Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment, National Health Commission (Fudan University)

WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Technology Assessment and Management

NEWSLETTER

December 2024 / Issue 4

HIGHLIGHTS

- Donation Signing Ceremony for Fudan School of Public Health AI Health Technology Assessment Research Fund Successfully Held
- The 17th China Health Technology Assessment Forum was Held in Fuzhou.
- The Meeting of Academic Committee of the Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment, National Health Commission (Fudan University) was Held in Fuzhou.

Donation Signing Ceremony for Fudan School of Public Health AI Health Technology Assessment Research Fund Successfully Held

On November 23, 2024, the donation signing ceremony for the AI Health Technology Assessment Research Fund of the School of Public Health, Fudan University was held at the Kangquan Library on the Fenglin Campus. Mr. Hou Weigui, Founder of ZTE Corporation; Ju Xinxia, Chairperson of the Zhongwei Public Welfare Health Technology Assessment Institute; Liu Li, Secretary-General of the Shanghai Fudan University Education Development Foundation and Director of the Fudan University External Liaison and Development Office attended the ceremony. Professor Chen Yingyao, Vice Dean of the School of Public Health, Fudan University, presided over the event.

In his speech, Professor Chen Yingyao expressed sincere gratitude to the donors. He pointed out that the establishment of this fund aligns with the rapid development trends of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and large language models. An AI-driven rapid health technology assessment system provides new methods and models for Health Technology Assessment (HTA), which helps improve evaluation efficiency, promotes the application of evidence in evidence-based decision-making, and is of great significance for the high-quality development of China's health system.

In his address, Mr. Hou Weigui, Founder of ZTE Corporation, introduced the background and original intent behind the establishment of the Zhongwei HTA Institute and highly commended the contributions made by the School of Public Health, Fudan University in the field of HTA. He reviewed the solid foundation of cooperation between ZTE Corporation and the School, and, comparing international practices and experiences, emphasized the significant importance of HTA work. Particularly in the current era of rapid AI development, empowering HTA with digital-intelligent technologies to promote its intelligent, scientific, and standardized development is a shared goal for both parties advancing together.

He expressed confidence that the School of Public Health, Fudan University, and the ZTE Corporation have the determination and capability to jointly promote the application of AI-HTA in areas such as real-world data, facilitating the translation of HTA outcomes into decision-making and fostering innovation.

Secretary-General Liu Li, representing the Fudan University Education Development Foundation, and Chairperson Ju Xinxia of the Zhongwei HTA Institute jointly signed the donation agreement. Chairperson Ju Xinxia accepted the donation on behalf of the Zhongwei HTA Institute and expressed gratitude.

During the academic exchange session, five scholars and experts engaged in in-depth discussions on cutting-edge theories in HTA and the application research of AI technology, sharing the latest scientific research results and practical experiences. Professor Chen Yingyao explored the potential and main challenges of AI systems for rapidly generating HTA reports, proposing the implementation of quality reviews for AI-generated reports, promoting pilot applications, and advancing research plans to support practical decision-making. Postdoctoral Fellow Yang Yi from the School of Public Health used the application of HTA in medical insurance reimbursement decisions for tumor immunotherapy drugs as a typical case study, offering specific suggestions on enhancing the scientificity, efficiency, and transparency of reimbursement decisions, and strengthening the practical application of HTA in this process. Postdoctoral Fellow Liu Shimeng analyzed the current development status and main challenges of HTA in China, proposing further strengthening of the institutional mechanisms for HTA, enhancing its application

in health decision-making, and discussing future directions for the field. Professor Du Shilin from the Zhongwei HTA Institute provided a detailed interpretation of the latest EU HTA regulations and discussed their implications for the construction of China's HTA system. Director Xue Hongjian from the Zhongwei HTA Institute shared future development plans for digital-intelligent HTA tools, summarized international collaboration cases in the field of AI and HTA, and proposed countermeasures for promoting the digital-intelligent development of HTA.

During the discussion session, experts held in-depth discussions based on the thematic presentations. All parties look forward to further cooperation in the public welfare field, jointly promoting the development of scientific exploration in China's HTA domain.

