



June 5, 2018

Dear friends,

In an era of rapid development and diffusion of health technology in the delivery of patient care, it's never been more important to conduct high quality health technology assessment (HTA) to inform clinical and policy decision-making. Young children are doubly vulnerable to rapid changes in health technology – first because of their susceptibility to illness and injury during early phases of growth and maturation, and second, because the measurement tools available to conduct HTA in young children are so limited. At TASK, HTA in child health is our raison d'être. It's all we do. We are excited to share with you TASK's latest developments, research milestones and upcoming plans. Thanks for your ongoing support!



Wendy Ungar, Director of TASK

[New TASK website is now live!](#)

We are happy to announce a redesign of the TASK website. The site has new content and is more user friendly. **The URL has changed so be sure to update your links!** [Check it out here.](#)

Neurodevelopment disorders: screening, interventions and costs

TASK is leading service use and economic evaluation analyses in neurodevelopmental disorders in partnership with the [BC PACE Coaching Project](#), the Pre-School Autism Treatment Impact ([PATI](#)) study, the [Pathways in ASD](#) national study and the [CHILD-BRIGHT SPOR Network](#).

Universal screening for autism?

PhD graduate, **Tracy Yuen**, found that universal screening for autism spectrum disorder at 18 and 24 months may not be a [cost-effective approach](#), since most children initiated treatment after 60 months.

Prolonged wait time for an autism diagnosis across Canada

In a [survey of ASD diagnosticians](#) across Canada, **Melanie Penner**, Bloorview Research Institute Clinician Investigator and Developmental Pediatrician, found that clinicians used a wide range of diagnostic tools, and the median total wait for an ASD diagnosis across Canada was 7 months (IQR 4 –12 months).

The Resource Use Questionnaire – a validated instrument for measuring service use

As part of the PATI Study, TASK developed and validated a questionnaire measuring resource use (RUQ) in children with neurodevelopmental disorders. Please contact us if you are interested in using the RUQ in your study.

The lifetime cost of autism

The severity and prevalence of neurodevelopmental disorders place a high economic burden on parents and public payers. Watch **Wendy Ungar's** [TEDx talk](#) on the lifetime cost of investing in children with autism.



Genomics

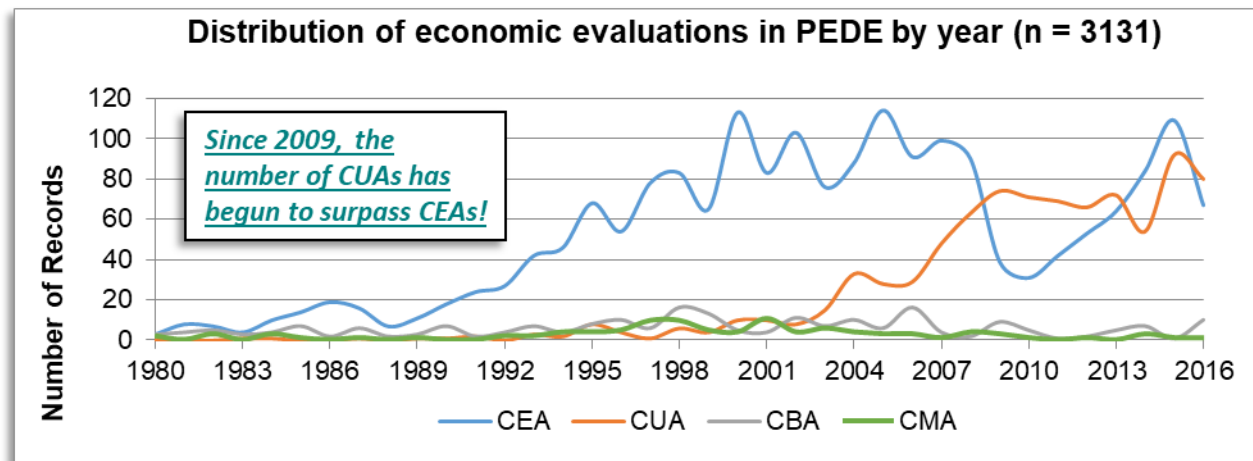
As part of her doctoral research, **Tracy Yuen** found that replacing a microarray for a molecular diagnosis of autism with either [exome or genome sequencing](#) would exceed \$10,000 per additional pathogenic variant detected.

With funding from CIHR, SickKids Scientist **Robin Hayeems** is developing and validating a multi-dimensional index of clinical utility to assess value and aid decision-making in genomic medicine.

Watch Wendy Ungar's recent talk as part of the Royal Canadian Institute of Science panel discussion on ["Whose genome is it anyway?"](#)

Paediatric Economic Database Evaluation (PEDE) Project

As part of the [PEDE Project](#), TASK maintains a database of pediatric economic evaluations. The database is the most comprehensive repository of pediatric economic evaluations in the world, containing detailed information on over 3,000 studies published over the past 30 years, including an inventory of utility weights.



Access to the on-line [database](#) is free and the database is easily searchable. It has been used in recent studies, such as [a systematic review and meta-analysis of childhood health utilities](#) and a study on family spillover effects in pediatric cost-effectiveness analyses, in collaboration with the Tufts Medical Center [CEA Registry](#). Please contact us if you are interested in collaborating on a study using the PEDE database.

Announcements

- ◆ Jathishinie Jegathisawaran joined TASK as a Research Coordinator in May.
- ◆ Dr. Avram Denburg, oncologist and investigator at Sick Kids, successfully defended his PhD thesis, "The Politics of Child Health Technologies: Social Values and Public Policy on Drug Funding for Children in Canada" in February.
- ◆ Watch for PEDE Update – Fall 2018!

Contact us

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