I also want to say how proud I am of my incredible team at the HTAi Secretariat, who adopted a "24/7 we never close" attitude to ensure things came off as planned. Denise Jarrett, Bryce Doherty, Evani Goll, Amren Thakur, and Naomi Suwinski, in particular, deserve to take a bow for their stalwart efforts on our behalf.

There were 964 registrants for this year's Virtual Annual Meeting. At a time when many people are suffering from virtual meeting fatigue, I think this is an incredible level of engagement and speaks so powerfully and well to the passion our members (and prospective members) have in the work of HTA, and the conversational space that HTAi opens at each Annual Meeting. This is, indeed, no small thing.

Something that struck me as I took in the banquet of ideas across the plenaries, symposia, keynotes, and the like was the absolute necessity of understanding the ecosystem of which HTA and HTAi are a part. By ecosystem I mean the various individuals and organizations and the ways in which they interact to improve health outcomes. To determine the value of a health technology at different points in its lifecycle – a key differentiating feature of HTAi, by the way, given our interest in the entire lifecycle – there is a delicate dance that must be choreographed between several different agents. Done well, there is the potential to not simply inform, but to improve decision-making that promotes an equitable, efficient, and high-quality health system. This is what motivates us, and AM21 was a reminder of that fact. It was also a reminder that HTAi can thrive when it remembers that it is an open platform for global collaboration. There was such an atmosphere of collaboration about AM21, and such willingness to leverage individual and collective intelligence. This is the foundation on which we can truly build out our strategy moving forward.

To help us deliver on the implicit and explicit promises made at AM21, I am proud to

introduce our new Executive Committee members: Wija Oortwijn, who succeeds Inaki Gutierrez-Ibarluzea as President; Rabia Kahveci, who succeeds Wija as Vice-President; Americo Cicchetti, who succeeds Marco Marchetti as Treasurer; and Jo Carol Hiatt, who succeeds Franz Pichler as Secretary. I am thrilled and excited to work with Wija, Rabia, Americo and Jo Carol.

Let me close by acknowledging our membership at large – your support of HTAi matters so much to me and in the coming months, I and members of my team will be reaching out to you to help ensure that we continue to stay focused on those things that deliver value, *as defined by you*. We are, ultimately, a society of members and your voice is one that I want to hear from more often as we move forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Abbott
Executive Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS



2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting

The Virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members took place on June 18, 2021, with the following items brought forward:

- Approval of [minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting](#)
- President's Report;
- Executive Director's Report;
- Treasure's Report
 - Review of the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending on December 31, 2020. [Please click here to view it](#);
 - Appointment of Auditor – the members appointed MNP LLP as the Society auditor for the fiscal year 2021;
- [Special Resolution #1 Bylaw Revisions](#) repealed Bylaw and replace with [New Bylaws](#). The Special Resolution passed. The members voted to repeal the existing Bylaws and replace with the new Bylaws.

Board of Directors Election Results

The 2021 Board Elections results were announced at the HTAi Annual General Meeting. The following positions were open this year for elections: Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Rabia Kahveci, Ukraine, was elected as Vice-President. Americo Cicchetti, Italy, was elected as Treasurer. Jo Carol Hiatt, USA, was elected as Secretary. Wija Oortwijn became the President of the Society, she succeeded Inaki Gutierrez-Ibarluzea– Congratulations! Thank you for volunteering to serve on the HTAi Board of Directors.

Sean Tunis, USA, Past President; Marco Marchetti, Italy, Treasurer; Franz Pichler, Australia, Secretary, have completed their terms on the Board. We thank these outgoing members of the Board for their commitment, dedication, and service to the Society.

To see the Board of Directors for the term 2021-2023, please visit our [Board of Directors page](#) on our website.

Annual Meeting 2022 Announcement

HTAi is excited to announce the location of the 2022 Annual Meeting in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

More information to come soon!

We want to hear from you!

We enjoyed seeing you at the 2021 Annual Meeting, and we hope you enjoyed your time with us. Let us know your thoughts, reactions, and feelings in the Attendee Survey, available [here](#). All attendees have until July 8, 2021 at midnight MDT (UTC -6) to fill out the survey... and you will definitely want to fill it out: three individuals with completed surveys will be selected to receive a credit of \$100 (USD) on registration for the HTAi 2022 Annual Meeting in Utrecht!

