



# THE CHOICE INSTITUTE

School of Pharmacy



## Director's Welcome

Dear colleagues and friends,

I am proud to share the extensive list of achievements this quarter by our faculty, staff, and students. Congratulations to Doug Barthold for being selected to Gov. Inslee's Washington State Prescription Drug Affordability Board. We are also excited about our new partnership with Komodo Health Data.

As 2023 comes to a close, we are thankful to our friends and colleagues for their fantastic work and their support of our program. We encourage all to consider donations to the [CHOICE Institute Fund](#), which supports various intramural and extramural activities in HEOR for our Institute.

We wish you all happy holidays and look forward to seeing you, healthy and energized, in the new year.

Sincerely,

*Anirban*

Anirban Basu, PhD  
Professor & Stergachis Family Endowed Director  
The CHOICE Institute

**GIVE TO THE CHOICE INSTITUTE**



# FALL QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS

## CHOICE Activities & Accomplishments



### [Douglas Barthold Appointed to WA Prescription Drug Affordability Board](#)

Research Assistant Professor & CHOICE Faculty Fellow, Douglas Barthold, was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to serve on the Washington State Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB). Authorized under Senate Bill 5532, this five-member board is tasked with analyzing data to review price and cost growth of prescription drugs and set upper limits for drugs that may lead to significant excess cost.



### [Announcing our new partnership with Komodo Health](#)

The CHOICE Institute has selected Komodo Health as its data partner to drive comparative outcomes and cost effectiveness research and analytics. CHOICE researchers will use Komodo's Sentinel application to gain access to real-world data from Komodo Health's Healthcare Map, the industry's most complete, connected, high-quality view of longitudinal healthcare in the U.S.



### [In Case You Missed It: CHOICE 5th Annual Research Symposium](#)

In October, we hosted our 5th annual research symposium, "Artificial Intelligence, Real Consequences: The side effects of AI in healthcare." Moderated by Associate Professor, Aasthaa Bansal, three leading experts in the field of machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare used case studies to discuss unintended consequences, lessons learned, and best practices for the use of AI/ML in real-world applications. The recording is available on our website.



## Fall Quarter at The CHOICE Institute

### Students

Congratulations to PhD student **Sara Khor**, who passed her dissertation proposal defense (general exam) in September and advanced to candidacy. Sara's dissertation is titled, "Incorporating Equity into Healthcare Decision Making Around New Technologies". Her supervisory committee is comprised of Aasthaa Bansal (Co-Chair), Josh Carlson (Co-Chair), Anirban Basu, Veena Shankaran, and Michelle Shin (Nursing) serving as Graduate School Representative (GSR).

We also congratulate PhD student **Ashley Tabah** for passing her general exam in November. Ashley's dissertation is titled, "Closing the coverage gap: Understanding the spending and adherence effects for cognitively impaired older adults." Ashley's supervisory committee consists of Ryan Hansen (Chair), Douglas Barthold, Jing Li, and Samuel Arnold (Pharmaceutics) serving as GSR.

PhD student **Shangqing (Joyce) Jiang** gave a podium presentation at the American Society of Human Genetics 2023 Meeting in November. [Read more.](#)

PhD student **Sara Khor** was awarded the the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Conquer Cancer Merit Award for her team's study that examined the association between pre-diagnosis financial strain and later stage cancer diagnosis. [Read more.](#)

In November, PhD student **Rachel Wittenauer** was invited to attend a meeting hosted by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) at their headquarters in Washington, DC for an APhA-CDC project, "Improving Standard Immunization Practices Among Pharmacists and Other Healthcare Providers." [Read more.](#)

PhD student **Emma Cousin** gave a guest lecture for first

year pharmacy students in Ryan Hansen's class, Pharmacy 512- Fundamentals of US Health Care, Pharmacy Safety and Law. More specifically, Emma presented on the US health insurance system in a way that was engaging and thought provoking for the students.

PhD student **Shiven Bhardwaj** was interviewed by Medscape Medical News to provide his viewpoint on a new JAMA Network research letter on the use of Real Time Benefit Tools in health systems. [Read more.](#)

PhD student **Carlos J. Pineda Antunez** was awarded a 47-month scholarship by The National Council for Humanities Sciences and Technologies of Mexico (Conahcyt), effective from October, 01 2023 to August, 31 2027, under the Call Becas de Posgrado en el Extranjero - Doctorados en Ciencias y Humanidades 2023.

**Carlos Pineda Antunez** and **Sara Khor** both presented posters at the 45th Annual Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) in Philadelphia, PA. Carlos' poster was titled, "Optimizing a Natural History Simulation Model of Colorectal Cancer Using GPUs" and Sara's poster was titled, "Can including race in clinical algorithms account for varying predictor quality across racial groups?"

