



**Executive Committee  
(2024-2025)**

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Neda Razaz

**Trainee Representative:**

Sara Stephens

**Administrator:**

Sue Bevan

# SPER Winter Newsletter

## President's Corner

Dear Colleagues,

I want to acknowledge that it has been a challenging time for all of us. Support one another and focus on what you can control at home and at work.

Our Annual Meeting in Boston MA is less than four months away. We want to share updates on what the SPER executive committee has been working on since the 2024 Annual Meeting in Austin, TX.

We are excited to report that SPER received an unprecedented number of abstract submissions for an in-person annual meeting! On average, the society has received 240 to 250 abstracts per in-person annual meeting since moving to an online submission system in 2009. This year SPER received 337 submitted abstracts for the 2025 Annual Meeting in Boston. Thank you to every member who participated in the abstract review. If you wish to participate in the abstract review process for the 2026 Annual Meeting that will be held in Phoenix, AZ please make sure you have an active SPER membership. Membership is renewable annually and active for the calendar year dues are paid (expiring 12/31).

Our Virtual SPER Meeting is just weeks away (April 8<sup>th</sup>). Eighteen abstracts were submitted for the Virtual Meeting. Abstract decisions will be sent in the next few weeks. The [preliminary agenda](#) is now available.

**The SPER Student and Postdoc Committee has planned a great Advanced Methods Workshop that will be held virtually for the first time this year** rather than the day of the Annual Meeting. The workshop will feature expertise from reproductive and perinatal epidemiologist Dr. Dana Goin. Dr. Goin will outline use of difference-in-difference approach and other methodological considerations for use of causal inference methods in epidemiologic research. An applied example with sample code and data will follow, allowing attendees a real-world example of how this can be applied to assess a research question (and how it may be applied to evaluate their own research questions). The workshop will be held on Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2025 at noon (EST). You can register for the workshop at: [Registration](#) is open now.

We are in the final stages of working with the Program Planning Committee to select oral and poster presentations. Abstract decisions will be shared in March for the Virtual Meeting and in April for the In-Person Meeting. The [preliminary program](#) is now available on SPER's website. The opening

session will be: *The widespread population health impacts from abortion bans in the US*. We will also be hosting four symposia organized by members at various career stages.

·Symposium 1: Minipuberty: An early window into reproductive function

·Symposium 2: Reproductive and Perinatal Health in the Digital Age: Insights from App-Based or Online Studies.

· Symposium 3: Climate Change and Children's Health: From Epidemiologic Evidence to Policy and Clinical Interventions

· Symposium 4: Symposium: Addressing Disparities in Rural Maternal Healthcare Access: Challenges and Solutions

Lastly, we are currently seeking nominations for open positions on the SPER Executive Committee: President, Treasurer, Member-at-Large, Student Representative, and International Representative. All of us have found it to be a rewarding experience in several ways. You will have the opportunity to expand your professional network and connect with members, work closely with those you admire, and address behind-the-scenes processes that affect equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Society. We want each member to feel seen, valued, and welcomed. Nominations are due March 18th. If you are interested it's totally ok to nominate yourself! Stefanie Hinkle at [stefanie.hinkle@penmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:stefanie.hinkle@penmedicine.upenn.edu) or can be submitted online through the [SPER website](#).

We look forward to seeing you in June in Boston!

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> SPER Virtual Meeting

The SPER Virtual Meeting will be held on April 8, 2025, from 10:00 – 5:00pm EST. Registration is now open (and free). Thank you to all who submitted abstracts! To register: [Virtual Meeting – SPER](#)

### SPER Virtual Advanced Methods Workshop

Register now for the 2025 SPER Advanced Methods Workshop featuring reproductive and perinatal epidemiologist Dr. Dana Goin. Using both a theoretical and methods overview, Dr. Goin will outline use of difference-in-difference approach and other methodological considerations for use of causal inference methods in epidemiologic research. An applied example with sample code and data will follow, allowing attendees a real-world example of how this can be applied to assess a research question (and how it may be applied to evaluate their own research questions).

