

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Jacob Bronowski, the Polish-British mathematician, and historian once said that "knowledge is an unending adventure at the edge of uncertainty." His words are like lanterns in my mind as I write this because as we approach the end of the third quarter of 2021, I feel a great sense of pride in what HTAi has accomplished so far this year. The uncertainty caused by the continuing fallout from COVID-19, and with it, the doubt and fear that inevitably accompany uncertainty, has compelled us to step boldly into uncharted waters. In doing so, our knowledge has grown exponentially, and with it, the confidence to lead in these extraordinary times.

2021 was envisioned as a transition year for HTAi after the chaos of 2020. The intent was to be prudent in our decision-making, minimize financial losses, and deliver value to our members. The Global Policy Forum at the beginning of the year, and the Annual Meeting at mid-year were both resounding successes, scientifically and financially. As a result, we are well-positioned heading into the last quarter of the year. Further, the support of our members and sponsors has helped to create a set of conditions that should see both the Latin America and Asia Policy Forums deliver richly satisfying intellectual content – as well as strong financial results. The net result is that the Society should be on a stronger financial footing as we begin 2022, and the team in place at the Secretariat has been well and truly "battle tested" over the past 12 months. This should help us stare down future challenges and seize opportunities.

All of the above is a preface of sorts to the key message I want to share in this month's column. On September 16, I'll be facilitating a strategic planning session with the HTAi Board that is intended to crystallize a 12-18 month roadmap for the Society. This builds on several smaller-scale discussions that have taken place this year as we turn our attention back to the Society's *2020-2025 Strategic Plan*. At the same time, a survey will be arriving in your inboxes very shortly asking you a targeted set of questions about the value you derive from your membership. This reflects my desire to get close to our members and ensure that the ideas we incubate in our planning sessions are aligned with the experiences and wishes of our members. So, it matters greatly to me that as many of our members as possible complete the survey. As a token of appreciation for doing so, all respondents will be entered into a draw for a complimentary registration to the 2022 Annual Meeting.

For me, strategic planning is not an annual ritual but rather, an ongoing dynamic conversation about the path we are traveling through time. As such, I welcome feedback from anyone who wants to help us do things differently and better. Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts with me at [rabbott@htai.org](mailto:rabbott@htai.org)

In closing, let me again pay tribute to the exceptional team I have the pleasure of leading at the Secretariat; the members of the HTAi Board; and especially our members. We often say that the Secretariat is a small but mighty team, and the same is true of our Society – we may be small compared to some other players in the HTA space, but we are indeed mighty because of the strength and character of our members. Together, we can do great things.

Rob Abbott  
Executive Director

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### **New Society Bylaws are in Effect**

At the 2021 Annual General Meeting, the Members approved the new Society Bylaws. The Bylaws officially came into effect as of July 22, 2021, after the completion of the Government Registrar's review. The new Society Bylaws are now available on our [website](#).

### **New Webinar Series**

We are now offering a webinar series broadcast to all HTAi members and prospective members!

Dates and times will be communicated in the coming weeks, so keep an eye on your inboxes and our social media channels for more information. If you can't make it to a webinar, don't fret! -We'll rebroadcast them the following week in the alternate time slot to ensure anyone can view the session.

### **2021 Virtual Annual On-Demand Content**

2021 Annual Meeting presentations will only be available on-demand until September 20, 2021. If you missed a panel due to schedule conflict, or you want to rewatch a Plenary discussion, make sure to check out the on-demand presentations via the Annual Meeting Platform.

For more information on how to access on-demand and the EventsAIR timeline please visit our [website](#).

### **HTAi Welcomes New Committee Chairs**

Recently, HTAi welcomed new Finance and Audit Committee Chair Americo Cicchetti and Business Development Committee Chair Franz Waibel.

[View our committees and volunteers on our website.](#)

## ANNUAL MEETING



**Save The Date!**

The HTAi 2022 Annual Meeting will take place on **June 25-29, 2022**, in Utrecht, Netherlands.

