

A Lifetime of Achievement: A Profile of Paul Kind

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Paul Kind, ISPOR's 2017 Avedis Donabedian Award winner, is known for his work in conducting health outcomes research as well as teaching future generations of researchers at the University of Leeds and elsewhere. However, according to those who know him, he is also, what could be termed a polymath – an accomplished jazz pianist and composer, who plays with ISPOR's band, The Monte Carlos; a political activist with the United Kingdom's Labor Party; and a motorcycle riding enthusiast.

He made his first ISPOR meeting presentation in 1997, going on to lead the organization's Quality of Life Special Interest Group before serving as an elected member on the board of directors. He continues to collaborate on new research projects with colleagues in Latin America and Russia, and is completing a long-standing assignment documenting the history of the value and valuation of health.

Kind, who is professor of Health Outcome Measurement at Leeds, is also "a pain in the neck," according to Ben van Hout at the University of Sheffield.

"I've known Paul Kind for more than 20 years now, and he has always been a pain in the neck," van Hout says. "Either at meetings, or face to face, he is always disagreeing, always challenging, always coming up with irrelevant details, sidelines, stories or whatever else springs into his chaotic mind. But then later I go home, and I think about what he has said and I think, 'Hey, maybe he is right,' and, 'You know he has a point there,' or, 'That might be a good idea,' and sometimes, 'Aaargh, I can see the link now.' Paul is and always has been a true academic—thoughtful, doubting, challenging, critical—not only of others, but also himself."

In addition to his position at Leeds, Kind is also the lead international scientist at the Centre for Health Economics, Management, and Policy at the National Research University Higher School of Economics, St Petersburg, Russia. For more than 40 years, he has worked on research regarding the valuation of health benefits for use in clinical and economic evaluation. In

addition to his academic work, Kind has acted as a consultant to government and international agencies, and has provided technical support to leading pharmaceutical companies.

Kind is a founding member of the EuroQoL Group, and has only recently stepped down from its leadership team, having served variously as its president and chair of its Executive Committee.

Andrew Lloyd, director at AcasterLloyd Consulting and Bladon Associates Ltd in Oxford, UK, knew Kind from their time together on the EuroQoL group. They would meet at the association's annual plenary meeting each year and occasionally at other conferences. About 10 years ago, Kind asked Lloyd if he could help teach a summer school course at the University of York.

Like van Hout, Lloyd also respects the way that Kind will argue against carefully held views.

"He always challenges you to think about things from a different perspective," Lloyd says. "It's always very easy in any walk of life to always start to think about things in the same way or approach a problem in the same way, and Paul is very good about challenging those kinds of beliefs and turning them on their head all of the time.

"He can be a bit anarchic maybe, but in a healthy way. He's probably one of the biggest critics of the instrument that he helped develop [the EQ-5D index]. He doesn't let the dust settle too much and he doesn't let sleeping dogs lie. He really likes to challenge the prevailing thought, challenge the orthodoxy."

Van Hout says he is among those "fortunate" to know Kind through being able to read his work that never made it to a final manuscript—"Work in progress, unfinished ideas, stupid ideas sometimes."

"It is in that kind of work that one can appreciate his brilliance, his intellectual tussle with the theoretical concepts that underlie the measurement and valuation of quality of life," van Hout says. "There is also the realization that his thinking always



starts from a real commitment to delivering better health care, is always from the point of view of patients and the public, and is never too lazy or afraid to challenge vested interests."

Kind "spends a lot of time thinking about things, and when you see him again, it all starts to spill out," Lloyd says.

Because of Kind's original background in engineering, "He's interested and intrigued in applying skills and experience from one clinical area to another clinical area," Lloyd says. "He has some quite strong and genuine political beliefs and in social justice."

Kind has "worked hard" for the Labor Party in the United Kingdom for many years, according to Lloyd. "I think some of the work that we do, such as access to health care, appeals to him because it can promote social justice," Lloyd says.