**This workshop will be held over Zoom, Tuesday April 29<sup>th</sup> 12:00PM – 1:00PM EST.** Registration is free and is now open at the [SPER Advanced Methods Workshop page](#).

## 2025 SPER Annual Meeting

June 9 – 10, 2025

Boston, MA



### Keynote speaker

Prof. Régine PM Steegers-Theunissen, MD, MSc, PhD

### Registration Information

Registration is now open ([SPER Registration page](#)). Registration fees for the Annual Meeting include admission to all sessions (keynote, other oral sessions, and the poster sessions), continental

breakfast, and refreshment breaks. **The annual meeting will begin on Monday, June 9 and finish on Tuesday, June 10.** The [annual meeting preliminary program](#) is now available at the SPER website.

**[Register for the Annual Meeting!](#)**

The deadline for early registration (and discounted cost) is **Monday, May 12**. Please join us.

**[Accommodations](#)**

**A block of rooms has been reserved at the Boston Sheraton Hotel, the venue for our 2025 Annual Meeting. [Hotel information and special rate](#) are available through the SPER website.**

**[Volunteers Needed: Poster Judges and Welcoming Peers!](#)**

Get to know the next generation of reproductive, pediatric, and perinatal epidemiologists by volunteering to serve as a poster judge or peer mentor at the upcoming Annual Meeting. Poster judges' involvement would entail visiting presentations during one of the two scheduled poster sessions, sign up through the meeting registration form.

Welcoming peers at the annual meeting are matched with new attendees and facilitate a positive meeting experience. Both welcoming peers and new meeting attendees can opt in during meeting registration.

**[European Perinatal and Pediatric Epidemiology Conference \(EPEC\)](#)**

We are delighted to announce the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Perinatal and Paediatric Epidemiology Conference (EPPEC) in Oslo, Norway, September 15-16, 2025. We have eminent keynote speakers who are all prominent researchers within their respective fields. Additionally, we are excited to provide a dedicated space in the program for talented young researchers, allowing them to present their work and contribute to collective knowledge.

Confirmed speakers for the conference, in alphabetical order are:

**Jasper Been, David Burgner, Abigail Fraser, Sonia Hernandez-Diaz, Jeremy Labrecque, Per Magnus, Jenny Myers, Martine Vrijheid**

Information about the preliminary program and abstract submission is available at [the EPPEC event site](#).

## Nominate and Vote for Executive Committee Members!

### Executive Committee Nominations due March 14, 2025

Nominations are being sought for President (2025-2028), Secretary (2025-2028), one Member-at-Large (2025-2029), and Trainee Representative (2025-2026). All terms will begin at the close of the June 2025 Annual Meeting. Members of SPER are encouraged to nominate themselves or any other member of SPER to run for these positions and help our Society achieve continued success through this opportunity for professional service.

The **President** will serve as President Elect (2025-2026), President (2026-2027), and Past President (2027-2028). The main duties of the President Elect are to help the President develop plans for the Annual Meeting and to chair the selection of the Student Prize Paper Award Recipient. The President designs the program for the Annual Meeting and is responsible for the Executive Committee's decision-making. The Past President chairs the selection of the Heinz Berendes International Travel Award recipient and provides input as needed.

The **Secretary** is involved in all Executive Committee activities, works with the President to set the Executive Committee meeting schedule, takes minutes, and leads other organizational tasks. The Secretary also works in coordination with the SPER administrators to send correspondence to the membership, update the SPER website, and with tasks associated with the annual meeting. This member will replace Helen Chin.

The **Member-at-Large** participates in all Executive Committee activities. The Member-at-Large elected this cycle will be responsible for managing the Communications Committee. The SPER-MAL for communications is responsible for the three annual newsletters, oversight of SPER's social media platforms, and leading the communications committee activities. This member will replace Kristen Rappazzo.

The **Trainee Representative** participates in Executive Committee meetings, encourages and facilitates trainee participation in SPER and plans the Advanced Methods Workshop. **Meeting and travel costs for the Annual Meeting will be covered for the Trainee Representative.** This member will replace Sara Stephens.