Next year's Annual Meeting will offer a hybrid event with on-site and virtual access, and discussions will focus on the main theme '**Lifecycle Approach: Coming Together to Make it Happen**'.

Follow our hashtag **#HTAi2022Utrecht** and Learn more about the Annual Meeting theme, host organizations, and upcoming announcements on our [website](#)

If you have any questions regarding the Annual Meeting, please email [annualmeeting@htai.org](mailto:annualmeeting@htai.org).



## 2021 Global Policy Forum

The 2021 Global Policy Forum (GPF) article is now published and fully citable! You can access "*Considering and Communicating Uncertainty in Health Technology Assessment*" through our official journal, the International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care (IJTAHC).

We thank Rebecca Trowman and Dan Ollendorf for contributing to the conception, design, analysis, interpretation of data and the writing of the paper.

[Read the article](#)

### Global Policy Forum Organizing Committee

The Global Policy Forum Organizing Committee recently opened a call for nominations to fill a not-for-profit vacancy as Jean Slutsky announced her impending retirement from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). We thank Jean for her service to the committee and the GPF generally and wish her all the best in her retirement.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Nicole Mittmann has filled the Global Policy Forum Organizing Committee vacancy. Dr. Mittmann is the Chief Scientist and Vice-President of Evidence Standards at the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) and leads their shared science groups, including the Health Economics, Research Information Services, and Scientific Affairs teams. We're delighted to have Dr. Mittmann onboard and look forward to her contributions over the next three years.

## 2022 Global Policy Forum

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

## 2020 Latin America Policy Forum

We are pleased to inform you that the 2020 Latin America Policy Forum article "*Identification and*

***selection of health technologies for assessment by agencies in support of reimbursement decisions in Latin America***" has been published in two languages online and is fully citable in IJTAHC.

[Read the English article](#)

[Read the Spanish article](#)

A huge thank you to Andrés Pichon-Riviere, Federico Augustovski, Sebastián Garcia-Marti, Andrea Alcaraz, Verónica Alfie and Laura Sampietro-Colom for their many contributions and efforts in the development of these articles.

### **Scientific Secretary**

The Latin America Policy Forum (LATAM PF) recently opened a call for applications for a Scientific Secretary to support the Forum for the 2022-2023 term.

We are happy to report that the Departamento De Evaluación De Tecnologías Sanitarias, Revisiones Sistemáticas Y Economía De La Salud, Instituto De Efectividad Clínica Y Sanitaria (IECS) was the successful candidate.

IECS is one of the main academic institutions devoted to public health in Latin America. As an independent, non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Buenos Aires School of Medicine, it develops research, education, and technical cooperation in health care to improve efficiency, equity, quality, and sustainability of health care systems and policies.

IECS has been part of the Latin America Policy Forum since its inception in 2016. Along with Latin America Policy Forum Chair, Dr. Hector Castro, we are very pleased to have them continue with the LATAM PF!

### **2022 Latin America Policy Forum**

The 2021 Virtual Latin America Policy Forum' *Deliberative Processes for Informed Decision Making by Health Technology Assessment*' will be held October 25 – 27 for approximately 2.5 hours per day.

### **Asia Policy Forum**

We are looking forward to the first-ever Virtual Asia Policy Forum! This year's topic is '*HTA in Asia Post-COVID-19*,' and the meeting will be split over three days into 2.5-hour sessions each day on December 6, 8 and 10. As in previous years, there will be a mix of formal presentations, breakout sessions and digital networking opportunities. A huge thank you to Asia Policy Forum Chair, Prof. Brendon Kearney, and Scientific Secretary, Linda Mundy for their hard work and dedication over the past several months.

### **Call for Nominations**

The Asia Policy Forum has recently opened a call for nominations for the HTAi Asia Policy Forum Organizing Committee to fill a for-profit vacancy.

