



RESEARCH2REALITY

Shining a light on research & innovation.

How Do We Keep an Entire Society Healthy?

An interview with **Laura Rosella**, Population Health Scientist
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Public health is a discipline which is focussed on the health of populations. Everybody understands, you know, my health, going to the doctor, one person at a time. But when you stand back and think about what makes society healthy and people healthy in society, that's really where public health focusses.

A lot of people can relate to infectious disease: how diseases spread from one person to another, and that makes a lot of sense, and that's still a very important area of public health. But if you think about any other ailment of society, it also has those same patterns. There's deep personal connections, there's structural factors that influence it, there's environmental factors, how we set up our health policies, or any policy for that matter. And that's really what public health is about: trying to understand how we keep society and people healthy.

What's currently exciting in your research?

I'm really excited about the discovery potential of AI. We have all this new data and all this new thinking, and analytically we didn't really know what to do with it. We're talking social media, GIS, all these emerging data sources that we actually didn't have the ability to work with before. Some of the new technologies are really allowing us to look at the data in a new way that takes away our traditional thinking and unpack new patterns that are really areas of promise for disease prevention.

TODAY'S RESEARCH. TOMORROW'S REALITY.



I'm really proud of the work we've done in population risk tools because not only have we done something methodologically very interesting and scientifically very interesting, we've actually put those tools in the hands of people working in the public health system and they can actually use them. And we've spent time with them making sure that we design it in a way that they can actually use it. I'm really proud of that work.