### **ISPOR Student Chapter Update**

The UW ISPOR Student Chapter kicked off the year with a vibrant Welcome Social Reception at Ravenna Brewing, fostering connections among Chapter members, including new students. This event provided a platform for attendees to share their summer experiences and set expectations for the upcoming school session. As the Fall quarter progressed, the Chapter conducted its annual UW ISPOR Seminar, introducing new and returning students to the Chapter's objectives, recapping the highlights of the previous year, updating members on registration, and outlining available board positions. Subsequently, the Chapter held board elections, resulting in the selection of **Manpreet Dhankhar** as Vice President, **Jennifer Deem** as Secretary, and **Felipe Montano-Campos** as Treasurer. Following Chapter policy, **Ben Nwogu** transitioned into the role of Chapter

President after serving as Vice President in the previous academic year. In a collaborative effort, the Chapter organized a Halloween-themed Happy Hour in partnership with the UW AMCP (Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy) at Big Time Brewery. This joint event proved to be a delightful experience, fostering social interactions between Chapter members and their counterparts from the UW PharmD program. Looking ahead, the UW ISPOR leadership is actively planning a series of events throughout the school year, aiming to bring significant value to members and enhance the overall Chapter experience.

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## Faculty

Congratulations to Assistant Professor **Clayton English** and his co-investigators, Associate Professor **Jenny Bacci** and Professor **Andy Stergachis**, for receiving a 2023 Garvey Institute for Brain Health Solutions (GIBHS) Innovation Grant award. Their project is titled, "[Partnering with community pharmacies to enhance access to long-acting injectable antipsychotics \(LAIAs\) in Washington State.](#)" This project will explore the appropriateness, acceptability, and feasibility of administering LAIAs at community pharmacies, which, if implemented, could potentially increase access to treatment, improve patient outcomes, and expand the delivery of behavioral health services provided by pharmacists. GIBHS funded 12 projects that develop and test innovative partnerships that extend the impact of mental health professionals in Washington state. [Read more.](#)

CHOICE faculty, Professor **Sean D. Sullivan** and Associate Professor **Ryan Hansen**, co-authored a study in JAMA on how Medicare is overpaying for generic drugs. [Read more.](#)

Associate Professor **Aastha Bansal** started a Visiting Scientist position at Child Health Evaluative Sciences, SickKids Research Institute, Toronto, Canada.

Associate Professors **Jenny Bacci** and **Ryan Hansen** received grant funding from the Community Pharmacy

Foundation for a study titled "Developing a model of care for medications for opioid use disorder at community pharmacies." [Read the study objectives.](#)

In November, Professor **Anirban Basu** was the invited speaker for the 38th Annual Rankin-Skatrud Memorial Lecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Population Health Sciences. Dr. Basu presented on Clinical Algorithmic Discrimination.

At the SMDM meeting in October, Assistant Professor **Kyu Lee** engaged in several activities. She taught a short course on "Infectious Disease Modeling Using Dynamic Compartmental Models in R", organized a symposium on "Challenges and Opportunities in Global Health Research: A Panel Discussion", and presented a poster on "Potential benefits of delaying seasonal influenza vaccine selections: a retrospective modeling study."

In October, Professor **Dave Veenstra** presented at a CDC seminar on the "[Cost Effectiveness of Population Genomic Screening](#)".

Professor **Veenstra** also provided a PhRMA Foundation webinar on "How to write a compelling 'Specific Aims' page". [Read key takeaways and watch the recording.](#)

At the International Society of Pharmacovigilance annual meeting held in November in Bali, Indonesia, Professor **Andy Stergachis** was awarded the Best Poster Prize for the poster titled, "Safety, immunogenicity, and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines for pregnant persons: A living systematic review and meta-analysis." **Sabra Zarea**, a recent graduate from our PhD program, is a co-author. This project, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is a collaboration between Tulane University, the Institute for Clinical Effectiveness & Health Policy (ICES, Buenos Aires, Argentina), London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Charite Centre for Global Health, Charité Universitätsmedizin, Berlin, World Health Organization, and the University of Washington. [Access the site here.](#)