Save the Date!

Don't forget to register for part 2 of our webinar series, "Compare and Contrast RWE Guidelines Across Decision-Makers Including HTAs" which is happening on July 8, 4:30 p.m. UTC.

[Register here](#)

Secretariat Update

We've hired a new Manager of Scientific Initiatives, Antonio Migliore!

Antonio has a Master's Degree in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Pisa (Italy) and a Master's in Health Economics and Management from the University of Rome "Tor Vergata". After a couple of years spent as a researcher at University of Pisa and Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento "S. Anna" di Pisa, he joined Agenas (the Italian national agency for regional healthcare). From 2007 to 2019, he was involved in research activities linked to the national HTA program, the Italian regional network for HTA (RIHTA), the EUnetHTA network activities, and the EuroScan International Network for new and emerging health technologies. More recently, he has been working as an independent consultant and assisting the WHO on projects related to medical devices for cancer, cardiac diseases, stroke, and diabetes management.

Learn more about the Secretariat on our [website](#).



Thank you for making the HTAi 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting a success!

Nearly 1,000 delegates joined us for two days of workshops, three days of presentations, and five days of seeing colleagues and making new connections. Each day was packed with stimulating and thought provoking panel and symposia sessions and we saw lively interactions and dialogues taking place in the discussion forums and live Q&A function.

Together, delegates viewed over 4,250 hours of content! Here are just a few of our highlights

Day 1

Day One sessions started with the Opening Ceremony, including addresses from HTAi Past President, Iñaki Gutierrez-Ibarluzea and representatives from the 3 host organizations (All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)

While the Hon. Lord Bethell of Romford's original planned address faced technical challenges, the issues were resolved later in the day and his address was included during the rebroadcast.

Following the Opening Ceremony, Keynote Speaker Dr. June Raine CBE took the stage to explore the Regulator-HTA partnership in driving innovation. Plenary One, *Evidence for HTA: Innovative Methods for Challenging Times*, kicked off immediately following Dr. Raine's presentation, and included a lively and insightful discussion session.

Day 2

Day Two focused on patient-centered presentations! Delegates were treated to an excellent keynote session from patient advocate Neil Bertelsen, and to quote from the many comments of appreciation, he delivered a 'passionate, impactful, inspiring and powerful' presentation. There was a call for this important talk to be shared widely and we agree and invite you to watch Neil Bertelsen's keynote [here](#). In Plenary Two, the question of how to realize: *Patients at the Heart of Innovation*, was discussed by leading voices in the global patient involvement community.

Day 3

Day Three featured a timely keynote address from Dr Melanie Lee, CEO of LifeArc corroborating the call from plenary 2 for early dialogues with patient communities. The final plenary overcame technical challenges to deliver an insightful look at the demands and challenges currently being encountered by industry and decision makers in a session called: *Innovating HTA to Support Novel Interventions*. The Closing Ceremony provided an opportunity to present awards for outstanding achievements, and to hear the closing remarks from our outgoing and incoming presidents, Iñaki Gutierrez-Ibarluzea and Wija Oortwijn.

Movement and breathing sessions

To alleviate some of the impacts of being sedentary, [the Scottish Ballet](#) got our delegates out of their chairs for a series of movement and breathing sessions – a physical and mental boost!

Virtual mixology class

The experts from [TT Liquor](#) hosted a captivating virtual mixology class where they led us through two tasty cocktail creations, modelling some core techniques. Annual Meeting

delegates had ample opportunity to network and form new connections with fellow attendees.

Want to recreate the cocktails at home? We've got you covered! All cocktail and mocktail recipes are available on our [website](#).

Music from host nations and art class

Attendees had additional options to attend Zentangle, a bite-size art session with Irene Walker from NICE or a rebroadcast of our remarkable performances from UK artists [The Ayoub Sisters](#), the [Northern Chamber Orchestra](#), and Welsh Men's Choir [Only Men Aloud](#).

Grants

This year, HTAi awarded a total of 25 Participation Grants to 4 patient and patient representatives, 16 residents of lower- or middle-income countries, and 5 students.

We would like to thank our Participation Grant Sponsors for their generous support!

