



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

All the Things we Cannot Count: Selection Bias in Perinatal Epidemiology

Thursday, March 14, 2019

12PM – 1PM

OHSU Campus Services Building 679

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Selection bias is ubiquitous in perinatal research. A common challenge is how to deal with babies born preterm, who are at high risk of morbidity and mortality and do not represent the underlying cohort of fetuses. As gestational age at birth is often an intermediate between exposure and outcome, conditioning on timing of birth can lead to biased estimates and apparent paradoxes. Some authors argue that gestational-age-specific rates calculated using fetuses as the denominator (extended fetuses-at-risk approach – FAR) instead of live births yield causally interpretable estimates even when the outcome can only be measured after birth. Dr. Basso will show how week-specific estimates based on fetuses can result in misleading conclusions. In the second part of the talk, she will discuss the broader implications of conditioning on events that follow the exposure, a common situation in this area of research.



Educated in Italy, Olga Basso has worked at the Danish Epidemiology Science Centre at the University of Aarhus (Denmark), at the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences, NIH (USA). She is currently Associate Professor at McGill University (Canada). Her primary research interests are in reproductive and perinatal epidemiology.