This call for nominations is posted on the SPER website ([SPER Call For Nominations](#)). Nominations are due by **March 14, 2025**, and should be sent to Stefanie Hinkle at [stefanie.hinkle@pennterapeutics.com](mailto:stefanie.hinkle@pennterapeutics.com) or can be submitted online through the SPER website.

Nominees will be asked to submit a candidate statement by the above deadline. You can also contact Stefanie by email for more information. The slate of candidates and ballot will be presented to the SPER membership for electronic voting to take place in April 2025.

## R13 Conference Grant Awarded by NICHD

We are pleased to announce that on January 16th, 2025, we received a Notice of Award from NICHD for the R13 conference grant proposal submitted last year. This NICHD grant is expected to provide 5 years of funding to help support the costs of our annual meeting. We thank Courtney Lynch (The Ohio State University) for serving as principal investigator for the past 5 years on the prior award.

## Recent and Upcoming Events

See [SPER's Online Events page](#) for details and registration links! Recordings of previous sessions are also available through that page.

- SPER held an annual Open Listening Session on February 28, hosted by the Equity Advisory Board. The session focused on ideas to enhance engagement in the annual meeting for new attendees, people with disabilities, and people who cannot attend in person. For example, we will host meet-and-greet event at the meeting for the first time to welcome new attendees and foster collaboration.
- **April 8, 2025**, from 10:00 – 5:00pm EST: 2<sup>nd</sup> SPER Virtual Meeting
- **April 29, 2025**, from 12:00 – 1:00pm EST: Advanced Methods Workshop

## Join a Committee! Opportunities for Member Involvement and Leadership

Are you interested in getting more involved in SPER? Consider joining one of our five committees!

- **Communications Committee**, working to shape our social media presence, newsletters, and communications policies.
- **Outreach Committee**, promoting awareness and increasing accessibility of the Society to help grow the membership. This committee has the responsibility of overseeing initiatives aimed at recruitment of new members, retention of existing members, and expanding the Society's reach. We are looking for more people to join our group, particularly those from diverse backgrounds.
- **Digital Engagement Committee**, coordinating our online seminar series throughout the year.
- **Equity Advisory Board (EAB)**, intersects with all aspects of SPER programming and activities to ensure that equity is prioritized. The EAB meets monthly to review existing SPER activities and programming and to develop new initiatives to promote equity.

- **Student, Trainee, & Post-Doc Working Group**, plans professional development opportunities for trainees in pediatric and perinatal epidemiology-related disciplines and promotes student/trainee/postdoctoral engagement with the Society.

Click here to access more [information on SPER committees](#) as well as the links to join them.

## Membership Renewal Time

It's time to renew your SPER membership for 2025! Benefits include discounted registration rates for the annual meeting; opportunities to serve on committees, review abstracts and be a poster judge; access to the online jobs and fellowships board; participation in the electronic mailing list; subscription to *Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology* – and more! If you would like to join SPER (or know a colleague who does), applications and renewals can be found on the [SPER Membership page](#). Reminder that SPER memberships run from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> (no matter when you renew), so renew early for more SPER value! Bundled memberships are also available—buy memberships for 5 of your trainees and save \$25.

## Looking for a job or fellowship? Recruiting for a position?

Explore the [SPER Jobs & Fellowships Bank](#). There are currently several listings, including for postdoctoral fellowships and multiple professorships. Check back regularly for timely access to these opportunities.

If you are looking to hire an epidemiologist with expertise in perinatal and/or pediatric health and would like to advertise your position on the SPER website, please [submit your contribution here](#).

## Give to SPER

Fund the future and support our mission to foster pediatric and perinatal epidemiologic research! Donated funds will be used to support our annual meeting, student travel awards and memberships, and expanded programming throughout the year. SPER is a Non-Profit 501c(3) organization, so your donations may be tax deductible. [Donate to SPER here!](#)

## Sponsor the SPER Annual Meeting

Support SPER and promote your organization! Sponsorships are available at the Full (\$750) and Email (\$350) levels. [Details on sponsoring the SPER annual meeting available here.](#)

### Follow SPER

SPER is currently active on [LinkedIn](#), [Bluesky](#) and [Facebook](#), follow/connect with us for society updates and information!



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