Recent research has shown that individuals tend to wrongly believe that, although they have changed much in the past, they are unlikely to do so in the future. This phenomenon, termed the End of History illusion, has many real world implications. In this study, we use conjoint analysis to explore whether this phenomenon exists with regard to preferences for end-of-life (EOL) care. We survey a national sample of older adults in Singapore to explore their preferences and willingness to pay (WTP) for pain management, dying at home, not being a burden on family members, longer survival and quality of healthcare experience. We then compare their responses to those from a sample of Stage IV cancer patients. If the End of History illusion exists in this context, we expect different results across the two samples.

Dr. Finkelstein is Professor at the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, Singapore and the Director of the Lien Centre for Palliative Care. He also holds appointments at NUS School of Public Health and Duke University Global Health Institute. His research focuses on the economic causes and consequences of health behaviors, with a primary emphasis on the use of traditional and behavioral economic incentives to influence those behaviors in ways to improve the public’s health. He has published over 100 manuscripts and 2 books in these areas. His primary areas of research concern obesity and its correlates although most recently his focus concerns understanding the complicated decisions that revolve around end of life care. His research has been widely cited by both academics and the media and he frequently consults with industry and government on economic issues related to public health.

All are welcome to attend. No RSVP is required. Lunch will be served from 12.00pm onwards, outside the amphitheatre.