Awards

2021 Annual Meeting Oral and Poster Presentation Awards

Best Poster (Non Student)

Abstract 180 - Optimal Treatment Sequence for Targeted Immune Modulators for the Treatment of Moderate to Severe Ulcerative Colitis

Best Poster (Student)

Abstract 211 - Validity Of Surrogate Endpoints In Subgroups Of Patients With Advanced Colorectal Cancer Defined By The KRAS Biomarker Status

Best Oral Presentation (Non Student)

Abstract 128 - Improving Literature Searching For Evidence On Health Apps: The NICE MEDLINE And Embase (Ovid) Health Apps Search Filters

Best Oral Presentation (Student)

Abstract 196 - Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS) For Antibiotic Management: Factors Limiting Sustainable Digital Transformation

David H Banta Distinguished Career Award

Winner – Prof. Brendon Kearney

Egon Jonsson Award

Winner - Esandi, M., Gutiérrez-Ibarluzea, I., Ibarгойen-Roteta, N., & Godman, B. (2020). An evidence-based framework for identifying technologies of no or low-added value (NLVT). *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care*, 36(1), 50-57. doi:10.1017/S0266462319000734

2020 International Journal of Technology Assessment in Healthcare (IJTAHC) top three reviewers:

- Janney Wale
- Katherine Duthie
- Anke-Peggy Holtorf

Best Reviewer

Winner - Janney Wale

Thank you to our Speakers!

The Annual Meeting hosted 80+ live sessions and 250+ pre-recorded oral and poster presentations available on demand. We send a heartfelt thank you to all our speakers and presenting authors who contributed to the success of the 2021 Annual Meeting by inspiring discussions and sowing the seeds for future collaborations.

Thank you to our Sponsors!

Thank you to our wonderful Annual Meeting sponsors who provided exceptional support and content for this year's Annual Meeting! Without you it would be impossible to stage a meeting of this magnitude and impact: Bayer AG, Edwards Lifesciences, Takeda UK Ltd, All Wales Therapeutics & Toxicology Centre (AWTTC), Health Improvement Scotland, Health Technology Wales, Janssen, Merck & Co. Ltd., National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), Novartis, Pfizer UK, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Institute of Health and Wellbeing – University of Glasgow, Sanofi, The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), Intuitive, Cambridge University Press, London School of Economics

If you have any questions regarding the Annual Meeting, please email annualmeeting@htai.org.

POLICY FORUM



Global Policy Forum

On June 8, 2021, Global Policy Forum members and HTAi Board members attended the 2022 Business and Topic Scoping Meeting. Attendees were given an overview of the 2022 topic '*HTA 2025 and beyond: Data Needs and Uncertainty Management in the Technology Lifecycle*' as well as the opportunity to engage in breakout discussions to further refine the topic scope.

[View the recordings](#)

The next Global Policy Forum will take place January 23 – 26, 2022, in The Hague, the Netherlands

Latin America Policy Forum

The health and safety of our stakeholders remains paramount. Based on continuous monitoring of COVID-19 and the importance of continuing HTA engagement in Latin America in 2021, HTAi along with the event Chair, Dr. Hector Castro, have decided to transition 2021 Latin America Policy Forum to a virtual platform. The topic for this years Forum is '*Deliberative Processes for Informed Decision Making by Health Technology Assessment*'.

The 2021 Latin America Policy Forum will be held October 25 - 27 for 2.5 hours per day.

Asia Policy Forum

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Guy Maddern as incoming Asia Policy Forum Chair.

Professor Guy Maddern is the RP Jepson Professor of Surgery at the University of Adelaide, Director of Research at the Basil Hetzel Institute for Translational Health Research at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Director, Surgical Research and Evaluation (incorporating ASERNIP-S) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. He was trained at the University of Adelaide and became a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1989. His clinical interests include the development of techniques to manage metastatic hepatic disease and hepatic approaches to optimize resection options. He has also published widely on new surgical techniques and their introduction into surgical practice. He has over 500 publications in scientific journals, has contributed to over a dozen surgical texts and attracted \$65 million of research funding.

The evaluation of new technologies and in particular surgical technologies is another area of focus and interest. Under his supervision, ASERNIP-S has been responsible for assessing these technologies before exposing the Australian population to them and has provided this service to the Australian and International community for the past 20 years, and is recognized, nationally and internationally, as the premier surgical innovation

assessment group.