The 17th China Health Technology Assessment Forum was Held in Fuzhou

From December 6 to 8, 2024, the 17th China Health Technology Assessment Forum was successfully held in Fuzhou. The forum was jointly organized by the Fudan University Center for Medical Technology Evaluation, the Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment of the National Health Commission (Fudan University), and the China Medicinal Biotechnology Association. It was co-organized by the Fudan University Center for Pharmacoeconomics Research and Evaluation, the School of Public Health at Fudan University, the School of Health Management at Fujian Medical University, and the Health Technology Assessment Committee of the China Medicinal Biotechnology Association. Approximately 400 participants from government agencies, universities, research institutes, medical institutions, and pharmaceutical enterprises gathered to discuss the theme "Health Technology Assessment and Service System," injecting new ideas and momentum into the development of HTA and promoting the translation of HTA outcomes into decision-making to support the high-quality development of China's health sector.

On the morning of December 7, the forum opened with addresses by Professor Dai Yue, Vice Dean of the Health Research Institute at Fujian Medical University; Mr. Wu Zhaohui, Vice Chairman of the China Medicinal Biotechnology Association; and Professor Chen Yingyao, Director of the Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment of the National Health Commission (Fudan University). The opening session highlighted the role of HTA in supporting the construction of health service systems and its potential in advancing health initiatives with Chinese characteristics.

The first plenary session, titled "Health Technology Assessment Supporting Health Systems," was chaired by Professor Hu Zhi from Anhui Medical University. Guo Xin, Director of the Policy Research Office of the National Health Commission's Reform Department, emphasized the implementation of a health-prioritized development strategy and the coordinated development of healthcare, medical insurance, and medicines, underscoring HTA's critical role in top-level design and policy research for healthcare reform. Professor Chen Wen from Fudan University analyzed the current state and challenges of pharmacoeconomics, proposing actions for its high-quality development. Yang Minhong, Secretary of the Fujian Provincial Health Commission, delivered a report titled "Deepening the Coordinated Governance of Healthcare, Medical Insurance, and Medicines to Empower Health Service Upgrading," highlighting Fujian's efforts to promote the "Sanming Experience" and optimize health services.

The second plenary session, "Health Technology Assessment Supporting Scientific Evaluation," was chaired by Professor Dong Hengjin from Zhejiang University. Professor Xie Feng from McMaster University discussed the necessity of incorporating economic evaluation evidence into clinical guidelines. Professor Gu Yuanyuan from Macquarie University used discrete choice experiments to analyze efficiency and equity in health resource allocation in China. Professor Wu Jing from Tianjin University explored the impact of DRG payment reforms on medical resource use and patient outcomes, providing empirical support for policy implementation.

The third plenary session, centered on the topic "Can Health Technology Assessment Support the Health Service System?", featured a discussion of perspectives. Professor Huang Jiayan from Fudan University presided over the session and delivered an introductory speech. Professors Sun Qiang from Shandong University and Chen Hao from Huazhong University of Science and Technology were invited to represent the affirmative and negative sides, respectively, expounding on and discussing the topic from their respective viewpoints. Experts including Professor Yang Lian, Vice Dean of the School of Public Health at Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine; Professor Xue Di from Fudan University; Professor Dong Hengjin from Zhejiang University; Mr. Yang Hai, Director of the Human Resources Department of Shanghai Sixth People's Hospital; Professor Yang Li, Deputy Director of the Department of Health Policy and Management at Peking University School of Public Health; Mr. Ming Qiang, Vice President of the Fujian Provincial Medical and Health System Reform Research Association; and Professor Yu Wei, President of the Shanghai Chuangqi Health Development Research Institute, engaged in discussions surrounding the aforementioned topic. The experts conducted in-depth discussions on issues including the positive role HTA can play in promoting the reform and development of the health service system, its application in facilitating the development and enhancement of the health service system, and the challenges faced in advancing the high-quality development of the health service system. The experts unanimously agreed that HTA plays a crucial role in the reform and development of the health service system, while also pointing out existing challenges. They proposed that health service decision-making should comprehensively consider multiple factors, and emphasized that further in-depth exploration of the role of health technology assessment within the health service system will be an important topic for future research.

The forum also featured 15 parallel sessions covering topics such as advances in pharmacoeconomic evaluation methods, value-based healthcare, and health insurance payment reforms. These sessions facilitated in-depth exchanges on cutting-edge research and practical applications of HTA. Oral presentations and poster displays attracted active participation, fostering vibrant academic dialogue.