The work of Professor Emeritus **Beth Devine** and her

Spanish colleagues was featured on a regional television news station in Murcia, Spain (October 18, 2023). The news anchor explained the results of the investigators' recently published study that explored the relationship between sources of Covid-19 vaccine information and intent to be vaccinated. Findings from their study suggest that individuals who used social networks as a primary source of vaccine information were less trusting of vaccines and less likely to be vaccinated. Those younger in age and of lower socio-economic status were more likely to be distrustful. The data, obtained from a nationally representative survey sample from 27 countries in the European Union (EU) support formal efforts of the EU to counter disinformation, including the EU Digital Services Act that sets out new standards for the accountability of online platforms, and provides a mechanism for EU-wide fact-checking of online information provided by all actors. [Read the study.](#)

Assistant Professor **Kyu Lee** and her co-authors published a retrospective modeling study examining the advantages of delaying seasonal influenza vaccine selections for the Northern Hemisphere. Their study finds that revising current timelines for vaccine selection could result in substantial epidemiological benefits, particularly when additional data could help improve the antigenic match between vaccine and circulating viruses. [Read the study.](#)

Assistant Professor **Jing Li**, PhD student **Julia Fox**, and their co-authors published an article in the October 2023 issue of Journal of the American Medical Directors Association, examining out-of-pocket expenses for long-term care by residential setting and dementia status. This study found that persons with dementia living in facilities often face substantial financial burdens from high out-of-pocket long-term care expenses. Policies that provide sufficient financial assistance are needed to address long-term care-related financial burdens experienced by older adults and their families, especially for those with dementia. [Read the study.](#)

In their article published in the September 2023 issue of the Annals of Vascular Surgery, Professor Emeritus **Beth**

**Devine**, 2023 Health Services PhD graduate Diana Poehler, and their colleagues at the Puget Sound VA reported the findings of their multi-criteria decision analysis wherein they assessed the concordance of patient and provider priorities around amputation levels for dysvascular patients facing a lower limb amputation. The decision problem is that there is a trade-off to be made between the level of amputation and the probability of healing; the greater the amount of limb preserved, the less likely the wound is to heal and the greater the probability of the need for a re-amputation at a higher level. Clearly, both groups preferred a level of amputation that preserves a greater proportion of the lower limb, however, there was a difference in the strength of preferences between patients and providers. Their findings were included in a special issue of the *Annals of Vascular Surgery* that highlighted the contributions of female scientists over the past 40 years, with an accompanying editorial for the issue written by one of the first female vascular surgeons in the US. [Read the study.](#)

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## Alumni

Recent CHOICE PhD graduate, **Sabra Zarea**, PhD ('23) joined AstraZeneca as a Senior Scientist in the Oncology Outcomes Research Lung Team.

**Mitch Higashi**, PhD ('01), was appointed the Associate Chief Science Officer of ISPOR—The Professional Society for Health Economics and Outcomes Research. [Read more.](#)

**Jon Campbell**, PhD ('07), was appointed the Chief Science Officer of the National Pharmaceutical Council (NPC).

**Naomi Schwartz**, PhD ('21), started a new position as Associate Director of Quantitative Science at BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc.

**Tricia Rodriguez**, PhD ('21), was interviewed by CNN regarding her recent pre-print publication co-authored

with her team at Truveta, titled, "Comparative Effectiveness of Semaglutide and Tirzepatide for Weight Loss in Adults with Overweight and Obesity in the US: A Real-World Evidence Study." [Read the article.](#)

**Rafael Alfonso-Cristancho**, PhD ('12) was invited to discuss the access of monoclonal drugs for Asthma in a video podcast series called "Coffee Talk" of the European Respiratory Society. The recording was made during the recent ERS Scientific Meeting in Milan, Italy. [Watch the video.](#)

**Meng Li**, PhD ('18) joined the Center for the Evaluation of Value and Risk in Health at Tufts Medical Center as an Assistant Professor in October.

Additionally, **Meng Li** was the First Prize award recipient of the IVI Valuing Innovation Project (VIP) for her paper co-authored with Professor Emeritus **Lou Garrison**, titled, "Incorporating Real Option Value in Valuing Innovation: A Way Forward." This paper proposes a new approach to valuing innovation that incorporates real option value, arguing that this approach can better capture the value of innovative products and services that have the potential to improve health outcomes and reduce costs. Dr. Li's work in this area began with her dissertation research, when she was a PhD student. CHOICE members who contributed to this research Dave Veenstra, Anirban Basu, Zizi Elsis, Woojung Lee, and Carrie Bennette. [Read more.](#)

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**CHOICE BLOG: INCREMENTAL THOUGHTS**



### **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

AbuShweimeh R, Knudson S, Chaabane S, Pal SN, Skidmore B, **Stergachis A**, Bhat N. [Pregnancy Exposure Registries in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Scoping Review Protocol.](#) BMJ Open 2023; May 8;13(5):e070543.

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CHOICE NEWS