Asia Policy Forum Organizing Committee members are required to commit to continued and diligent support of the content and development of Asia Policy Forum meetings through input on the topic, agenda, the research, framing and reporting of the pre-meeting background paper, the identification of speakers, and several outputs of the meeting. Input will be provided by email and through approximately six 90-minute meetings (by teleconference) per year ahead of the HTAi Asia Policy Forum meeting in late October/early November.

The term of office for member organization representatives is 3 years and can be extended up to a further 3 years only (maximum 6-year term).

The deadline for nominations is Thursday, September 30, 2021. Nominations can be submitted by email to [policyforum@htai.org](mailto:policyforum@htai.org).

The Asia Policy Forum Chair will review nominations with the support of the HTAi Secretariat.

Please see the Policy Forum Series Organizing Committees' [terms of reference](#) for more information.

## Policy Forum Advisory Committee

As we continue to mature our thinking and action with respect to the Policy Fora series, the role of the Policy Forum Advisory Committee (PFAC) becomes increasingly important. The role of the Chair is a critical one as PFAC addresses the need for leading-edge scientific content within the series and a viable business model to ensure financial sustainability.

HTAi President, Wija Oortwijn has had the great pleasure of serving as PFAC Chair over the past year. Still, with her new responsibilities as President, it was necessary to begin the process of finding a replacement.

After an internal call for applications and subsequent interviews, it was decided that Alicia Granados will act as Co-Chair over the balance of 2021, assuming full Chairmanship of PFAC on January 1, 2022. Alicia comes to the PFAC with a broad range of experience with HTA, HTAi and the global HTA environment. We are excited to have her in this role as the PFAC addresses the need for financial sustainability and leading-edge scientific content within the series.

If you have any questions regarding Policy Forums, please email Ali Powers at [apowers@htai.org](mailto:apowers@htai.org).



## RWE-AI Quarterly Meeting

The RWE-AI quarterly meeting held on September 16 was a success! The focus was on Artificial Intelligence. Golnar Karimian and Pooyeh Graili presented two reviews on "The ethical issues of application of artificial intelligence in healthcare" and "Artificial intelligence in outcomes research: a systematic scoping review," respectively.

**A recording will be emailed in the coming weeks to members.**

Dr Golnar Karimian (MD, PhD, MSc) is a hepatology and gastroenterology resident at Maastricht UMC+, and holds a doctorate in hepatology, focusing on signal transduction pathways in hepatocyte cell death and the development of new therapeutic targets for the treatment of chronic liver diseases at the University Medical Center Groningen. She has extensive experience in preclinical and clinical research in the field of chronic inflammatory diseases, organ regeneration, and intracellular signal transduction pathways. She has just completed a master's degree on Public Health, specializing on Healthcare Policy,

Innovation and Management, at Maastricht University. She is a member of the RWE&AI IG and her recent work has focused on AI, including changing workflows, ethical aspects, and applications in healthcare, but, also, in R&D.

Pooyeh Graili, the principal consultant at Quality HTA, is an MD, MBE, MPH with expertise on HTA, outcomes research, qualitative and quantitative evidence synthesis, RWE, and health economics in a wide range of therapeutic areas. She has over 12 years of experience within governmental organizations, pharmaceutical companies (market access and medical affairs), consulting firms, private clinics, health care and research centers internationally (North America, Europe, and Asia). Her experience in developing market access strategies and medical practice contributes to her knowledge base. Pooyeh has presented her research at numerous international conferences and symposia including CADTH, SMDM, ARCC, RSNA, and more. She has contributed to several publications and been a reviewer of scientific abstracts for ISPOR, CAHSPR, HTAi, and CADTH congresses and symposia.

If you have any questions regarding Interest Groups or would like to submit a webinar topic, please email Sydney Ruller at [sruller@htai.org](mailto: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](mailto:nsuwinski@htai.org).