



# SAPHIRE Newsletter

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พิธีลงนามบันทึกข้อตกลงความร่วมมือ (MOU)  
ความร่วมมือระหว่างศูนย์วิจัยและนวัตกรรมเพื่อ  
การพัฒนาประเทศไทยอย่างยั่งยืนกับศูนย์วิจัยและนวัตกรรมเพื่อ

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The logo for MIDAS features the word "MIDAS" in a white, sans-serif font. The letter "I" is stylized with a colorful circular graphic above it, composed of segments in yellow, orange, and red. Below the letters "I", "D", and "A", there are three vertical bars in blue and cyan.

Harness evidence-based insights from  
**Early Health Technology Assessment**  
to support innovation development



## Expert Team in Early HTA

On June 19, 2023, the Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program Foundation (HITAP Foundation), in collaboration with the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health of the National University of Singapore (NUS), organized a workshop on *“Fruitful Research: How to Make Health Innovation Worthwhile”* at The Sukosol Hotel Bangkok. The event was attended by medical professionals, researchers, and innovation developers from the public and private sectors.

Dr. Yot Teerawattananon, Secretary General of the HITAP Foundation, and Dr. Wang Yi, Assistant Professor at NUS, shared their knowledge and experience about “early Health Technology Assessment” or early HTA, covering the topics such as, what makes a health innovation “desirable” and “marketable”, and how to know if it is worth investing in research and development of a certain health innovation.

In this regard, the Medical Innovation and Development Assessment Support or MIDAS, a collaboration between HITAP Foundation and NUS, was officially introduced at the event as an expert team specializing in early HTA. MIDAS serves as an initiative derived from a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on “Collaboration on Priority Setting and Early Health Technology Assessment of Health Innovations in Thailand” signed by HITAP Foundation, NUS, and their leading partner agencies including the Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI), the Thailand Center of Excellence for Life Sciences (TCELS), and the National Health Security Office (NHSO).



Currently one of a few in the world and the one and only in Asia, MIDAS aims to support health technology innovators and funders in their development of innovation during the research and development phase through interdisciplinary collaboration and cutting-edge research through services which include identifying target product profiles (TPPs), developing early health economic modelling, designing clinical trials, as well as organizing training and capacity building sessions of early HTA in Thailand and beyond in order to create positive change in medical innovation and healthcare system.

For more information, please visit

[www.midas-health.com](http://www.midas-health.com)

# MORU Members

## Join EMCR Workshop



Picture 1: Group photo

## MORU

Tropical Health Network

Some members of MAEMOD (Mathematical and Economic MODelling) team at Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit (MORU) including Wirichada Pan-ngum, Thitiya Theparod (Mahasarakham University), Weerakorn Thichumpa (Ph.D. student), and Pavadee Chuaicharoen (Ph.D. student) joined the Early and Mid-Career Researcher (EMCR) Workshop at the SPECTRUM & SPARK Annual Meeting on February 13, 2023 at RACV Cape Schanck Resort, Australia.

The Workshop, attended by 45 participants, including Master's and PhD students, recently graduated post doctorate researchers, and senior researchers, comprised international keynote presentations, a poster session, professional development activities, a banquet dinner, and prizes. The participants were able to share their current or completed research in relation to SPECTRUM & SPARK key themes, including emerging infectious diseases, endemic infections, quantitative skills, and methods for policy. This has certainly strengthened the network of modellers and secured potential future research collaborations.



Picture 2: MAEMOD team was doing the session on exchanging culture.

On May 24, 2023  
40+ students, scientists  
and interested members of the public attended  
Pint of Science Thailand, organized by MORU,  
at Café Narasingh in Bangkok.



# Pint of Science Thailand 2023

**The event** was part of the annual global Pint of Science festival, between May 22-24, 2023, which featured thousands of researchers across hundreds of cities in 26 countries, who shared and discussed their research with people in a local pub, bar, cafe, or public space.

Pint of Science Thailand featured three researchers: Lt. Col. Asst. Prof. Dr. Kanlaya Jongcherdchootrakul, a field epidemiologist from Phramongkutklao College of Medicine; Dr. Palang Chotsiri, Senior Scientist from MORU's Clinical Pharmacology Department; and Dr. Chayada Piantham, Data Scientist from MORU's Clinical Therapeutics Unit (CTU).

Dr. Kanlaya kicked off the evening with a talk about heat stroke. She described the growing number of strokes due to rising temperatures, early signs and symptoms, and heat stroke prevention.

Dr. Palang introduced some pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic models and discussed how to design dose regimens to optimise patient impact. He noted knowledge gaps in his field, particularly those involving drug design for vulnerable groups.



Finally, Dr. Chayada demonstrated how natural selection can be represented mathematically using the ratio of reproductive rates between two competing strains. She used this concept to fit a model to COVID-19 data to quantify the fitness advantage of the SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant over the Alpha strain.

For more information about Pint of Science Thailand, please visit

[www.pintofscienceth.com](http://www.pintofscienceth.com), or Facebook and Twitter @pintofscienceTH

# In-Person Seminars Are Back in HIAS



For the first time in three years, two HIAS (Hitotsubashi Institute for Advanced Study) Health seminars were held in-person in January and March 2023.



Prof. Raymond Duch from University of Oxford presented the results of a recent experiment testing the effect of financial incentive on COVID-19 vaccine taken up in rural Ghana. The study was conducted in collaboration with SAPHIRE and was partially funded by the International Decision Support Initiative (iDSI) Plus.

Dr. Wanrudee Isaranuwachai and Ms. Chittawan Poonsiri, both from HITAP, presented research on health technology assessment and systems research relating to Evusheld and high-cost users in Thailand. Dr. Wanrudee and Ms. Chittawan also participated in an international meeting on health promotion and prevention of noncommunicable diseases, led by HIAS Health for the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan.

# NHF and HITAP Co-Host Forum on Open Data Movement to Support Research Development and Health Policies in Thailand



To celebrate the “International Open Data Day” the National Health Foundation (NHF) together with HITAP hosted an online knowledge-exchange forum, “Open Data Movement to Support Research Development and Health Policies in Thailand” on March 3, 2023. The discussion was led by Dr. Piya Hanvoravongchai, Secretary-General of NHF, and featured by four renowned speakers providing case studies, insights and perspectives as data custodians, data users, and experts in the open data field.



This forum is part of a research project titled “Open Data Catalytic Initiative for Research and Policy Support in Thailand” under the strategic priority “Convergence of Digital Health Platforms and Health Information Systems Implementation in Thailand” derived from the Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2022 – 2026 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Royal Thai Government.



**Dr. Piya Hanvoravongchai**  
Secretary-General, National Health Foundation

**Dr. Lalitaya Kongkam**  
Deputy Secretary-General, National Health Security Office

**Prof. Dr. Virasakdi Chongsuivatwong**  
Faculty of Medicine, Prince of Songkla University

**Ms. Nongnuch Thanthithum**  
Deputy Director, Division of Injury Prevention,  
Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health

**Dr. Boonchai Kijsanayotin**  
Founder and President, Asia eHealth Information  
Network (AeHIN)