In the Classroom

Dennis Fryback, professor emeritus of Population Health Sciences and of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, characterizes Kind as "an excellent teacher." Kind came at the university's request in 1999 to revive a graduate course in population health science, Measuring and Monitoring Outcomes of Medical Care, which had not been taught for several years. "We sought to be a world-class program and this course was essential to that," Fryback says. "We needed a world-class teacher/researcher in this area to offer the course while we sought permanent faculty. Who better to make an offering of this course than Paul Kind?"

According to Fryback, the course was "a huge success."

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Students in the course came from many different disciplines, including physicians, pharmacy, health administration students, epidemiologists, health economists, health ethicists, “and even a health systems engineer or two.” Fryback says Kind’s style of teaching through discussion led to broad interactions among all of the students.

“He challenged each student to find a semester project for application of a measure of health to their work or research and to submit a plan for it as a final paper in the course,” Fryback says. “Now, 16 years later, I don’t recall specifics, but I do recall that out of these course papers arose several longer-term collaborations and publications.”

Like van Hout and Lloyd, Fryback says Kind can be opinionated, but that does not interfere with his ability in the classroom.

“Even though he is associated with EQ-5D and he is opinionated, he is ecumenical in what he presents for students,” Fryback says. “He excites discussion. He encourages hands-on experiences and animates students. I believe that in this one semester Paul changed the careers of some students with this course offering, starting career-long focus for them on health outcomes measurement applied to their fields. He brought the world of health measurement to the classroom, but also equipped students to carry this forward to many different academic and applied arenas.”

Making His Musical Mark

It was during the time of teaching the summer school course at the University of York in which Lloyd says he “got to know Paul a bit better,” and found out that he is a jazz pianist. “He’s pretty good, actually, he writes his own material, ‘trad jazz’ I’d guess you’d call it,” Lloyd says.

Sean D. Sullivan, dean of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Washington, has played about 13 years with Kind in The Monte Carlos, ISPOR’s cover band, which usually does a show each year at the organization’s annual convention. He says the ensemble hasn’t played one of Kind’s original compositions, sticking instead to popular and R&B music of the 1960s, 1970s, and later decades. Kind not only plays keyboards, but trumpet as well, which he has picked up in recent years, Sullivan says.

And, “In a group with a lot of scientific minds coupled with a lot of creative minds, you’d expect there to be a lot of egos clashing,” Sullivan says. “But that isn’t the case, especially with Paul.”

In picking one song Kind likes to play, Sullivan names Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Sweet Home Alabama.” The song “has a particular keyboard solo, and Paul really enjoys playing that,” he says. The Monte Carlos gets together about once a year in March or April to practice, usually in Chicago, and Kind is dedicated to the group despite the distance he usually has to travel. “Paul will fly in from England, and one time he flew into Chicago from South America on his way back to England.”

“... [Kind] has been riding alone, with his feet in the data, doing the analyses himself, behind his own computer, struggling and learning, but also inspiring.”

Sullivan has not worked with Kind professionally, because they work in different areas of the field, but he notes that Kind brings a thorough preparedness to each rehearsal and gig. “That’s the same kind of preparedness I’d envision him bringing to his classes,” Sullivan says.

Some of the performances have not been easy, due to venue issues, but Sullivan says Kind and the other band members tend to take things in stride and do their best to entertain their fellow ISPOR members.

One particularly memorable gig was when ISPOR rented the entire House of Blues in New Orleans. “My wife took hundreds of photos and put them together into an album for each of the band members,” Sullivan says. “That was my favorite performance, and if you ask Paul, that was probably his too.”

Taking the Road Less Traveled

Both van Hout and Lloyd point to Kind’s love of motorcycle riding. According to Lloyd, Kind has traveled across parts of the United States and Canada.

Van Hout says Kind “likes to go off the beaten track, or to take a side road just because it is there, just because it looks interesting.”

“But just as one remains rather limited in one’s knowledge about a country by staying on the main road, one may stay rather limited in understanding what one is studying without going off road,” van Hout says. “And often, unlike others, Paul has not been sitting on the back of some young talented researchers. Instead he has been riding alone, with his feet in the data, doing the analyses himself, behind his own computer, struggling and learning, but also inspiring.” ■



Pictured left to right: 2016-2017 President Lou Garrison, Paul Kind, and ISPOR Avedis Donabedian Award Chair Mark Sculpher.