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Distinguished Lecture Series

Sally C. Morton

- **Challenges in Comparative Effectiveness Research**
January 16th, 2014, 12-1pm
@ Robbins Building E301
- **Trends in Patient-Centered Outcomes Research**
January 16th, 2014, 4-5pm
@ Wolstein Research Building 1413
– Reception to Follow
- **Professionalism – What Is It, and Why Is It Important?**
A Conversation with Students
January 17th, 2014, 12-1pm
@ Wolstein Research Building 1403
(Backup at School of Nursing NOA 31A)

Professor Sally C. Morton, Chair of the Department of Biostatistics at University of Pittsburgh, is an expert in evidence-based medicine and comparative effectiveness research. She was the 2009 president of the American Statistical Association and is current chair of Section U (Statistics) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the statistical expert to the Methodology Committee of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute, and a founding editor of *Statistics, Politics and Policy*. She has served on several national policy committees, including the US Census Scientific Advisory Committee, the Institute of Medicine Committee on Geographic Variation in Health Care Spending, and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on National Statistics.



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Abstracts

1. Challenges in Comparative Effectiveness Research (1/16//14, 12-1pm @ *Robbins Building E301*)

“What healthcare treatment works best, for whom, and under what circumstances?” is the central question of comparative effectiveness research (CER). In this talk, I will discuss CER’s policy origins and its relationship to evidence-based medicine and patient-centered outcomes research. The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) has been legislated to set methodological standards for CER and provides an opportunity for statisticians to contribute. In the latter part of the talk, I will discuss systematic review methods for assessing the strength of evidence when synthesizing a group of studies. These assessments are used for decisions at the individual patient and population health levels, as well as clinical practice guidelines. I will present the inherent challenges, results from a reliability study, and implications for CER conclusions.

2. Trends in Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (1/16/14, 4-5pm @ *Wolstein Research Building 1413*)

Patients and other stakeholders – such as families, caregivers, clinicians, and policy-makers – are becoming partners in research, rather than solely subjects or participants. This trend is seen in particular at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Established by the Affordable Care Act, this private nonprofit entity has a specific legislated mission. PCORI “helps people make informed health care decisions, and improves health care delivery and outcomes, by producing and promoting high integrity, evidence-based information that comes from research guided by patients, caregivers and the broader health care community.” In this talk, I will discuss the motivation for PCORI, the patient-centered perspective, and how the public can become involved and utilize the results of PCORI and similar institutions to make informed healthcare decisions.

3. Professionalism – What Is It, and Why Is It Important? A Conversation with Students (1/17/14, 12-1, @ *WRB 1403*)

In this discussion, I will define professionalism and discuss its importance in a statistical career, regardless of the sector – academe, government or industry – a statistician works in. I will also address statistical collaboration from the perspective of a biostatistician. I will consider the role professional societies play in one’s career and, more broadly, in the scientific community. Finally, I will provide advice for success in graduate school and discuss the job interview process. Questions and comments will be welcomed throughout this informal presentation.