The Youth Forum was a highlight of this event. On the evening of the 7th, presided over by Young Researcher Yang Fan from the School of Public Health, Fudan University, outstanding young scholars from diverse backgrounds and fields shared their personal growth journeys, academic research, and scientific insights. Professor Li Xue from The University of Hong Kong explored how early-career faculty can break through career bottlenecks in non-advantageous disciplines, delving into aspects like team management and innovative exploration. Professor Zhang Tiantian from Jinan University shared her experiences in research and teaching, encouraging young scholars to pursue excellence through self-breakthroughs and continuous growth. Professor Sun Tao from Hangzhou Normal University analyzed the dilemmas faced by young academics, urging everyone to move forward courageously and persist in their efforts. Associate Professor Zhang Yan from Huazhong University of Science and Technology discussed the dialectical relationship between thinking and skills, emphasizing the importance of mindset, which provided new food for thought for the audience. The atmosphere at the Youth Forum was relaxed and lively, showcasing the new spirit of young scholars in China's HTA field, while also providing them with a broad platform for academic and professional development exchange.

On the morning of the 8th, the fourth plenary session, "Re-evaluation of Drug Reimbursement," was chaired by Professor Ma Aixia from China Pharmaceutical University. Experts including Professor Jiang Jie from Jinan University, Professor Hu Ming from Sichuan University, Director Liu Guoqiang from the Third Hospital of Hebei Medical University, Researcher Tao Libo from Peking University, Professor Yu Baorong from the University of International Business and Economics, Professor Gong Jian from Shenyang Pharmaceutical University, and Associate Professor Yin Jia from Shandong University engaged in in-depth discussions on the theme.

Among them, Professor Jiang Jie conducted comprehensive discussions from multiple perspectives, including the long-term benefits of chronic disease treatments for patients, challenges in the pharmacoeconomic evaluation of traditional Chinese medicines, differences in efficacy evaluation indicators compared with Western medicines, assessment through patient satisfaction and comparative analysis with Western medicines, research on drug inclusion and exclusion mechanisms, and dimensions of re-evaluation. Professor Hu Ming proposed that more refined management of medical insurance funds and the evaluation of clinical access references involve multiple aspects, requiring comprehensive consideration and implementation from perspectives such as practical usage, accessibility and affordability, clarity of clinical value, guidance for real-world treatment decisions, and drug comparisons. Director Liu Guoqiang, from a national standpoint, suggested establishing standards, consensus, and guidelines for the re-evaluation of drugs approved with conditions, while strengthening assessment mechanisms. He also emphasized improving publicity and education to ensure policy implementation. Regarding bottlenecks in the value assessment of traditional Chinese medicines, he encouraged comparative studies between Chinese and Western medicines for the same indications. Researcher Tao Libo proposed that drug re-evaluation should prioritize drugs with insufficient evidence during initial medical insurance access assessment or those facing changed competitive environments. He highlighted the need to address confounding biases in real-world data usage and strengthen evaluation and regulatory systems. Professor Yu Baorong pointed out that institutional frameworks are key in the re-evaluation of innovative drugs. Drugs with pricing misalignments or efficacy discrepancies should be prioritized for adjustment, with bottlenecks lying in the recognition of re-evaluation, organizational leadership, and social costs. Professor Gong Jian acknowledged the progress in China's pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors, emphasizing policy refinement and prioritizing the evaluation of inclusive drugs such as those for pediatric and geriatric populations, rare diseases, and traditional Chinese medicines. He called for changes in evaluation dimensions to influence policy, sought channels to address implementation issues, and noted that real-world data applications require guideline support, while encouraging greater efforts from enterprises. Associate Professor Yin Jia stressed that drug re-evaluation should integrate clinical recommendations and consider social and indirect costs. Bottlenecks include leadership coordination, time management, quality control, regulatory constraints, funding security, and data-sharing issues. Professor Ma Aixia delivered the concluding remarks, stating that the re-evaluation of drug reimbursement is a critical component in dynamically optimizing the medical insurance catalog,

which can better protect patient rights, promote the efficient use of medical insurance funds, and ensure sustainable development.

Professors Huang Jiayan, Ma Aixia, Xue Di, and Sun Qiang announced the winners of the poster and oral presentation awards and presented the awards to the recipients. The forum received 180 abstract submissions from various universities and institutions across the country. After a blind review by experts, 35 were selected for oral presentations and 109 for poster displays. Ultimately, six authors from institutions such as the Shanghai Health Development Research Center, the Hongkou District Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Fudan University, and Anhui Medical University received first, second, and third prizes in the poster presentation category. Another six authors from Nanjing Medical University, Fudan University, Tianjin Medical University, China Pharmaceutical University, Shandong University, and Shandong Provincial Maternal and Child Health Hospital were awarded first, second, and third prizes in the oral presentation category.