He is a past President of HTAi and a past Chair of INAHTA.

Guy will start his position in August and will take over from Professor Brendon Kearney as Chair once the 2021 Virtual Asia Policy Forum has concluded. HTAi would like to express our sincere gratitude for Brendon's dedicated service and accomplishments over the past five years with the Asia Policy Forum.

During Brendon's role as Chair, his leadership contributions have ensured success of the Forum and have strengthened the Society itself. Brendon has developed important relationships within the Asia region and has increased engagement greatly. This has led to outstanding growth in HTA activity throughout the region.

HTAi will certainly miss working with Brendon as a committee member and look forward to his ongoing collaborations with us as a member of the HTAi Society.

We are grateful for the understanding and flexibility of the HTAi Asia Policy Forum members with the current global situation and their willingness to take part in the 2021 meeting virtually. The topic for this year's meeting is '*HTA in Asia Post-COVID-19*'. Please note the meeting dates have recently changed due to a conflict. The 2021 Virtual Asia Policy Forum is now scheduled to take place December 6, December 8 and December 10 for 2.5 hours per day.

If you have any questions regarding Policy Forums, please email Ali Powers at apowers@htai.org.



Patients at the heart

"What a moment!" - HTAi member responding to Neil Bertelsen's Keynote address in the discussion forum on Day 2 of the HTAi 2021 Annual Meeting.

A patient advocate and past PCIG Chair, Neil's [Tale of Two Pandemics](#) - which offered a vision of a golden opportunity to reshape the way we make decisions engaging all sections of society – was an exceptional moment in an Annual Meeting overflowing with highlights.

For PCIG, these highlights include:

- Stimulating virtual discussion improved by the participation of more than 50 patients and their representatives, including 45 who gained free access to the Annual Meeting thanks to the PCIG PASS (sponsored by Janssen, Novartis and Edwards Lifesciences)

- Two patient and citizen involvement focused workshops (one in partnership with the HTAi Developing Countries Interest Group) and 13 'Green Sessions' – colour coded to flag patient and public involvement was being discussed
- Patient involvement in the Local Organizing Committee (David Chandler and Shelagh McKinlay)
- Patients and their representatives in keynote, plenary, panels, workshops and symposia
- Two of our most dedicated members, Janney Wale (past Chair) and Anke-Peggy Holtorf (PCIG Projects Coordinator) announced two of the top three reviews for the Society's journal, with Janney named the top reviewer.

PCIG views the expertise of patients and their representatives at Annual Meeting as an essential and valuable addition to our multi-stakeholder gatherings.

"It is absolutely vital to have patients and/or their representatives participating in the HTAi meeting," incoming HTAi President Wija Oortwijn said.

"They bring lived experiences and as such may have a different perspective to the issue at stake. They draw attention to aspects that are often not, or not sufficiently, addressed by other stakeholders involved in HTA. Having a good understanding of different perspectives on the issue, the associated strategies for its resolution, and the quality of the supporting evidence will ultimately lead to more meaningful HTA."

"This is the first HTAi I've attended, so can't offer a comparison, but would completely endorse any call for greater numbers of patients (shorthand for people who matter in HTA) to be given passes for future events," LOC member and plenary 2 speaker, David Chandler, said.

"I don't have a large budget in my organization to attend events, so have to be very selective about what I can attend . . . It is such a tragedy that such inspiring words and a clarion call <sounded in Neil's keynote address> is only seen by those who are privileged to get access."

While the PASS holders continue to delve into the recordings from Annual Meeting, PCIG is evaluating patient involvement at the event and working with PASS recipients and the wider HTAi community to determine improvements. It welcomes HTAi's commitment to encouraging greater diversity in Annual Meetings and the announcement of PCIG Chair, Ann Single, as Co-Chair of the 2022 International Scientific Program Committee with Wim Goettsch and Gert van der Wilt.

PCIG is forming a new project team to further its work on patient involvement at Annual Meetings and welcomes applications from the wider HTAi community to join.

If you have any questions regarding Interest Groups or would like to submit a webinar topic, please email Sydney Ruller at sruller@htai.org.

We'd love to hear from you!

Are you an active member with something you would like to add to the monthly HTAi Readers Digest? If so, please send your request to nsuwinski@htai.org.