At the conclusion of the forum, Professor Chen Yingyao, Director of the Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment of the National Health Commission (Fudan University), delivered the closing speech. He expressed gratitude to the attending leaders and experts, and hoped that all participants would enhance communication through this academic forum, contribute new strength to the development of health technology assessment in China in the new era, and jointly assist in the building of a Healthy China.

The forum focused on hot topics such as HTA supporting health systems, HTA facilitating scientific evaluation, and drug reimbursement access. It featured lively discussions on innovative concepts and methods of HTA under new circumstances, as well as how to more fully and effectively apply HTA in decision-making practices to support the high-quality development of health initiatives with Chinese characteristics. The forum attracted widespread attention and active participation from professionals across various healthcare sectors, with over 400 attendees, fully demonstrating the leading role of the China Health Technology Assessment Forum in promoting the exchange, dissemination, and application of HTA.

The Meeting of Academic Committee of the Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment, National Health Commission (Fudan University) was Held in Fuzhou.

On December 7, 2024, the Key Laboratory of Health Technology Assessment of the National Health Commission (Fudan University) (hereinafter referred to as the "Key Laboratory") successfully convened its 2024 Academic Committee Meeting in Fuzhou. The meeting focused on in-depth discussions regarding the Key Laboratory's achievements over the past year and the challenges it has faced, while providing

valuable suggestions for its future development. Members of the Academic Committee, including esteemed experts and scholars such as Meng Qingyue, Zuo Xuejin, Dai Tao, Zhang Liang, Zhang Chaoyang, Dong Hengjin, Yu Wei, Hu Zhi, Sun Qiang, and Chen Wen, attended the meeting. Key Laboratory Director Professor Chen Yingyao, Deputy Directors Professor Xue Di and Professor Kan Haidong, along with several core laboratory members, also participated in the proceedings.

At the beginning of the meeting, Professor Chen Yingyao comprehensively summarized the laboratory's work achievements over the past year, covering key tasks, scientific research outcomes and their translation into policy, disciplinary development and talent cultivation, and the management of open research funds. He highlighted representative achievements in the field of Health Technology Assessment. Simultaneously, he outlined future development directions for the Key Laboratory and proposed work plans for the new year.

Following the annual report, the meeting was chaired by Professor Yu Wei. Members of the Academic Committee acknowledged the accomplishments achieved by the Key Laboratory in the past year, offered suggestions for its future development, and provided valuable opinions and recommendations. Lively discussions centered on key issues such as the laboratory's development positioning, opportunities and challenges, key research priorities, and disciplinary development. The committee members unanimously agreed that the Key Laboratory should further strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative research, focus on enhancing policy translation capabilities, and work closely with government agencies and medical institutions to promote the broader application of HTA outcomes. They also recommended that the Key Laboratory regularly publish research findings and assessment reports to further expand its societal impact, attract attention from the public and policy decision-makers, and contribute to the development of China's health sector.

Professor Yu Wei summarized the comments from the committee members. He fully affirmed the achievements of the Key Laboratory over the past year and expressed support and expectations for its development plans and explorations in cutting-edge technological fields. He emphasized that the Key Laboratory should continue to focus on its research priorities, maintain its developmental positioning, leverage its international advantages, identify breakthrough points in frontier areas, dynamically adjust its strategic direction, and consolidate and strengthen its leading position in the field of HTA in China.

In conclusion, Professor Chen Yingyao expressed sincere gratitude to the committee members for their valuable suggestions and guidance. He stated that in the new year, the Key Laboratory will fully utilize its advantages and distinctive features in the field of HTA, integrate domestic and international resources and talent, deepen research in areas of strength, further develop studies in specialized fields, clarify its development positioning and goals, actively respond to major national health needs and societal concerns, promote the role of HTA in supporting the reform and development of health service systems, and strive to achieve more new progress, breakthroughs, and outcomes.

Key Lab of Health Technology Assessment, National Health Commission (Fudan University) /
WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Technology Assessment and Management

P.O.Box 197, No 138, Yi Xue Yuan Road, Shanghai, 200032
Tel: 86-21-33565190
Email: cwchen@shmu.edu.cn
Website: https://chta.fudan.edu.cn/